

In another column the question as to the burning of Columbia is interestingly treated by Mr. James Wood Davidson, who makes out a strong case against Gen. Sherman. The testimony which Mr. Davidson adduces is abundantly varied, and will repay perusal.

The next election for State officers will take place in Kentucky on the 2d day of August. California follows on the 1st of September, Arkansas on the 6th, Maine on the 13th of the same month, and Ohio and Iowa on the 12th of October. Then comes Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts and several other States on the 2d of November.

**Cotton States Convention.**

A congress of men representing the cotton-growing States of the Union will assemble at Raleigh, N. C., on the 13th of July—next month. Hon. D. E. Butler, of Georgia, is the President of the body, and all agricultural societies and State or co-operative Granges are invited to send delegates and take part in the proceedings. The leading question will be the production and transportation of cotton and other Southern products. There will be side or auxiliary matters brought up and discussed of an interesting character.

**The New Movement in California.**

The Independent People's Convention of California, at Sacramento, adopted a platform which indicates that the party it represents has entered upon a determined campaign against all manner of monopolies in the State, and especially against the powerful railroad corporations which now unite, it is alleged, to control legislation and the judiciary in the State. The objects of the party, as declared in the platform, are as follows:

"To unite together honest and law-abiding citizens of all portions of California, irrespective of class, local or business distinctions, and regardless of religion or previous political opinion, for the purpose of bringing about a thorough system of reform in State, County and municipal government, and especially with a view of securing retrenchment in public expenditures; a consequent reduction of taxation; the regulation and control of all corporations exercising franchise of a political nature; the reduction to a reasonable rate of fares and freight on railroads, as well as steamboats operated in conjunction with railroads; in prevention and punishment of unjust discrimination by railroads and other corporations against localities and individuals; the scouring from the power or possibility of monopoly of the natural waters of the rivers, streams and lakes of the State, vesting them once more in the people; the rescue of inhabitants of cities from the oppressive power of water and gas corporations and other kindred monopolies; the purification of the administration of justice throughout the State by reforming the grand jury system so that powerful criminals may be punished as well as weak, and generally to secure such improved legislation in the interest of good government as wisdom and an honest purpose of reform may suggest."

It is to be hoped that the new party will do well in its enterprise, but it may well be asked, in the light of disasters to just such movements, hasn't the new party undertaken to fix too many things right at once? Hon. John Bidwell, who has been nominated for Governor, is a wealthy farmer of Butte County, and an "old and ardent Republican." He was a member of the Thirty-ninth Congress. His wife is a daughter of J. C. G. Kennedy, of Washington, D. C., former head of the Census Bureau. Hon. R. Pacheco, present Lieutenant-Governor and acting Governor, was nominated for Lieutenant-Governor by acclamation.

Cotton planters and interior cotton buyers have, for many years, had grievous cause of complaint of the losses sustained in the weight of cotton shipments to some of the large markets, and each year the losses seem to increase, notwithstanding some efforts have occasionally been made to lessen them. Cotton bales from the time of their arrivals in a city are subjected to pillage by classers, samplers, laborers and rag-pickers, which stealage amounts in the aggregate to an enormous amount. The "city crop" in New Orleans is estimated at 20,000 bales, which consists largely of loose cotton secured in carrying and handling the crop in that city. Included in this estimate is the quality of cotton in from near by sections to be ginned and baled in the city, which cannot in the nature of things be of much magnitude. In New York the same state of affairs exists as to stealage in cotton handling and sampling, and in fact matters are equally bad in all the principal cotton centres in the country.

The attorneys for Lewis Dent, convicted of murder at the May term of the Aiken court, and sentenced by Judge Maher to be hung on the 9th of July, received, on Friday last, from his Honor, an order to the sheriff to stay the execution until the appeal taken the Supreme Court has been decided.

**Who Burned Columbia?**

REVIEW OF GEN. SHERMAN'S VERSION OF THE AFFAIR.—The publication of his "Memoirs" by Gen. Sherman makes, for the third time, an occasion for the country to ask, who burned Columbia? The first occasion was the publication of his official report just after the event; and the second was in September, 1873, when he published a letter in the Washington Chronicle, apparently designed to influence the decision of the Mixed Claims Commission.

In his "Memoirs" just published, Gen. Sherman uses this language concerning the burning of the capital of South Carolina: "Many of the people think this fire was deliberately planned and executed. This is not true. It was accidental, and, in my judgment, began from the cotton which Gen. Hampton's men had set fire to on leaving the city, (whether by his order or not is not material,) which fire was partially subdued early in the day; but when night came the high wind fanned it again into full blaze, carried it against the frame buildings, which caught like tinder, and soon spread beyond our control."

In his letter to the Washington Chronicle, in 1873, Gen. Sherman says: "I reiterate that, no matter what his (General Hampton's) orders were, the men of his army, either his rear guard or his stragglers, did apply the fire, and that this was a sufficient cause for all else that followed." By "all else," of course, Gen. Sherman means the destruction of the city.

In his official report of the event itself in 1865, Gen. Sherman says: "And without hesitation I charge General Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia, not with a malicious intent, or as a manifestation of a Roman stoicism, but from folly and want of sense in filling it with lint, cotton and tinder."

I have thus given in his own words Gen. Sherman's three statements of his version of the story of Columbia's burning. They show a toning down as we come on from 1865 to 1873, and finally to 1875; but this discrepancy is not the matter before me just now. The general idea of the three statements is that the burning of Columbia was an accident, and that Gen. Hampton is responsible for it. I propose to show that the burning of Columbia was a crime, and that General Sherman is responsible for it.

1st.—On page 237 of volume first of the "Supplemental Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War," published officially by the Government, are these words, in a despatch dated December 18, 1864, from Major-General H. W. Halleck, in Washington, to General Sherman, then in Savannah: "Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed; and if a little salt should be sown upon its site, it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession." The italicising of the word *some* is done by Gen. Halleck. Are not the animus and intention of these words perfectly clear? That they were understood and cordially concurred in by the officer to whom they were addressed, is apparent from Gen. Sherman's reply to them, which, dated December 24, 1864, contains these words: "I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and don't think 'salt' will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them naturally into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work up pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that is in store for her."

I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as Charleston." (Page 291.) It will be observed here that Gen. Sherman distinctly approves Gen. Halleck's suggestion that Charleston should be desolated; that he regards Columbia as equally deserving that fate; that he foresees that if the Fifteenth (Howard's) Corps should get a chance they would destroy the city; that he promises that this Fifteenth Corps should get the first chance at destroying the city; that he knows that his whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon the city; and subsequent events bear out every one of these points. He marched the Fifteenth Corps into Columbia on the 17th of February, and the city was destroyed that night. Gen. Hampton evacuated the city about 9 o'clock Friday, the 17th; Gen. Sherman took possession before 10 o'clock; and the fires that destroyed the city began between 8 and 9 o'clock that evening—more than ten hours after the city was in Gen. Sherman's hands.

2d.—In his cross-examination before the Mixed Claims Commission, (in November or December, 1872)—that portion conducted by Geo. Rivers Walker—Gen. Sherman stated that in Columbia soldiers not on duty and of the Fifteenth Corps were allowed to disperse about the city; that his men were thoroughly under control, well disciplined, and that the long roll would at any time have summoned them to their ranks; that he feared they would burn the city, and that he would not restrain them to their ranks to save every city in South Carolina. I have not the text of this examination now before me, but am satisfied as to the correctness of this summary; and if it is incorrect it can easily be disproven, as it can be verified if correct.

3d.—Gen. O. O. Howard, while in Columbia, in 1867, in a conversation with Gen. Hampton, held in the office of Governor James L. Orr, several other witnesses being present, said that General Sherman knew perfectly well that Gen. Hampton did not burn Columbia; that no one was authorized to say that "our troops did not set fire to it, for I saw them do it myself." Gov. Orr testified concerning that conversation to this effect: "Gen. Howard said in substance

that the city was burned by United States troops; that he saw them fire many houses." There were several other witnesses to this conversation between Generals Howard and Hampton.

4th.—In his official report of the event, quoted above, Gen. Sherman goes something beyond the usual scope of a military paper in specifically charging the destruction of the city upon Gen. Hampton. This specific charge was unfortunate for General Sherman, in that all the evidence goes to prove that the charge is rash. Colonel Stone received the surrender of the city from Mayor Goodwyn as early in the day as 10 o'clock, and took immediate possession of it, the Confederate troops having been withdrawn before the surrender; and—note the importance of the connection—the conflagration that destroyed the city began after dark, say after 8 o'clock, (Colonel Stone himself says about 9 o'clock.) That is to say, the Federal troops had possession of Columbia fully ten hours previous to the fires that destroyed it; and during this time Gen. Hampton's command was marching Northward towards or beyond Winnsboro. But further upon this point, Colonel Kennedy, of the Seventeenth Corps, one of the "skirmish line" that entered the city ahead of Col. Stone's command, and one of Gen. Sherman's pet witnesses before the Mixed Claims Commission, says in testimony: "I cannot for my life see how Wade Hampton and Beauregard are so positive that Sherman's soldiers first set fire to the cotton, for not one was near it when the fire was started, and certainly neither Hampton nor Beauregard were within gun-shot of either the cotton or the State House." This was before 9 o'clock that morning. This glib witness, in proving the distance of the Confederates at the time the cotton was fired, proves rather too much for his General, who is trying to prove that these same Confederates did fire that cotton. Of the fire itself, that which destroyed the city, Col. Stone, after stating that the time was "about 9 o'clock," says: "All at once fifteen or twenty flames, from as many different places along the river, shot up, and in ten minutes the fate of Columbia was settled." Colonel Stone, it will be remembered, is the officer who, as the official representative of Gen. Sherman, received from Mayor Goodwyn the surrender of Columbia.

5th.—General Sherman did not submit before the Mixed Claims Commission the testimony of Col. Stone, who was sent by himself into Columbia about two hours earlier than he (Gen. Sherman) and his main witnesses arrived there. For not submitting this important testimony, Gen. Sherman offers the frivolous pretext of not knowing Col. Stone's address.

6th.—Adjutant S. H. M. Byers, in a pamphlet entitled "What I Saw in Dixie, or Sixteen Months in Rebel Prisons," says: "The boys, too, were spreading the conflagration by firing the city in a hundred places." The "boys" seem to have done that night exactly as Gen. Sherman told General Halleck they generally did, that is, "do their work up pretty well;" for no one should complain of a hundred separate applications of the incendiary torch as not being "pretty well" in its way.

7th.—Mr. Whiteley Reid's "Olio in the War" says of this destruction of Columbia: "It was the most monstrous barbarity of the barbarous march." This opinion bears upon the character of the act, not upon the question of who did it.

8th.—Before the Mixed Claims Commission, scores of witnesses testified to the fact that the soldiers of Sherman's army set fire to the city in hundreds of places; that they carried about torches, kerosene or petroleum balls, and buckets of the inflammable fluid, lighting fires wherever the wind would not carry the flames fast enough; that this was done often in the presence of their officers, who made no attempt to check or to punish them; and that, as above shown in Sherman's letter to Halleck, General Sherman selected his guards from a corps notorious for their violent and destroying habits, and that, with opportunities furnished by the commanding General himself, these men plundered, burned and robbed in the presence of their officers, and all this with the previous, present and perfect knowledge of General Sherman himself.

9th.—Mr. William Beverley Nash, a negro, then resident in Columbia, now a State Senator of South Carolina, who was a delegate to the Philadelphia Republican Convention that nominated President Grant in 1872, has made affidavit to the effect that the Federal troops burned Columbia and that General Hampton had nothing to do with it. This is an eye-witness of a race and of a party not likely to stretch a point in Gen. Hampton's favor.

10th.—Dr. T. J. Goodwyn, the Mayor of Columbia, who surrendered the city to Col. Stone, in his affidavit testifies that, with a number of leading citizens, he called upon Gen. Sherman two days after the fire; that, in the course of conversation about the burning of the city, Gen. Sherman said that he thought his troops burned the city, but excused them because, as he alleged, the citizens had given them liquor. Generals Howard and Blair and other Federal officers were present at this conversation. It is manifest that Gen. Sherman afterwards forgot about this liquor matter when he talked before the Claims Commission, seven years later, about the discipline of his soldiers and the long-roll's power to bring every man to his ranks at any moment.

11th.—Col. Stone, who received the city in surrender, two hours before Gen. Sherman entered it, in a letter to the Chicago Tribune, says: "The streets in some instances contained bales of cotton which had been cut open, and these caught fire twice or three times during the day; but these fires had been promptly put out by some of the firemen of the city, aided by a detail of soldiers under charge of an officer."

now (later in the day) had intimation that the Union officers released by us from the city prisons had formed a society to which had been added many members from our soldiers and the negroes, the object of which society was to burn Columbia." This movement is mentioned, not to account for the burning, but to show the feeling in the army; a feeling of which Gen. Sherman was fully aware before he furnished that opportunity for its wreaking.

12th.—The following towns and villages in South Carolina, in some of which, at least, there was no cotton in the streets, were burned either in whole or in part during the same campaign: Robertsville, Grahamville, McPhersonville, Barnwell, Blackville, Orangeburg, Lexington, Winnsboro, Cumdeu, Lancaster, Chesterfield, Cheraw and Darlington.

13th.—Gen. Beauregard, and not Gen. Hampton, was the highest military authority in Columbia at that time. Gen. Hampton was assigned to duty at Columbia on the night of the 16th, Thursday; and the order issued about the cotton came from Gen. Beauregard at the request of Gen. Hampton, (through the latter, of course;) and that order signed by Capt. Rawlins Lowndes, A. A. G., was that the cotton be not burned. Capt. Lowndes, in his affidavit, submitted in evidence before the Mixed Claims Commission, after explaining that Gen. Hampton, after conference with General Beauregard, had directed him (Captain Lowndes) to issue an order that no cotton should be fired, adds: "This I did at once, and when I left Columbia, which I did after the entrance of the Federal troops, not one bale of cotton was burned, nor had any been fired by our troops. At the time I was acting as Assistant A. A. G. for Gen. Hampton." This order not to burn the cotton is not important as showing the origin of the fire, because it hardly touches that question directly at all; but it is important in its bearing upon the veracity of Gen. Sherman, who in his official report (1865) said that Gen. Hampton "ordered that all cotton, public and private, should be moved into the streets and fired." The existence of that order—not to burn the cotton—and the testimony of Gen. Beauregard, Gen. Hampton and Capt. Lowndes may be accepted as settling that one point.

14th.—Gen. Sherman, in his report to the Committee on the Conduct of the War, (Page 6 of Part 1 of the Supplemental Report,) says: "I hereto subjoin complete details;" but from these details, called complete, the General has omitted all his correspondence between the 16th and the 21st of February—the period covering the destruction of Columbia. Both before and after this event the correspondence submitted is frequent and altogether voluminous, but in these five days not a word is given there. Why are these letters withheld, and where are they?

Such is a brief outline of the case Columbia has against Gen. Sherman. The points above given are not the whole evidence in the case, but merely illustrative items, the great body of proof lying beyond the limits of a paper like this. The Mixed Claims Commission has "settled" one point—shall the United States pay for the property destroyed in Columbia?—in the negative. Let that remain settled. Columbia has another case already in action before the great assize of history. The Court are the historians who are to sum up the evidence, and the jury is the civilized world. Before that assize she is preparing the evidence. Her points are sharply defined ones, and she makes them without indirectness or chicanery. A local committee of citizens of Columbia, with Chancellor Carroll, a jurist of ability and purity of character, at its head, has been already several years collecting testimony upon the burning of that city in 1865, and the evidence thus put in legal form will probably have some influence in shaping the opinion of the civilized world.

Columbia expects to make, among probably others, the following points, and she will rely in the strongest of them upon General Sherman's testimony or that of his own witnesses: That General Sherman desired the destruction of Columbia; that General Sherman knew that his soldiers desired the same thing; that General Sherman believed that if the Fifteenth Army Corps were quartered in that city they would destroy it; that General Sherman thus desiring, thus knowing and thus believing, did quarter the Fifteenth Corps in Columbia; that the Federal forces, under Colonel Stone, of the Fifteenth Corps, received the city in surrender from Mayor Goodwyn, and took military possession of it about 10 o'clock Friday morning, the 17th of February, 1865; that the body of the Fifteenth Corps entered the city an hour or two later than the command of Col. Stone; that the conflagration which destroyed the city began about 8 o'clock in the evening—ten hours subsequent to the occupation; that the conflagration began in several places by concert, of which notice was given with signal rockets; that Federal soldiers in large numbers aided in spreading the conflagration by brand, match and torch; that as to the cotton, General Beauregard, on the 14th, ordered Major Greene, Commandant of the Post, to have the cotton moved out of the warehouses to a place or places where it could be burned, if it should become necessary to burn it, without endangering the city, and that Major Greene, having no available transportation, placed the cotton in the broadest of the streets, as the best he could do under the circumstances; that on the 16th, when General Hampton was assigned to duty at Columbia, he urged Gen. Beauregard, his superior officer, to order that the cotton be not burned; that Gen. Beauregard so ordered, and that the order was issued by Capt. Lowndes, A. A. G., from General Hampton's headquarters; that all the fires that arose

from the burning cotton during the day, Friday, in whatever way caused, were extinguished by the local fire companies assisted by the citizens and Federal soldiers; that several citizens of Columbia, during the day (Friday) were warned by officers and soldiers of Sherman's army of the impending conflagration of the city to take place that night; that the conflagration did take place that night, announced by signals and beginning at several places to the windward of the heart of the city; that numerous Federal officers witnessed the active agency of the soldiers in spreading the conflagration, without taking timely steps to prevent the same; and that, in fine, Gen. Sherman is morally responsible for the burning of Columbia.

JAS. WOOD DAVIDSON.  
New York, June 15, 1875.

McMurray & Davis, one of the largest wholesale dry goods houses of Charlotte, have failed.

**CITY ITEMS.**—Does this weather suit you who, in the depth of winter, prayed for summer?

We are still waiting for the verdict. The voters of School District No. 9 have levied a tax of 1½ mills.

Yesterday morning was extremely warm, and the afternoon but little better.

Such weather as yesterday may be good for the crops, but it is wilting on paper shirt collars.

Perry & Slawson's cigars are found to be all the go. It is a luxury to smoke them—especially the Havana Tips.

During the heat of last evening, our corps was refreshed with a treat of sparkling soda from our neighbor, Mrs. Hoffman, for which our thanks are due.

Some persons like a strawberry in it, others don't; some take it crooked, and others straight; but yesterday it was generally taken and no questions asked, provided it was well iced.

Everybody can't go to Heaven, but the man who keeps a row of shade trees along the border of his sidewalk will come as near to getting a comfortable place by-and-by as any of us.

We have received another stalk of cotton—from Mr. H. Dent. We only regret that we have no good spot in which to plant these sample stalks. It might not bring a full bale of 400 pounds.

A policeman in front of each of the churches, in the city, every Sunday morning and evening, would have a salutary effect upon the boys who congregate thereabouts, and seem to be attracted there for no other purpose than that of disturbing and annoying those inside.

According to previous announcement, Rev. Ellison Capers, of Greenville, delivered the annual address before the DeStael Society of the Columbia Female College, last evening. His theme was "Woman; Her Influence and Sphere of Work;" and he handled his subject in a masterly manner. The address was pre-ceeded with prayer by Rev. John W. Kelly and a hymn by the young ladies.

**COLUMBIA MALE ACADEMY.**—The exercises of the Columbia Male Academy closed, yesterday, after a very successful session. We learn that during the session over one hundred pupils have been in attendance. The principal announced the names of the following pupils as the successful candidates for the four annual scholarships tendered to the Academy by Union College, Schenectady, New York, viz: V. E. Stolbrand, George Bryan, H. T. Thompson and J. M. McMaster. These scholarships include board and tuition. Union College is one of the first institutions of learning in this country, and we congratulate these young gentlemen upon the success they have already achieved.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CELEBRATION.**—On Sunday afternoon, the scholars of the Baptist Sunday School had a celebration, consisting of singing, speaking, awarding of prizes to the pupils, &c. The exercises were under the management of the zealous and efficient Superintendent, Albert J. Dodamead. All the available space was occupied by the parents and friends of the children. The altar was tastefully decorated with evergreens and flowers, and at the foot of the pulpit were the words "God bless our school." The exercises were opened with singing, in which the children showed their vocal powers to advantage; after which, prayer was offered by the pastor, Rev. A. B. Woodfin.

The first speaker was Benny Getsinger, who delivered his piece, "Remember thy Creator," in a clear voice. "Stand up for Jesus," by Johnny Ivey; "Heavenly Sabbath," by Ida Woodfin; "Moses Saved by the King's Daughter," by Ida Woodfin, and Mattie and Laura Dodamead; "Jesus at the Well," by Mollie Physioc; "Christ and the Little Ones," by Annie Leaphart; "Little Flower," by Robby Physioc, about four years old. "The Tower of Strength" was built by