

THE DIVISION OF DAKOTA.

The leading facts in relation to the attempts that have heretofore been made to secure the division of Dakota may not prove uninteresting.

The bill for division was first introduced in the house of representatives March 27, 1871, and was reported adversely and tabled May 1, 1872.

It was again introduced in the house December 15, 1873, but no action was taken upon it.

It was again introduced in the house December 15, 1875, and reported back from the committee with a recommendation that it pass as amended March 31, 1876. It was recommitted and died with other measures. It was introduced in the senate March 16, 1876, by Mr. Windom and reported back April 10, 1876. It was passed by the senate August 8, 1876, yeas 31; noes 19; absent 21. Those voting for the bill were Messrs. Allison, Boggs, Burnside, Cameron, (of Wisconsin) Christiancy, Cockrill, Crogan, Ferry, Hamilton, Hamlin, Harvey, Hitchcock, Howe, Jones, (of Nevada), Kelly, McCreary, McDonald, McMillan, Maxey, Mitchell, Morrill, Oglesby, Paddock, Patterson, Ramsom, Sherman, Spencer West, Windom, Withers and Wright.

Those voting no were Messrs. Anthony, Bayard, Boutwell, Conkling, Davis, Dawes, Eaton, Edmunds, Frelinghuysen, Kernan, Key, Merriman, Stevenson, Thurman, Wallace and Whyte. It was not only then, as now, opposed by the democratic party, almost without exception, but by the New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Delaware, and New Jersey members. Mr. Boggs, who voted for the bill in order to enable him to move its reconsideration, called up his motion to reconsider December 13th, 1876, and urged Algonquin as a suitable name for the territory. The matter finally went over till December 20th, when the name was changed to Huron and the bill again passed in the senate but was defeated in the house of representatives.

It was again introduced in both houses of congress in December, 1877, and was killed by an adverse report in the house March 5th, 1878. Introduced again in 1879 and 1881 it met the same fate.

In January, 1882, a delegation of twenty-two citizens of North Dakota went to Washington to urge the passage of the bill introduced in December, 1881. A still larger delegation from the southern part of the territory went to Washington ostensibly to favor the division of the territory. They met the northern delegation in the rooms of Mr. Pettigrew who stated frankly the situation. He expressed the belief that the division bill could be passed if the South Dakota admission bill was not pushed at that time; that the republicans saw they could gain an advantage by dividing the territory, thus laying the foundation for another republican state to be admitted in the near future while the democrats were likely to consent to it in order to delay admission until after the next presidential election. Admission, however, he regarded impossible at that time. Mr. Moody who was present said if that was the case their visit to Washington was in vain. He took his hat and left the room followed by Barney Canfield and other "visiting statesmen" from the south. He went to the chairman of the committee on territories in the house, Mr. Burrows, of Michigan, and arranged to have the report of that committee recommending the passage of the division bill withheld and the bill admitting the southern section, which made division contingent upon admission, advanced instead.

The old Yankton bond matter was brought up at this time and an influence absolutely essential to the success of the measure refused to admit Dakota or take any steps toward advancing its interests in that direction until an adjustment of the bond matter honorable to the territory and satisfactory to the bond holders should be effected.

That session of congress passed and nothing was accomplished toward admission and in the meantime the division bill had lost its standing upon the calendar, and there was no possible way to reach it during the life of that congress excepting under a suspension of the rules. The next congress would have a democratic majority and there would be no hope for either division or admission until the next presidential election. The friends of admission finally accepted the situation and consented to allow an effort to be made to pass the division bill. They agreed with leading democrats that the admission question should be dropped and no attempt would be made to carry it either as a direct proposition or by an amendment. Holman and other leading democrats agreed to support the bill. Randall and Springer agreed not to oppose. The prospects were flattering and the friends of the measure were certain of success—the writer of this article who had spent five winters in Washington laboring for division was alone in doubt. The measure was to come up on the 5th of February. A two thirds vote was required to put the bill on its final passage. On the night of the 4th of February a caucus of the democrats was held at the National hotel, and it was determined to defeat the bill for party reasons. Mr. Keifer, the speaker of the house, had agreed to recognize Mr. Grout for the purpose of calling up the bill with a view to putting

it on its final passage. The republicans were confident; the democrats perfectly quiet. Gen. Grant made his statement followed by Mr. Burrows. Randall in reply warned the democrats of their danger. He assumed it meant another Colorado affair, it meant the immediate admission of one or both sections. If the bill dividing Dakota was called up and passed he said it would then go to the senate where it could be amended so as to admit both sections and be returned to the house where the republican majority could pass it as amended, and thus Dakota's admission be gained in spite of the advantage they then held. Holman went back upon his pledges and spoke against the measure, and of all the democrats, twenty-two in number, who had promised to vote to suspend the rules, only Deuster, of Wisconsin, because of his personal friendship for Anton Klans, of Jamestown, Coleridge, of Indiana, and Wise, of West Virginia, because of their friendship for W.B. McConnell, of Fargo, dared vote with the republicans in favor of the bill. The vote stood 151 yeas; 110 nays; and the resolution to call up the bill and put it upon its final passage was lost, the necessary two thirds not voting in the affirmative. It was then that the editor of the TRIBUNE wrote from Washington. "It is sheer nonsense to longer think of division; and it is the part of wisdom to accept the situation and make the best of it. Heretofore North Dakota has expected division and has heretofore shown but little interest in territorial legislation. In the meantime the insane asylum and state prison have been built and other public institutions have been located in the southern part of the territory, and we can go on with the fight for division, and in the end will find that we have given up everything and gained nothing. We have lost time and opportunity, and it is now time to stop and lay the foundation for institutions for Dakota considering the rights and interests of the north as well as the south.

The reasons existing for division which have been so forcibly put by the editors of the territory and so eloquently stated in the halls of congress, are passing away, and by the time our next legislature meets the north and south will be united by at least four lines of railroad. The capital can be located at some convenient point in central Dakota or on the Missouri river, and few indeed will see a necessity for division except in the interests of politicians, and their interests ought not to be considered if they conflict with the interests of the people. Northern Michigan is far more isolated than North Dakota, and yet the people of that section long since gave up the project of organizing a new state from northern Michigan and Wisconsin, and the people appear to be prosperous and happy. Texas is as large as half a dozen ordinary states but its people no longer clamor for division. They have accepted the situation just as those of Dakota will."

On the 6th of February, the day after the matter was finally disposed of in congress, the TRIBUNE editorially said: It is now a settled fact that Dakota will not be divided. The bill was defeated by a vote of 151 to 110. Although every argument possible in favor of division has been laid before congress, yet that body has seen fit to disregard and object purely on party grounds. It has been shown that the people of North and South Dakota have no interest in common; it has been demonstrated that the southern half has more than the requisite number of people to entitle her to admission; the press of the territory and the whole country has fought for the measure; prominent men from both North and South Dakota have visited Washington and tried to impress upon their friends the importance of the scheme, but all to no avail. Division is now out of the question, but admission may be gained through the next congress. Dakota will continue to boom, however, just the same as if she had been divided. It will make a grand state as a whole, and in less than fifteen years her representation in congress will equal that of either Ohio or Illinois. She will be a power, and her voice will be heard and respected. The agitation of the question of division and admission has done much good. It has advertised the territory thoroughly. It has caused the compilation of facts and figures relative to its size, increase of population and rapid development, and the publishing of them by the press of the whole country. Thousands now are thoroughly awakened to the importance of the northwest, and the result will be an unprecedented immigration next spring, and henceforth until every acre of this fertile region is taken up and cultivated by a thrifty people.

Although the action of congress in the matter of division may be an insult to the people of Dakota, the boom and the prosperity of the territory will in no way be affected. This was the position of the TRIBUNE last February before the capital bill became a law, and before Bismarck seriously contemplated making a push for the capital location, and none who will look the ground over candidly can reach any other conclusion—Dakota can not be divided. As stated then the reasons urged for its division are passing away. It was urged that its lines of communication led from the west to the east and that there was not even a wagon road connecting the two sections excepting a military and Indian trail leading up the Missouri river connecting the military posts and Indian agencies. Now mail routes have been established and daily lines of stages connect the two sections by both the Missouri and James rivers. Three lines of railroad have been surveyed from the south to Bismarck, one to Jamestown and one from Fargo is already under construction, and one is about to be put under construction from

Deadwood to Dickinson. Before the next legislature meets the capital can be reached from any portion of Dakota within twenty-four hours, and Dakota will be as well provided for in that respect as Minnesota, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, New York or Pennsylvania.

The theory that the vast extent of country lying between the two settled portions of the territory was a howling waste, like the theory of the great American desert, has proven to be a myth. No fairer land can be found on God's green earth than the James river valley, no lands are more productive or better adapted to grazing than the undulating prairies of the Missouri slope. The heretofore unsettled portion of Dakota lying between these two sections has to-day fifty thousand people who have settled upon the free lands of this region since the attempt was made to satisfy congress that these lands were worthless and uninhabitable.

The man—a resident of Dakota—who attacks any portion of the territory, or the people of any section of it, is unworthy to be called an American citizen. No well informed man will do it—no man worthy of respect or confidence will think of it. No man, be he a South Dakota politician, merchant or farmer, a North Dakota wheat grower, herdman or boomer, can now give any reason for the division of Dakota that will attract attention or gain respect in the halls of congress or elsewhere if serious thought is given the subject.

We of Dakota are one people, and those of each section have, or ought to have, an equal interest in maintaining the good name of the territory. Those of each section have done their part toward making it famous as the home of a healthy, happy, and industrious people. The only blot upon its fair name have been placed there by those who care naught for the territory or the welfare of the people, and who struggle only for their own personal advancement.

It is an insult to the intelligence of the people of Dakota to assume that they care aught for the quarrels of old timers; the disappointments of Campbell, the grievances of Moody, or that they would have been any more ready to sympathize with the real estate speculations of one locality than they are with those of another locality. But they are well informed as to the cost of state governments. They know that to maintain a state government costs from \$150,000 to \$300,000 per annum; money that must come from the hard earnings of the people. They know that the division of Dakota means the doubling of this burden; that it means two sets of state officers where one will do as well; that it means two legislatures where one will answer; that it means place and power for another set of politicians, and not the slightest gain to the people of either section in return for the expenditure of money involved. They know that the great states of the Union are the influential states in congress and in national conventions, that New York with its imperial delegation in congress and in conventions is far more powerful than all of the little states of New England with half a dozen sparsely settled southern and western states thrown in. They know that by division we gain absolutely nothing but two votes in the United States senate at an expense of from \$150,000 to \$300,000 per annum, being the cost of the additional state government.

If the people were disposed to incur this burden congress would not and will not consent to it. The east has become alarmed at the growing power of the west and their only hope of maintaining their old time supremacy for a season even is to prevent a further division of the northwestern territories. There is a greater probability of consolidation than there is of division. The republicans when in power refused time and again to divide. Now that the democrats believe they are on the eve of gaining supremacy they dare not consent to it lest they add strength to the force which they hope to overcome. So, indeed, Dakota will not and cannot be divided and he who hopes for it has not read rightly the signs of the times. He who works for it labors in vain.

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