

OPINIONS

Of Different Gentlemen Regarding the Question of Division or Admission, or Both,

Col. Donan's Eloquent Plea Before the Committee on Territories at Washington Last Week.

The 'Constitutional Bill.'

Col. Donan, who has been in favor of division all along, made an able argument before the committee on territories at Washington last week in favor of the constitutional convention bill, which allows all parts of Dakota to meet together and settle the division and admission question for themselves. After setting forth the magnitude and development of the territory, Col. Donan says: "We are the largest body of people on the continent, who are denied all rights of self-government. The great principle of 'no taxation without representation,' for which our brothers went to war is set at naught whenever the borders of our territory is crossed. Nearly four hundred thousand free born American citizens are virtually disfranchised because they live in Dakota. We have no voice or vote in the selection of those who are to govern us, and the evils of carpet bag rule, of which our friends in the south so bitterly and so justly complained, are in full force among us. We only ask the common right of American citizens we only pray for the liberty to govern ourselves as we deem best, we only beg the boon of 'home rule,' only crave admission into the union and equality with other citizens of the republic. We now wish to try a new plan to attain what we believe to be our constitutional rights. We wish your high authorization for a legal, peaceful and honest movement toward statehood. We think the bill we offer properly amended, furnishes at least a fair foundation to stand upon. It postpones the whole matter of admission until after the presidential election, so that no uncertain Dakota blizzard can chill the aspirations of any distinguished "possibility." It leaves the whole vexed question of division into two states or admission as one to a majority of a convention to be selected fairly by a vote of the people of the whole territory; so that if our friends of South Dakota outnumber us of North Dakota by two or three to one, desire division they have only to say so at the polls and to find under this bill a way at least stamped with your high authority for attaining the object of their wishes and their hopes. An amendment submitting the question of division to a vote of the people and then providing for the organization in accordance with the result of that election of one or two states would be satisfactory to me. I have no partisan or sectional interests in the matter. All I wish, all I ask, is that the people of Dakota may be permitted to decide fully, freely and fairly at the polls what is best for themselves and their grand territory, and when this decision is made may be enabled to carry it into effect. On all these grounds I pray some favorable action on the part of your committee, some action that will give us a substantial foothold on which to begin the formation of a commonwealth of which all of you and the republic may never have reason to be ashamed."

A Dead Issue.

THE DIVISION SCHEME. A correspondent of the Fargo Argus, who lives near the 46th parallel, has come to the conclusion that after all perhaps it would be better to admit the territory as one grand whole. In his argument he says: "The capital has been located by a commission chosen by southern and northern members of the territorial legislature, the south having a majority, lines of railroad are being completed north and south as well as east and west, and judging from present appearances the agricultural, grazing and mineral lands of the territory will soon be joined together by the strong iron bands of different railways, which together with our navigable rivers, will establish an inter-state communication and commercial traffic that must engender the best of feeling, and territorial fraternity. We understand that in such an arrangement there could be but one capital and one set of officers, also, that the cost to the taxpayers of the country would be only about half as much as it would be in case of division and subsequent statehood for the north and south divisions. With the present make-up of congress as already stated, we can't expect any satisfactory governmental action until the coming presidential campaign has been fought and decided, and if in favor of the democratic division will be a dead question, so dead that the breath of life could never be breathed into it. Why not all join hands and agree to work in harmony for the admission of Dakota and Montana with their present territorial limits, one as a republican state and the other as a democratic state, and settle this vexed question at once on a hopeful and practical basis, and not spend any more time in wrestling with impossibilities."

THE WASHINGTON BUDGET.

NEW PENSION BILL. WASHINGTON, Feb. 25.—Senator Harrison introduced in the senate today a bill of great importance to soldiers and their widows. It provides a pension for all soldiers who served during the war of the rebellion in the military or naval service for a period of six months and were honorably discharged, provided they are now disabled. The bill proceeds upon the theory that there are many soldiers and sailors who did not contract any disability during the war of such a specific and well-defined nature as to enable them to make proof thereof, as required by the existing laws, but in truth and in fact they are now breaking down in health by reason of the hardships and exposures of the service. It is a bill that grants relief to the class of soldiers who had the physical strength to bear the burdens of the war without receiving hospital treatment, but by reason of their long and faithful service have since become invalids. The highest rate of pension granted is \$24, which is made divisible according to the degree of actual disability. The bill increases the rate to \$12 of all widows of pensioners who contracted disability in and since the war of the rebellion and who are now drawing \$8 and fixes the rate of such claimants at \$12 per month for all future pensions. It also provides a pension for the widows of such soldiers as may be pensioned under the first section of said bill and also the widows of those who served in the war of the rebellion, and who shall obtain a pension under the existing laws for disability, without the

widow being required to prove that the cause of the death was due to army service. This does not grant a pension to all widows, but to the widows of soldiers who are or become pensioners. It grants relief to many worthy claimants whose husbands were disabled by reason of their military services and were destined to die from some specific disease from which they were liberated an acute disease intervening and causing death, the claimants were barred owing to the immediate cause of death not being due to army service. This bill is the result of the demands which the government is unable to meet under the existing laws.

REGARDING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. Representative Springer today introduced for reference in the house a proposed constitutional amendment making the presidential term six years and rendering the president ineligible for re-election at the next succeeding term. It provides for a direct vote for president in each state and abolishes the electoral college. Each state shall have a number of votes equal to the number of representatives and senators in congress to be given each candidate in proportion to the vote cast for each. The term of representatives in congress is fixed at three years, and congress shall meet each year on the 1st Wednesday in January, the 1st session to convene on January 7th succeeding the November election.

HOUSE. On motion of Mr. Poland a resolution was adopted directing the judiciary committee to inquire whether the act of the legislature of Dakota to provide for the levy of a tax on the property of railroad companies does not conflict with the organic act establishing that territory. By Mr. Belford, a resolution calling on the secretary of state for information touching the alleged subjection of naturalized German-American citizens to military duty while temporarily residing in Germany. By Mr. Finerty, a joint resolution declaring that congress laments the death of Wendell Phillips as a national bereavement, which at once deprives the American rostrum of the superb intelligence of human freedom's devoted friend. By Mr. McCommas, proposing a constitutional amendment, providing that no state shall be precluded by the grant of any charter of incorporation from taxing the capital stock of such corporation. By Mr. Stevens, to establish an inter-state railroad transportation bureau for the regulation of commerce with foreign nations and among states, and with Indian tribes. Mr. Crisp, from the committee on Pacific railroad companies, to pay the cost of surveying their lands; referred to the calendar. Mr. Evans, from the committee on territories, reported a bill providing a civil government for Alaska; referred to the committee of the whole. Also a bill requiring governors of territories to be residents of such territories for two years before the date of appointment. Referred to the house calendar. Mr. Willis, from the committee on education, reported a bill to aid temporarily the support of schools. Referred to the committee of the whole.

The house then went into a committee of the whole, Blackburn in the chair, on the plura pneumonia bill. Hatch supported the bill. He ridiculed the fear expressed by some of the opponents of the bill that it would provide for a large number of federal officers to work against the democratic party. He was not afraid of a few more office-holders. That was not what the democratic party had to fear. What the democratic party wanted was federalism in New York; federalism in Indiana; federalism in Ohio. (laughter.) It wants to bury some of the baronets and corpses that had been hanging to it. It had a national committee sit here a few days ago, and a majority of that committee did not even have originality or independence enough to find a place in this United States wherein to hold a convention outside of the place where the republican convention was to be held. He had traveled long enough in the wake of the old barracks of the democratic party, following the republican party. He wanted a little new blood in it; a little independence; a little originality in it. Before he would have followed the republican party to Chicago he would have gone to Los Angeles. He would have gone where the thermometer reached 400 degrees below zero or 300 degrees above the boiling point, rather than have gone to Chicago. [Laughter.] He would have had the democratic party possess independence enough to strike out for once on its own hook. He defied the intelligence of the house to introduce a measure which had for its object the promotion of the agricultural interests and which sought in the slightest degree to interfere with the operations of those gigantic and almost monopolistic corporations which controlled the transportation of the country without having some democrat attacked by a quail of conscience, and jump on it quicker than a duck on a June bug, with constitutional objection. [Laughter.] The bill was then read by sections for amendments.

The petty thefts that have been going on at Mandan for the past few weeks finally culminated in an attempt to burglarize the residence of Mayor Bellows. Two men were captured and one has confessed.

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