

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1886.

B. S. DINKINS, Editor.

Capt. R. B. Tillman has announced through the *News and Courier*, that the Farmers' Convention will meet in the Agricultural Hall at Columbia, on Thursday next, the 29th. He gives as his reason for the announcement, "that there may be no misunderstanding."

The Presbytery of Augusta have exonerated Dr. Woodrow from the charges in connection with evolution, and in addition have elected him a delegate to the General Assembly which meets in Augusta in May.

A grave subject now before the people and Congress is how to deal with the labor strikes. By some means the perplexed problem must be solved or the strikes now confined to the North and North-west will extend through the whole land, and invading all occupations, sap the foundation of the Government. The importance of the question deserves the highest consideration of the wisest in the country. The demand of the millions, composing the laboring class, cannot with safety be disregarded. Whether the grievances they complain of be real or imaginary, there should be a tribunal clothed with power to investigate and administer to the exigencies of the case. While carefully guarding the rights of the laborers, the perpetrators of outrages like those recently committed in St. Louis and other places, should be severely punished. Organizations like the Knights of Labor, and we may add, large railroad corporations should not exist without a power competent to supervise and control their actions.

Congress has taken the matter in hand and appointed a committee to examine representatives of each of the warring factions as to the cause of the trouble. Lengthy interviews have been held with Gould, the great railroad Crosses, and Powderly, the Mogul of the Knights. The President in a message to Congress called attention to this momentous question, and recommends a commission of Labor, composed of three members, as the best means of adjusting the difficulties. In one part of the message he says:

The present condition of relations between labor and capital are far from satisfactory. The discontent of the employed is due in a large degree to the grasping and heedless exactions of employers, and alleged discrimination in favor of capital as an object of governmental attention. It must also be conceded that laboring men are not always careful to avoid causeless and unjustifiable disturbance. Though the importance of better accord between these interests is apparent, it must be borne in mind that any effort in that direction by the Federal Government must be greatly limited by constitutional restrictions. There are many grievances which legislation by Congress cannot redress, and many conditions which cannot by such means be reformed.

I am satisfied, however, that something may be done, under Federal authority, to prevent disturbances which so often arise from disputes between employers and employed, and which at times seriously threaten the business interests of the country; and in my opinion the proper theory upon which to proceed is that of voluntary arbitration as a means of settling these difficulties. But I suggest that instead of arbitrators chosen in the heat of conflicting claims, and after each dispute shall arise, there be created a commission of Labor, consisting of three members, who shall be regular officers of the Government, charged, among other duties, with the consideration and settlement, when possible, of all controversies between labor and capital.

A commission thus organized would have the advantage of being a stable body, and its members, as they gained experience, would constantly improve in their ability to deal intelligently and usefully with questions which might be submitted to them. If arbitrators are chosen for temporary service, as each case of dispute arises, experience and familiarity with much that is involved in the question will be lacking. Extreme partisanship and bias will be the qualifications sought on either side, and frequent complaints of unfairness and partiality will be inevitable. The imposition upon the Federal Courts of duties, foreign to the judicial function, such as the selection of an arbitrator in such cases, is at least of doubtful propriety.

The establishment by Federal authority of such a bureau would be a just and sensible recognition of the value of labor, and of its right to be represented in the departments of the Government. So far as its conciliatory offices had relation to disturbances which interfered with transit and commerce between States, its existence would be justified, under the provision of the Constitution which gives to Congress power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States," and in the frequent disputes between laboring men and their employers of less extent and the consequences of which are confined within State limits and threaten domestic violence, the interposition of such a commission might be tendered upon application of the Legislature or the Executive of the State under the constitutional provision which requires the General Government to "protect" each of the States against domestic violence.

WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON, April 23, 1886. Spring is in Washington now with all its glory. The leaves are out on the trees, making the streets long vistas of color, and the grass is bright

with that charming tint which only Spring can paint. The parks and squares are gray with the yellow blossoms of the Forsythia and the white of the magnolia, while the cloudy pink of the peach tree peers over garden walls. It is hard to tell what impresses one most—the softness of the climate, the fine avenues; some over two miles long radiating from the Capitol like the sticks of a fan, the green circles and squares and triangles that greet you unexpectedly in every direction, the magnificence of the public buildings, or the cosy elegance of the private residences.

It is not to be wondered at that under the seduction of a Washington spring the President should "lightly turn to thoughts of love." If an oyster could fall in love at all, it would be on one of these bright spring days in Washington. Whether or not Mr. Cleveland is to marry in the near future, it is believed that he will, and the would-be-knowing-ones accuse him of manifesting every matrimonial symptom. He goes out more frequently now than ever before, and those who meet him on his afternoon drives with his private Secretary, come to the imaginative conclusion that he is very happy and sentimental despite the cares of State.

This is the time for drives and rides and walks about the city, and everybody who can take time for it, is out of doors. Members of the Cabinet, Justices of the Supreme Court, Senators, Representatives, and Department officials may be seen after four o'clock P. M. on horse-back, on foot, or in more or less elegant turnouts on the streets and country roads around the city, while the ladies who are busy with spring shopping, throng Pennsylvania avenue all day long.

Congress has come to a point in the session where it is necessary to exercise pluck of principle. Various appropriation bills—for the aid of education, falsely so styled in some instances for new pensions, for river and harbor improvements, for public buildings, and other enterprises for expending the people's money, are coming up for action. The Republican minority, feeling responsibility neither for the House nor the President, do not care if the record of the session is conspicuous for extravagance, and a grave responsibility is thus placed upon the Democrats in Congress.

The River and Harbor bill is now before the House and members are working at it section by section and voting away money in order to help each other carry doubtful districts in the coming fall elections. Each one of a dozen little unheard-of rivers and bays, in many states, wants an appropriation to dredge its channel two feet deeper perhaps, so that the one or two steamboats that ply its waters, may not run aground. Some of these demands upon the Treasury vaults would be ludicrous if they were not so outrageously impudent. Their only excuse is the necessity of Congressmen to buy votes with Government money, and their only chance of passage is the average members' willingness to log-roll.

The Senate on Wednesday, passed between four and five hundred private pension bills; the largest day's work that either branch of Congress ever did. It also voted to erect a fire proof hall in this city for keeping records, and Senator Hoar wittily asked before voting for it if it were specially for the safe keeping for the President's "private papers." The Senate continues to debate in a rather languid way during a part of each day, the subject of secret or no secret sessions.

The Attorney General as a witness has infused new interest into the Pan Electric investigation this week. He gave a statement of his connection with the affair, declaring that he had never used official position to advance the interest of the scheme, that he had had nothing whatever to do with the bringing of the Govt. suit that he still retained his stock which was not a gift, that instead of making, he had lost \$400 by Pan Electric, but that it was a perfectly legitimate enterprise for all that.

Much interest has also been taken in the Strike investigation now in progress here, owing to the fact that Grand Master Workman Powderly and Jay Gould among others, were present as witnesses. An exceedingly interesting body of testimony was given all around, but Mr. Powderly drew more attention than the rail road king. He made a full presentation of the case, and gave a full history of the Knights' organization.

Too Many School Books.

Abbeville Medium: A man is blind if he cannot see many ways in which the expense of our government can be reduced. There is no good reason our taxes should be so heavy. We have always believed in paying all officials well and do not hold to any parsimonious views. At the same time we believe the government could be properly conducted at less expense. But outside of specific taxes the greatest burden to our people is found in the multitude of school books which we are compelled to buy. The prices too are unreasonably high but still the crazy idea prevails that we have to keep up with the times and must necessarily require great loads of books even for children who have not advanced beyond the elementary branches. We cannot see any reason in it. Who is to correct the evil, if not those who have our educational matters peculiarly in their charge? Has any State Superintendent of Education ever recommended a change for the better? Has any State Board ever considered the matter? If so, who is standing in the way of this retrenchment? The people are patient but they are almost exhausted by this continual drainage of their pocket-books. They are not able to stand the pressure much longer. Some relief must be provided and we await

the coming man who is to cure the evil.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Correspondence *News and Courier*: The Farmers' Convention, soon to assemble, will be composed, I trust and believe, of the discreet and patriotic citizens of the State who will have in view only the welfare and prosperity of the State, and not political preferment or advancement. Such being the case I must hope that great good will be accomplished. There is certainly room for reform in the State and this convention may assist materially in bringing about this reform.

As a taxpayer, I would call attention to our county affairs, which it would be well for the convention to consider. Can there not be a more economical administration of the county government and a consequent reduction of taxation? Is a board of county commissioners, with almost unlimited power to tax, absolutely necessary? Why do we hold on to this system, inaugurated by the Radical Government. We did not need county commissioners before the war; why cannot we abolish the office now and substitute a less expensive system? The real truth is that the politicians in our Legislature are afraid to move in this matter, but surely a body of farmers in convention assembled will not be timid, as they do not ask for office at the hands of the people. Again, cannot the officers of county treasurer and county auditor be performed by a county treasurer alone with an assistant to receive returns?

The system of road working also calls for change, and in a convention of practical farmers I trust some valuable suggestions will be made. The present system is a farce, and results in bad roads everywhere, but especially in the low-country. How can it be otherwise? The law requires that the road hands shall be ordered out to work not less than six nor more than twelve days; but who is to carry out and enforce the order? It is unwilling service on the part of all, and the overseer who is not paid and has no special interest in the work cannot be expected to incur the displeasure of every road hand by requiring him to perform his duty or else to report him and subject him to the penalty of the law. As a consequence no work is done; the road hands when ordered go on to the road to avoid the fine, blaze a few pine trees, and the overseer or superintendent after a few days declares the work done, and the hands are discharged for a year.

Now, as a practical planter myself, I contend that road working is a tax. When a man is ordered to work the road you tax his time, which is a loss to the laborer, and under present management no benefit to the public. If, then, there is to be taxation in order to keep up public roads why not levy a tax in money only upon every laborer who is liable to road duty? From this money why not pay for the work on the roads and let it be done by contract, giving the contract to the lowest bidder? It might be so arranged that a laborer who wished to avoid paying his tax in money could pay his tax in labor by hiring to the road contractor and receive his due bill for so much money receivable for taxes. The main and important point is to place the road-working in the hands of responsible parties, and this can only be done by letting out the work by contract to the lowest bidder and to require a bond for the faithful performance of the contract.

THE FARMERS CONVENTION.

Palmetto Post: If the delegates to the proposed Farmer's Convention are all farmers de facto, and the doors of that body are sternly closed in the faces of the soreheads, shitepokes, blatherskites, denagogues, cranks, disappointed political market gardeners, tag-ends of defunct political parties and the unavailing stamps cast aside by past county conventions, we have no fear that such a convention would conceive, or, conceiving, adopt any measure that would tend in any way to embarrass the progress of our State in its course on the high plane of civilization it was placed by the people in 1870, but rather encourage her in a more practicable carrying out of the plans then laid out for her progress and uplifting.

War Among Editors.

Our streets were thrown quite into a state of excitement on the morning of the 16th instant, by an encounter between the editor of the *Star* and the senior editor of the *Press*. The facts related by several eye-witnesses are as follows: On the morning of the 15th inst., one day after the issue of the *Press*, at about half-past 7 o'clock in the morning, as the senior editor of the last named paper was on his way to breakfast, and just as he passed the corner of the street on which is situated the store of Messrs. Terry & Shaffer, his attention was arrested by someone hailing. Stopping to listen, he heard footsteps approaching from around the corner, and directly the editor of the *Star* made his appearance, each advanced toward the other, and when they got within speaking distance the editor of the *Star* inquired, "Are you responsible for the article which appeared in the last week's *Press*?" To which question the senior editor of the *Press* answered, "I am." Whereupon the editor of the *Star* struck him a blow on the shoulder with his fist, which was immediately resented on the part of the editor of the *Press* by a blow in the face. The editor of the *Star* then struck his opponent on the shoulder with his walking cane, which was resented by a blow in the face, as before. Again did the editor of the *Star* raise his cane, but before the blow descended the *Star*'s editor rolled on the ground, from which position he arose to renew the attack. Cane

were now out of the question, and the battle continued in regular fist-cuff style, and sparring came together, and the representative of the *Press* was tripped. Both fell together, the *Star*'s editor falling on top, which vantage ground he immediately made use of, striking two or three blows on the face of his opponent with a large seal ring. At this juncture the friends of the *Star* raised its editor up and prevented the parties from again engaging in the fist-cuff.—*Collision Press*.

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