THE FELICIANA DEMOCRAT.

BY G. W. REESE. THE CONSTITUTION.—STATE RIGHTS. TERMS.—$3 PER YEAR.

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TERMS.

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Together with a variety of other fine goods, warranted to be the articles *for which they are sold.*
The above stock was selected in New York and New Orleans by the subscriber, and is the largest and most superior ever offered in this market.
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WATCHES, CLOCKS, AND JEWELRY, repaired and warranted.
His store is on Brick Row, one door north of W. W. Chapman & Co.
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He has on hand a large assortment of superior well seasoned material, and all orders for work will be executed with promptness, and in a workmanlike manner.
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BUGGIES, on hand and for sale.
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Thankful for the patronage and public confidence extended. I desire to retain and increase the same, by industry, promptness, fair prices, and good work, which will be guaranteed to stand.
I am fully prepared to furnish at short notice,
METALLIC BURIAL CASES,
and WOODEN COFFINS, on such terms as will insure me against any charge of extortion, from the unfortunate.
Personal attention given on all Burial occasions.
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HAVING superior facilities for the prompt and faithful execution of a strictly *Carriage and Buggy making and repairing Business,* I invite public attention to my establishment. None but finished workmen are in my employ, and no inferior or old fashioned work will be found on hand.
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HAVE a full and complete assortment of every thing in their line. Their old customers and the public in general are requested to call. april 8

SILVER SPOONS, tea and table, just received by
je 9 NAUMAN & STRAUSS.

The Feliciana Democrat.

LETTER OF J. P. BENJAMIN.

NEW ORLEANS, July 30, 1855.

To the Honorable J. P. Benjamin:

SIR—The State of Lonisiana is on the eve of a general election. The crisis is momentous to the people of this State and of the whole of the United States; a powerful national party organization has sprung up under the name of the American party, whose published national proceedings and acts, declare objects and purposes which we deem destructive to the most sacred principles of the Constitution, and violative of political and religious rights secured by that sacred instrument.

Believing that, upon the issue now made throughout this widespread Republic, the Constitution of the United States is to stand or fall, and knowing that the occasion must have aroused your liveliest attention, as a citizen, a lover of your country, and the representative of our State in the Senate of the United States, we, as your political and personal friends, feel a desire to have a public expression of your views upon this all-absorbing question. By complying with our request, you will oblige many of the true old Whigs,

James P. Freret,
L. E. Forstall,
H. M. Hyams,
Alfred Vienne,
M. Musson,
Alfred Penn,
A. C. Hensley,
J. Crickard,
A. Durel,
A. B. Ringgold,
H. D. Ogden,
Jas. H. Donegan,
J. B. Steel,
Geo. May,
Placide Forstall,
Matth. Martin.

NEW ORLEANS, August 3, 1855.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your favor of 30th ult., and very cheerfully comply with your request.

The grave aspect of political affairs is well calculated to excite the earnest solicitude of every citizen who loves his country, and it is peculiarly the duty of those who have been elevated by the State to a position which affords more than common facilities for forming a correct appreciation of the condition of national affairs to make full and free communication of their opinions and of the principles which govern their public conduct.

The great political question of the day, vastly overshadowing all others in its influence on your interests, your happiness, your very existence, is that which has reference to your constitutional rights for the protection of your property. In the debate which occurred in the Senate of the United States, on the Nebraska bill, the mortifying conviction was forced on my mind that the Whig National party was no more.—That great party to which it had always been my pride to belong, which, under the lead of Clay and Webster, had long struggled with varying fortunes for the power of conducting puplic affairs on principles which I honestly believe to be best calculated to promote the welfare of the people had perished with its chieftains. I found not one Northern Whig untainted by the contaminating influence of free-soilism.—Not one Northern Whig raised his voice or gave his vote in either house in defence of those institutions of the South, which are expressly recognized by the Constitution, and the protection of which was formally and solemnly guaranteed to our forefathers when they consented to merge, for all national purposes, the independent sovereignty of the Southern States into one Confederated Union. Again and again did Northern Whigs, on the floor of the Senate, declare that they abjured all further union with Southern Whigs, on natioal principles; and, I repeatedly heard the declaration made that the defeat of the Whig party was to be attributed to the dead weight which it carried at the North, by the recognition in the national platform of the constitutional rights of the South.

At the last session of Congress a proposition to repeal the Fugitive Slave law commanded eleven votes in *the Senate!*—The recent elections of Northern Senators have displaced many of the firmest and most consistent supporters of public law.—Shields, of Illinois, Dodge, of Iowa, Pettit, of Indiana, Norris, of New Hampshire, all able, eloquent and independent statesmen, who fearlessly struggled for the right, have been succeeded by avowed Freesoilers; and in the present state of public opinion at the North, I entertain no doubt that a proposition to repeal the Fugitive Slave law would find twenty advocates in the Senate; in that Senate to which we have been accustomed to look as the last refuge of the Constitution; as forming for its defense an ægis so impenetrable that even the lightning of infuriated fanaticism might play innocuous about it.

How stands the case in the other branch of the National Congress? Infinitely worse. A majority of the next House of Representatives will be Freesoilers. Prominent members of the last House, leaders of that factious minority which sought by an abuse of Parliamentary rules, to defeat the ascertained will of the majority, were heard to threaten that they would return to the next Congress prepared to repeal the Nebraska law and the Fugitive Slave law, or break up the Government in the attempt. Most of these men have been reelected after pledging themselves to the people of their districts, to carry out their treasonable designs by means of amendments to be offered to the appropriation bills at the next session of Congress. Thus the very existence of this Government will be put at issue within the next twelve months.

Permit me, for the purpose of making myself more clearly understood, to develop the effects of such a course of conduct as is threatened by these traitors.

The General Appropriation bill, as its name imports, is that which provides for the payment of nearly all the current civil expenses of the Government. The salaries of all public officers, of the Judges of the courts, of those who collect, keep and disburse the public revenue, are provided for in this bill. If it fail to pass, your public offices would be closed, your courts of justice shut up, your revenue officers arrested in the discharge of their duties, and the whole Government brought to a stand still.

The bill of course requires the assent of both branches of Congress, and the scheme is, to add a clause to it repealing the Fugitive Slave law and the Nebraska law, so as to force the Senate to assent to these unconstitutional measures or to assume the responsibility of stopping the wheels of Government by rejecting the whole bill.

I state my deliberate conviction that this attempt will be made in the House of Representatives. I state my most serious apprehension that it will succeed in that body, and my entire confidence that the Senate will resist the infamous project to the end. If these apprehensions be realized, the next session will be closed without providing the supplies necessary to administer the Government, and the Representatives will go home to their constituencies to render an account of their action. The President will be compelled to call an extra session of Congress in order to provide means to carry on the Government; and the only hope left to save the country will be the returning sense of justice in the masses of the North, when brought in view of the appalling danger that will then have become so manifest and so impending as to force immediate and decided action. If they shall fail to choose the wise course of obedience to the Constitution; if they shall supinely acquiesce in the mad and treasonable warfare waged against the South, the Constitution and common humanity, the days of this Republic will have been numbered; and I have neither heart nor courage to seek further to penetrate the veil that darkly hides the future.

Strange, unprecedented in history, is the fact that in a government framed by common consent for the common protection of all the interests of the governed, one half of the people should carry on a malignant and relentless warfare against the dearest rights of the other half, without the slightest interest in the subject matter, without professing even to perceive any advantage that could be derived by themselves in the event of success, and with a blind and savage disregard of the calamities that must ensue if that success were possible. Suppose a body of insane fanatics in this section of the confederacy should avow their belief in the sinfulness of subjecting the animal creation to the domination and service of man, and should, under the dictates of this "higher law," act on their conviction of the duty of stealing from the northern farmers, the flocks and herds which form so large a portion of their wealth. Suppose that to effect this they should organize band of robbers and incendiaries who should make the night lurid with the flames of their barns and granaries, and even threaten with the torch the roofs that protect their families. Suppose that in this course of conduct they were not only excused, but encouraged and applauded by the South, and that the Southern Legislatures took pride in passing laws for their protection and assistance—how long think you, the North would remain as patient and as forbearing as the South has shown her self to be? Yet this is but a faint picture of the actual warfare now waged against the unresisting South, for superadded to all other horrors of the servile insurrection to which the North is constantly inciting our slaves, are the nameless horrors which such a calamity would inflict on our wives and our daughters.

And now, fellow citizens, when the gloomy aspect of public affairs should induce you to take counsel with each other in devising means to avert dangers so imminent, what are the people of Louisiana doing?—Are they uniting in one great Southern party upon some platform similar to that of Georgia, on which we can all stand together and meet with firmness the coming shock? Are they like watchmen on the tower, straining their anxious vision towards the quarter whence danger impends? Not at all.

The Whigs of Louisiana, or four-fifths of them have been seduced into joining an organization which, although calling itself the American party, has no claim to the name of a party at all. It is a mere association for the purpose of influencing, not the *measures* by which the public good is to be attained, but the men by whom the offices are to be filled. Oh! what a wretched fall from the proud traditions of the gallant Whigs of the olden time!

Although entirely unnecessary to recapitulate the often urged objections against this new organization, I will state succinctly that I am opposed to their principles;

Because they are anti-republican in refusing equal political rights to all American citizens;

Because they violate the spirit, if not the very letter of the Constitution by the proscription of citizens on the ground of their religious belief.

Because they are a retrogression towards the errors of the dark ages in tending towards a union of Church and State, a union equally dangerous to civil and religious liberty;

Because they present issues addressed to the passions and prejudices of the people, and thus tend to divert their attention from those higher subjects over which it is their duty to keep ceaseless watch;

Because, above all, they infringe that priceless privilege of a freeman, the right of independent personal action, guided by independent personal judgment.

If not one of all these objections, insuperable in my opinion, existed against this organization, I repeat that I would refuse to join a body held together, not by the ties of a common belief in certain *principles and measures* of public policy, but simply by *their preference of themselves as the right class of men for office holders.* Even if this preference were wise and judicious, such an association does not deserve the name of a party in a republic; it lacks the essential elements of one; it is a baseless fabric, unsubstantial and ephemeral.

It is impossible that such of our fellow citizens as have still adhered to the Know-Nothings after the ignominious scenes at the National Convention lately held in Philadelphia, can long remain deceived. The light of reason is already breaking on them. Every day adds to the proof that so far as the North is concerned, the whole strength of the party rest on two bases; one of violent hostility to the South, the other of bigoted intolerance towards Catholics. I put it to you as candid men, if the Northern Know Nothings were to refuse admission into their lodges of all enemies to the South, and all unwilling to extend equal political rights to Catholics, how many members of the party would remain? Not enough to carry a constable's election in any ward or district in a Northern State.

To speak of a party as national, the platforms of which are sectional, is to do violence to the received meaning of language and none can long remain deceived, except the willing dupes.

Although the Democratic party is not yet so thoroughly disorganized as the Whig party, it requires no political sagacity to perceive that it cannot maintain itself as a national party. The few truly national Democrats who remain at the North have been reduced to a minority so insignificant that their struggles become more and more faint, and their voice is now scarcely heard in the roar of the popular clamor for what is called "Freesoil." The dissatisfaction engendered by the conduct of the present Administration has thoroughly disheartened the party which brought it into power.—They are unable longer to cope successfully with the growing fanaticism and intolerance of the North, and will be unable to preserve the national features of the platform. In it, as a party, I have little hope for the South, and neither its failure nor its success in the ensuing election would in my