

# The Greensborough Patriot.

BY SHERWOOD & LONG.

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, and Miscellaneous Reading.

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EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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## THE NATIONAL CRISIS.

LETTER FROM HON. JOHN BELL.

Secession no Remedy for Southern Wrongs.

Nashville, Dec. 5th, 1860.

Dear Sir—Could I have flattered myself that any argument I could address to the Mass Meeting appointed for the 29th ult., at Vicksburg, would contribute in any important degree to aid you and your compatriots in degrading the progress of the sentiment which threatens to precipitate your State into a political vortex, which in my judgment would be no less fatal to her own interests than ruinous to those of her neighbors, I would, at any personal sacrifice, have obeyed the summons of my friends, but feeling no such confidence in my ability to serve them as you ascribe to me in your letter, I have yielded to the force of circumstances which claimed my attention at home.

So far as my views and opinions have any weight or influence in determining the course of any portion of the people of Mississippi in the present critical juncture, they may be stated on paper, and I suppose would be as effective for the purpose intended as they would be if communicated in a speech.

The question of chief importance to be considered, and answered is, whether the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency, considered in all its significance and bearings together with all precedent and existing grievances, would justify Mississippi, or any other State or States, in withdrawing from the Union? In form, the election was in strict accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Constitution and laws. The objection to it is that it was effected by a purely sectional party, organized upon the principle of hostility to slavery, and having for its prime object the repression of slavery as a permanent administrative policy, with a view to its ultimate extinction. It cannot be doubted that an administration of the Government, based upon this policy, could operate far more effectively in bringing about the extinction of slavery in the South through official influence and patronage, than by any more direct mode of attack.

But it is clear that the Federal Government was established for no such purpose or object; for, however strongly many of the framers of the Constitution were opposed to slavery, it is notorious that it was owing to their forbearance to insist upon their objections to the clause in the instrument, providing for the rendition of fugitive slaves, to their own, that we have any Federal Union. It was upon this question that the Convention was, at one time, upon the point of breaking up in confusion. The policy of making the Government an instrumentality for the repression or extinction of slavery as is now attempted by the party which is soon to be in power, was never contemplated by the framers of the Constitution.

I have often expressed the opinion that the success of a purely sectional party, organized upon any principle, sentiment or policy, in strong antagonism to the interests and sentiments of the opposing and defeated section would deeply imperil the Union; and I believe, that we have now a Federal Union, which was upon this question that the Convention was, at one time, upon the point of breaking up in confusion. The policy of making the Government an instrumentality for the repression or extinction of slavery as is now attempted by the party which is soon to be in power, was never contemplated by the framers of the Constitution.

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the mischief which the Republican party may be induced to inflict by its anti-slavery policy, for reasons which I need not state, it will be readily acknowledged, will be ten-fold greater than in any which the Abolition Societies have it in their power to inflict.

That I do not unjustly charge the Republican party with having adopted a policy which, in its character, tendency and practical operation, is in conflict with the spirit, if not the letter, of the Constitution, can be made manifest in a very few words: One of the important objects to be accomplished by the adoption of the Constitution, as declared in the preamble, was to "insure domestic tranquility;" and the power was expressly given to the Federal Government by that instrument to "suppress insurrections." The simple announcement to the public that a great party at the North, opposed to slavery, has succeeded in electing its candidate for the Presidency, disguise it as we may, is well calculated to raise expectations among the slaves, and might lead to servile insurrections in the Southern States. If such an event, which is more than possible, should really happen, it might become the duty of Mr. Lincoln to restore the tranquility which the policy of the party had disturbed, and to suppress an insurrection which the same policy had excited.

In stating the exceptions which may be fairly taken by the South to the election of Mr. Lincoln, I have purposely presented, in the strongest light, the dangers to which Southern rights and interests are exposed, that it may not be supposed that I had not considered or comprehended the full extent of the injurious consequences which may result from the present menacing attitude of the North upon the slavery question; before I formed an opinion upon the grave question, whether the election of Mr. Lincoln, in all its bearings, together with all the precedent grievances of which the South has a right to complain, furnish any sufficient cause to justify the surrender by the Southern States of their interest in the rich and glorious heritage of the Union, and to seek safety and the undisturbed enjoyment of their rights in a Southern Confederacy. With this explanation, I am now prepared to say, unhesitatingly and unequivocally, that it would not; and the confidence I feel in the solidity of the grounds upon which I give this answer, is justified by the following considerations:

1. Mr. Lincoln, it is well known, does not hold extreme opinions on the subject of slavery. It is certain that he has expressed a decided opinion that the South has a constitutional right to demand the faithful execution of the Fugitive Slave Law, and that, under certain circumstances he would feel it his duty not to oppose the admission of a new slave State into the Union. His declaration on this point is little satisfactory to the South; but neither that declaration, nor the opinion expressed by him on the subject of the Fugitive Slave Law, is at all satisfactory to the extreme of his own party.

Upon the whole, if Mr. Lincoln's public declarations on the subject of slavery are to be considered the true exponents of his future policy, and if he possesses the moral courage to adhere to them in opposition to the counsels of the extreme men of his party (and it is just and fair to presume that he does possess that virtue, no serious mischief need be apprehended during his administration except the usual evils attending the perpetuation of the slavery system.)

2. But it is assumed by some that Mr. Lincoln has disguised his true sentiments; that his true character has not been understood; and that he will be under the control of the worst men of his party. I do not think so. I have every confidence that his future policy will be found to be in strict conformity with his past declarations. But apart from this, it is now generally known that he will be powerless for mischief, except to a very limited extent, during the first two years of his administration, unless the Southern Senators and Representatives elected to the next Congress should rashly, and, as I think, indiswisely, resign their seats or retire from Congress, and thus voluntarily surrender the control in both Houses to the Republican party, which surely they will not do. With both Houses opposed to him, Mr. Lincoln cannot appoint his Cabinet ministers or fill any offices of high grade without the assent of the Senate, or indeed of any interior grade above that of a clerk or petty deputy postmaster. He will be able to carry no measure connected with the subject of slavery which does not command the assent of the South and the conservative members from the North.

3. As to any apprehensions that the Republican party, encouraged and stimulated by the efforts of the North, may be so strengthened in the result of the elections of Senators and Representatives, in the next term, as to obtain a majority in both Houses of the 38th Congress, that is, during the last two years of Mr. Lincoln's administration—while it may be well to regard such an event as possible, the strongest reasons for the confident belief that no such unfortunate result will attend the elections in the North, which are to decide the complexion of the 38th Congress.

Of the whole number of votes cast for Mr. Lincoln in the recent election, from his own personal knowledge, and from information received from other sources, of the sentiments of the South, and especially of those of the Middle States, and the States north of the Ohio, I am sure I hazard nothing in stating that a large number—at least one-third—was devoted to the Union, and although opposed to slavery in the abstract, have but little sympathy with the Republican party, and would be sincerely glad to see the slavery controversy between the two great sections of the country speedily terminated. They supported the Republican candidate in the late election, mainly influenced by the strong and inveterate feelings of opposition to the Democratic party—believing that Mr. Lincoln was the only available candidate in the field to defeat that party.

I am also well satisfied that not more than one-third part of Mr. Lincoln's supporters are so extreme in their anti-slavery sentiments, and are animated by so intense a hatred of the South, as to be either wholly indifferent to the effect upon the Union of the policy of the Republican party, or actually desirous of a separation of the free from the slave States.

of the Missouri Compromise, which they regarded as little less sacred and binding than the Constitution, and in further resentment of the attempt to force the Lecompton Constitution upon the people of Kansas. But now that they have so signally triumphed in the late election, and in view of the evils already inflicted upon the country, and the still greater evils to be apprehended they will be content to cease the war upon Southern interests and feelings.

For foregoing reasons, I feel confident that the 38th Congress will exhibit a falling in the strength of the Republican party, instead of an increase.

4. All of the existing grievance of which the South may justly complain can be redressed in the Union. As to the indignity, not to say insult, offered to the South, of nominating and electing the candidates for a sectional party, on principles which practically exclude the Southern States from a voice in the election, contrary to established usage, and in violation of the spirit of the Constitution, they may be pardoned for what are called Personal Liberty Laws, which are the Federal Government any longer than States to surrender fugitives from justice from the slaveholding States, in those cases in which the crime imputed to the fugitive is the abduction or stealing of slaves. Some further legislation by Congress may be required to secure the surrender of such fugitives, but the due enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law is all that is required to redress the grievances arising from the escape and abduction of slaves from the Southern States. The President is armed with sufficient power and means to enforce this law in defiance of all obstructions which may be thrown in the way to defeat it. If he neglects or fails to see it executed, he is liable to impeachment.

The next subject which I propose to myself to notice briefly, is the doctrine or theory of secession, which, as I understand it, is the right claimed to exist under and by the Constitution, in the exercise of which a State may withdraw from the Union, whenever a majority of the citizens may decide to do so, for any cause whatever. For it is quite immaterial whether any grievance or wrong sustained at the hands of the co-States, or by the action of the Federal Government, is set up to justify the exercise of this right or not, inasmuch as the people of the seceding State, under this theory, claim to be a separate tribunal or judges to decide whether any such grievance or wrong has been inflicted and upon the extent and sufficiency of the wrong.

In fact, the theory of secession implies the right of a State to dissolve its connection with the Union at discretion; and the whole question resolves itself into this: whether the Federal Union, as it now exists, and as it was intended to be by its framers, is anything more than a voluntary association of States, for common defence and other objects of vital importance to their interests and prosperity, carrying with it no binding obligation upon any of the States to yield obedience to the Federal Government any longer than such State should consider it expedient. I propose to enter into no elaborate argument to demonstrate the unsoundness of this theory, and to show that no such right was reserved by the Constitution either to the State or to the people. This has often been done by able pens. I must be permitted, however, to say that when its nature is properly defined and its logical and necessary consequences are candidly stated, its absurdity must strike the commonest understanding. Its reasonableness and folly, aside from its absurdity, will be illustrated by a single example.

The possession and control of the mouth of the Mississippi was held to be of such vital importance to the interests of the South, as to have been the subject of a treaty of cession to the United States for that reason, at a cost of fifteen million of dollars. It was stipulated in the treaty of cession that the territory thereby acquired should be admitted into the Union as a State, or States, with all the rights and privileges of the other States of the Union. But, can it be supposed that Mr. Jefferson and the other great statesmen of that day, if they interpreted the Constitution as the advocates of the theory of secession now do, would have been so madly stupid and blind to consequences as to have assented to such a stipulation? Far wiser and better would it have been to have paid five times the price, and to have held the country as a subject province, having first amended the Constitution so as to authorize such a holding. And should Louisiana now secede from the Union and set up an independent government, in the exercise of the right of secession, even supposing the right to exist, can there be any doubt that the same statesmen and political necessities which led to its original acquisition would lead to its subjugation by the government of the United States, or by the States interested in its navigation of the Mississippi river and its tributaries?

After what I have written on the preceding pages of this letter, it is scarcely necessary to say I adhere to the Union. I will not say that in no possible contingency would I consent to a separation of the States. But I would exhaust every constitutional means for the redress of every grievance before I would think of dissolving the Union. I am not willing that one State should be withdrawn from the Union—that one star should be taken from the bright cluster which now emblazons the national flag.

I have long foreseen the probable occurrence of a crisis like the present and shrunk from the possible issue, of it, and I could never contemplate the destruction of the Union with our sensations not unlike those which I imagine would overwhelm me on beholding the last going down of the sun—never to rise again.

With the highest consideration and esteem, I am, your fellow citizen,  
JOHN BELL.  
T. A. BRADLEY, Esq., Vicksburg, Miss.

expectation that they would only be thereby exercising a right reserved to them under the Constitution, and that they would be in no danger of incurring the penalties of treason, or of exposing themselves and their country to the calamities of civil war.

In the preceding pages of this letter, I have attempted to show that the friends of the Union in the South should not despair of obtaining redress from the North, of all existing grievances, and that the prospects of being able to avert the greater ones, of which there may be some apprehensions, are as encouraging, that it would be the extreme of rashness and folly to think of resorting to any means of redress, not warranted by the Constitution. What gives me the greatest concern at present is the painful conviction that the movement in favor of secession, in Mississippi and other States of the South, is led, for the most part, by men of distinguished ability and influence, with whom the expediency of secession is a foregone conclusion and a settled conviction, men who can be reached by no argument of reasonance—men who do not want to be convinced of the insufficiency of existing grievances to justify a disruption of the Union, men whose imaginations have been taken possession of, and their judgements led captive, by the dazzling, but, as I think, delusive vision of a new, great, and glorious Republican empire, stretching far into the South. The scheme of disunion, as I have reason to believe, has been long cherished by some of these leaders, and they have only waited a pretext more plausible than any heretofore presented, to attempt the accomplishment of it.

What between the inflammatory appeals and highly colored and exaggerated story of wrong and oppression already endured, and the still more intolerable oppression to be anticipated from the fanatic spirit of the North, on the one hand, and the glowing pictures and seductive representations of the grandeur, power and prosperity of the new Republic, on the other hand, it is not surprising that a body of highly gifted men, strongly excited and carried along by their own fanatics, have been able to mislead many thousands of a peculiarly excitable and impressionable population, against the dictates of their sober judgements. And it is a sad reflection that upon the speedy return of this class of Southern citizens to wiser and more temperate counsels may depend the fate of the Union. May no hope be indulged that the change of view seems to be the present purpose and determination!—A little time for reflection upon the nature and amount of evils which are certain to attend a revolutionary movement, and also upon other and more appalling contingencies, which may and probably will arise between its beginning and consummation.

I do not forget that I am addressing, through you, brave men who are ready to die in vindication of their honor or in defence of what they believe to be their rights, I do not appeal to their fears.

But whatever may be the final decision of the people of Mississippi upon the gravest question ever presented to their consideration, which deeply affect the relations existing between them and the people of Tennessee, and of every other Southern State, I can bring myself to the conclusion, that the existing interests of the country, and the danger which would befall the South if Mississippi will take upon herself the responsibility of doing an act that would expose the peace and security of her sister States of the South to direct and eminent danger, and perhaps decide their destinies for we or for woe forever without previous consultation with them, and first exhausting every peaceable mode of redress for the grievances of which she complains. In a community of independent States or sovereignties, if any one of them should pursue a course which would put in eminent peril the peace and security of the other States, without first exhausting every means of peaceable redress for all grievances of which she might complain, they would be justified by the law of nations in making common cause against her, and in preventing her by force, if necessary, from pursuing such course. Such being the responsibility attaching to the action of out of a community of separate and independent States, how much greater would be the responsibility incurred by one of the Southern States of this Union in adopting the desperate measures of breaking up the Union and thereby putting in jeopardy the highest and dearest interests of them all without first taking solemn counsel together. These interests are common to them all, and the grievances complained of are common to all. Could the evil consequences certain to ensue be confined to the State adopting the rash measure of secession, the other States might not feel called upon to protest against it. But that cannot be. The consequences—and who can foresee their extent?—must be felt by all.

When the subject in every light in which it can be presented, I am constrained to say that by no public law, by no code of morals, by no law of Ethics or Heaven, would Mississippi or any other State be justified under existing circumstances, in withdrawing from the Union. I do not believe that the highest and dearest interests of the South would result from a separation of the Southern States. I am confident that a majority of the people of the North are this day, prepared to agree to any fair and reasonable plan of adjustment, which shall be a conference of the Southern States, would propose. I purposely abstain from suggesting what in my opinion, should be the basis of such plan of adjustment.

After what I have written on the preceding pages of this letter, it is scarcely necessary to say I adhere to the Union. I will not say that in no possible contingency would I consent to a separation of the States. But I would exhaust every constitutional means for the redress of every grievance before I would think of dissolving the Union. I am not willing that one State should be withdrawn from the Union—that one star should be taken from the bright cluster which now emblazons the national flag.

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JOHN BELL.  
T. A. BRADLEY, Esq., Vicksburg, Miss.

## Fighting in the Union—Position of Gov. Wise.

We find in the papers the following letter from Gov. Wise. Having been written to by a gentleman from Columbus, Georgia, to define what he meant by "fighting in the Union," he replies as follows:

Rolliston, near Norfolk, Va.,  
December 1, 1860.  
DEAR SIR: Yours of the 22d ult., was late coming to hand. I now thank you for it.—As to my doctrine of fighting in the Union, it is one of true policy.

1st. If a sovereign State is judge of the infraction as well as of the mode and measure of redress, she may remain in the Union to resist wrong, as well as do so out of the Union.

2d. If other States have infringed the Union, not she, the State wronged is bound to defend the Constitution and the Union against those who have infringed the one and threatened the other. Logically the Union belongs to those who have kept, not those who have broken its covenants.

3d. The Union is not an abstraction: it is a real substantial thing, embracing many essential and vital political rights and properties. It has nationalities, lands, treasury, organization of army, navy, ships, dock-yards, arsenals, &c., &c. Small as these things are, these rights and possessions because wrong done attempt to deprive us of other rights? Is it not cowardly to renounce one right to save another? Are these rights not as precious as the mere right of property in negroes. But, 4th. If you secede, you not only renounce the Union and its possessions, but you fail to unite your own people, because you do renounce these rights. Wake a man up to destroy the Union and Constitution, and he will stare at you and turn away. But tell him that the Constitution is infringed and the Union threatened by Black Republicans, and call on him to aid you in defending both, and he will act heartily with you.

5th. The how is this to be done? The 3rd clause of the 10th section of the 1st art. of the Constitution of the United States permits a State to keep troops and ships of war in time of peace, and to engage in war, when actually invaded, or when in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay. Now, are we not actually invaded? Is our danger not imminent? Does it admit of delay? May not a sovereign State decide?

6th. And what is the difference? Will it not be revolution and war in either event? I say, then, stick to all your rights, renounce none, fight for all, and save all!

Yours, truly, &c.,  
HENRY A. WISE.

Mississippi and Maryland.  
The following is the letter of Governor Hicks of Maryland, partially reported in our Telegraphic news of Saturday. It sufficiently explains the purport of the letter of Judge Handy, the Commissioner from the State of Mississippi, to which it replies:

we and they, in the event of any dismemberment of the Union, will suffer more than all other combined, I am now in correspondence with the Governors of those States, and I await with solicitude for the indications of the course to be pursued by them. When this is made known to me I shall be ready to take such steps as our duty and interest shall demand, and I do not doubt the people of Maryland are ready to go with the people of those States, for weal or woe.

I fully agree with all that you have said as to the necessity for protection to the rights of the South; and my sympathies are entirely with the gallant people of Mississippi, who stand ready to resist any infringement of those rights. But I earnestly hope they will act with prudence as well as with courage.—Let us show moderations as well as firmness; and be unwilling to resort to extreme measures until necessity, shall leave us no choice.

I am unable to inform you when the Legislature of this State will be called together; for until I can perceive the necessity for such a step I am not willing to awake the apprehension and excite the alarm which such a call at the present time could not fail to create.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your obedient servant,  
THOS. H. HICKS.  
Hon. A. H. HANBY, Commissioner of Mississippi.

From the Washington Constitution, Dec. 21.  
**The Abstraction of Bonds from the Interior Department.**  
The public are already aware that on the voluntary confession of Godard Bailey, the Indian appeal clerk of the Interior Department, and who was charged with the custody of the bonds and other securities held in trust for the Indian tribes, it was discovered late on Saturday night that some of these bonds to the enormous amount of \$870,000 had been fraudulently extracted by Bailey and given by him to William H. Russell, of the firm of Russell, Majors & Waddell.

Immediately on the receipt of Bailey's letter disclosing the above fraud, the Secretary of the Interior made a close examination of the securities. The examination lasted several hours, and resulted in disclosing that out of the \$3,396,241 72 (the gross amount of the Indian Trust Fund), but \$2,526,341 82 were forthcoming, and that \$870,000 were missing. Immediate steps were taken for the arrest of the perpetrators of this fraud.—The Department is in possession of ample means of identifying the bonds, wherever they may be, and proceedings have been taken for their recovery.

Yesterday morning Secretary Thompson sent a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, (of which we subjoin a copy,) acquainting him of the fraud, and asking for a full investigation of the entire matter with a view to the exposure and punishment of all the guilty parties. In compliance with his request a committee of five was appointed, the members of which immediately waited on the Secretary at the Interior Department, to announce their appointment and their purpose to commence the investigation at an early day.

The following is Secretary Thompson's letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives: Department of the Interior, Dec. 24, 1860.  
Sir: On Saturday night last I was informed, by the voluntary confession of an officer of this Department, that State bonds, held in trust by the United States Government for certain Indian tribes, to the amount of eight hundred and seventy thousand dollars, had been abstracted from its custody and converted to private use.

The enormity of this fraud demands a full investigation by a committee of Congress into all the facts and circumstances which have attended its perpetration.

To vindicate my honor and integrity, and to expose the guilty and the delinquent, I desire to appeal, through you, to the House of Representatives over which you preside, for the appointment of a committee of that body, with full power to send for persons and papers, and report upon the subject.

I ask this investigation in order that full justice may be done in the premises.

I am, with much respect,  
your obedient servant,  
J. THOMPSON,  
Secretary of the Interior.

**The Indian Bonds Robbery.**  
Officer A. R. Allen, one of those sent on to New York to arrest Mr. Wm. H. Russell, was yesterday arrested by Justice Betts in that city, who was daily delivered up to officer Allen. On arriving here Russell was taken to the residence of Capt. Goddard, Chief of Police, and committed to jail; and subsequently another hearing was held at the jail before the Chief of Police. The District Attorney appeared for the Government, and Messrs. Daridge, Chilton, and Humphrey Marshall, of Kentucky, for the accused. The bail demanded by Justice Goddard was \$500,000, which not being forthcoming, Mr. Russell was committed for trial at Court in the usual form. It was expected yesterday that an effort would be made to bring him before Judge Crawford, with a view to the reduction of the bail; but it was not done.

On Monday evening Goddard Bailey was released from jail on two securities in the sum of \$3,000, but yesterday the securities surrendered him, and he was returned to jail, where he is at present.

Many rumors are about in reference to the bonds, and for which that lottery was intended as a remedy; but, as the whole affair will undergo an official investigation, it will be best not to anticipate.—National Intelligencer, Dec. 27.

At best life is not very long. A few more smiles, a few more tears, some pleasure, much pain, sunshine and song, clouds and darkness, hasty greetings, abrupt farewells, when our little play will close, and the in-liner and injured will pass away! Is it worth while to hate each other?