

North Carolina Argus.

NEW SERIES—VOL. IV—NO. 43.]

WADESBOROUGH, N. C., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1862.

[WHOLE NO. 205.]

W. N. EDWARDS' LETTER.

POPULAR MOUNT, 4th Oct'r, 1862.

COL. D. A. BARNES:

Dear Sir:—I duly received, under your cover, two memorials from a portion of my fellow citizens, for whose intelligence, patriotism and worth I entertain the highest respect, requesting me, as President of the State Convention, to reassemble that body "at an early day;" and a few other eminent citizens, by letter or otherwise, expressed a similar desire. Their suggestions have been duly and maturely considered, and I have consulted several gentlemen, whose talents, experience and public services entitle their views upon any question connected with our State policy to great weight, and, after a careful and anxious review of the subject in all its bearings, and availing myself of all the lights accessible to me, I have been unable to perceive any sufficient cause, at this time existing, for calling the Convention together. Respect for the opinions of my fellow-citizens, as well as for the imposing character of the solicitations made to me, and justice to myself require that I should state some of the leading reasons which have led to this conclusion.

The memorialists represent that another session of the Convention is rendered necessary by "the unfinished and imperfect condition in which the Constitution of the State was left at the late adjournment;" while others desire one to meet the exigencies of the war. The Convention, on the 30th of April last; and at its fourth session, passed a resolution in these words:

"Resolved, That this Convention do, on Tuesday, the 13th of May next, at 2 P. M., adjourn, subject to the call of the President; and, in case of his death, inability or resignation—of Messrs. Ruffin, Brown, Graham, Osborne and Smith of Halifax—or in case of the death of one or more of them, then the residue, at any time from now until the 1st November, 1862; and if not then called together by that time, that this Convention do stand dissolved."

As to remodeling the Constitution, there is reason to believe that all further action to that end was abandoned by the Convention itself. Other resolutions were passed on some named day, as it did on three former occasions, and not have left it as a matter of discretion with its presiding officer, or his alternates, to call it together or not as they might think proper. Whether amendments were needed or not certainly depended very little indeed upon future contingencies, to be judged of, in the course of a few months, by me or any one else, in the exercise of a discretionary power. The Convention, at the time of the passage of the resolution of adjournment, had the facts before it in reference to the Constitution as fully as the President could have them in the recess, and could determine for itself at the time, without devolving the duty upon him. A careful reading of the Journal towards the close of the last session, will I think, satisfy any one that it would be assuming too much to suppose the Convention contemplated amendments.

My own impression decidedly is, that the final dissolution of the Convention was postponed to the 1st of November in consequence of the War and for that cause only. There seems to me very little reason to doubt but that a final and absolute adjournment would have taken place, if the country had been in the enjoyment of peace. Such an adjournment would have also taken place, notwithstanding the war, if the Convention had been satisfied that nothing would occur up to the time designated in the resolution to require the exercise of its high powers. The Convention perceived that circumstances might occur in the progress of hostilities to render another session expedient. For instance—the State might be invaded by so strong a force, and many counties so completely overrun by hostile armies, as to make it impracticable for the people of a large section to elect members of the General Assembly, perhaps, in even a majority of counties; or the success of the enemy in the mighty efforts then going on in the invasion of Virginia by the numerous and powerful army under McClellan, might leave North Carolina in a very exposed condition. The President was therefore clothed with discretionary power to act upon emergencies as they might arise. In the contingencies mentioned, and others which might be readily conceived, another session of the Convention might have been deemed necessary; but no such session, as I conceive, was contemplated, except in consequence of some extraordinary event arising after the adjournment. My action, according to the true meaning of the resolution and the evident intention of the Convention, is restricted to events of subsequent occurrence, upon which the body could not act, and does not extend to those which had already taken place.

It will be remembered that, at the time of the passage of the resolution, the affairs of the Confederacy were in a critical condition, and there was much to excite the apprehensions of the patriot. Nothing has transpired since, rendering further action of the body any more needed than

—nothing calling for the exercise of the high and extraordinary powers confided to the President. On the contrary, the arms of the Confederacy have since been attended with splendid success—far beyond our most sanguine hopes—and our prospects were never more bright and cheering. The strength of the enemy in North Carolina is greatly diminished, and he has made no progress in the invasion of our territory. He has been driven from Virginia, with the exception of a few of the Eastern and Northwestern counties, and in other sections the events of the war have been highly favorable to the cause of our national independence. Where, then, is the necessity for a fifth session of the Convention, so far as the war is concerned? What reason exists for any further action on the part of that body, which did not exist in as full force in April and May last as it does now? It is true that the Government of the United States recently made arrangements to bring into the field a greatly increased force, but the Confederate Government has also passed an act which will greatly augment ours.

In relation to any action on the part of the State and her necessities may require, it appears to me that the General Assembly has ample authority to do everything which the crisis may demand. It is a well established principle, that the General Assembly has power to pass all laws not prohibited by the State or the Confederate Constitution. The Legislature, therefore, has before it a broad and extensive field of power. Measures such as those alluded to seem to me most appropriate for the action of that body. Its members have been recently elected by the freemen of the State, and are familiar with their feelings and sentiments. They may be presumed to know what the people desire, and what burdens they are able and willing to bear for the laudable purposes above mentioned, or any other object demanded by State exigencies; and I cannot imagine for a moment but that the Legislature, chosen by the intelligent and patriotic freemen of North Carolina, will, with entire unanimity, maintain the proud position which the Convention assumed in relation to the eternal separation of North Carolina from the United States, and the independence forever of the Southern Confederacy, at any and every sacrifice; and that they will, with like unanimity, indignantly repel the foul slanders upon our good old State by Northern journals and Northern officials, in representing that a large portion of her people entertain "Union" sentiments and "Union" sympathies.

To condense my views in a very succinct form, I will say, that I cannot, according to my understanding of the true meaning of the purposes of the Convention, go, in search of reasons for re-assembling it, behind the date of the adjournment, and that no event has since occurred, to require another session.

For these reasons, I am constrained to decline a compliance with the solicitations made to me. If I were clearly satisfied that public opinion demanded another session of the Convention, I might yield my own convictions and act accordingly; but from the best information I have been able to obtain, public opinion neither demands nor would approve it. It is proper to state that the memorials are signed only by eleven persons, and that but a few others have intimated to me, by letter or otherwise, a desire that the Convention should be recalled.

The power conferred upon me by that enlightened and patriotic body—the Convention of North Carolina, whose tokens of favor and confidence will ever exist amongst the most treasured memorials of my public life, is one of grave responsibility, deep importance, and great delicacy—a power to be exercised with the highest degree of care and caution. Regarding it in this light, the cause for its exercise should be clear and satisfactory. I see none such at this time.

With sentiments of high regard,
Your obedient servant,
W. N. EDWARDS.

Definitive Treaty of Peace (1789) between the United States of America and His Britannic Majesty.—ARTICLE I. His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, namely: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, to be free, sovereign and independent States; that he treats with them as such, and for himself, his heirs and successors relinquishes all claims to the Government, propriety, and territorial rights of the same, and every part thereof.

It will thus be seen (says the Savannah Republican) that our independence was not acknowledged as a Nation, but the sovereignty and independence of each separate State, and that the King of Great Britain treated "with them as such." This State sovereignty has never been given up, but was reserved in the Articles of Confederation as well as in the Constitution of the United States, and all attempts to substitute the word National for Federal were resisted and defeated.

New Postmaster.—Chas. Overman, Esq., has been appointed Postmaster at Charlotte. The appointment

TAKING THE OATH.—A very shrewd, sensible man, in Maury county, Tenn., who had been a strong Union man until the Yankees got there but who, after that, became equally as strong a Southern man; went to Columbia one day, and was brought before General Negley. "Well said General Negley, "Mr. B. you must take the oath before you go home."

"Very well," said B., "just have it boxed up, General, and I'll take it out."

"Oh?" said Gen. Negley, "you don't understand me; you must take the oath to support the Government of the United States."

"Why General," said friend B., "I have a wife and several children, and it as much as I can do to support them. I am a poor man, and I can't think of supporting the whole United States—that's rather too much."

By this time Negley became rather impatient. "Here," said he, handing B. the printed oath, "read it for yourself."

"I can't read," said B.

"Well, then," said Negley, turning to the Provost Marshal, "give him a pass anyhow; he has no sense."

And thus he went home without taking the oath. The Yankee General was outwitted that time. We give this incident as vouched for by one of the exchanged Nonelson prisoners.—Rebel.

SCENE IN A HOSPITAL.—Lady (at the bedside of a sick soldier)—How d'ye do? Is there anything you want?

Soldier, (curtly).—No I believe not.

Lady.—Is there nothing I can do for you?

Soldier, (with anxiety).—No, I think not.

Lady.—Oh I do want to do something for you. Can't I wash your hands and face?

Soldier.—Well, if you want to right bad, I reckon you can; but if you do, you will be the fourteenth lady who has done so this morning!

Rev. Joseph Cross, a Methodist clergyman, chaplain in Bragg's army, attended the baggage train across from Tupelo to Chattanooga. He says:

"One day halting at a well for water, an old colored woman, who sat there knitting, while half a dozen younger ones emptied their buckets and pitched down our parched throats, hailed me with—

"Well, my master, are you going to heaven?"

"To Tennessee first, auncy," I answered, "to heaven afterwards."

"Oh, master!" she exclaimed, "it ought to be heaven first, and last, and all the time."

"And so it is, auncy," I said, "but I am anxious to go home to Tennessee now; and when there, I don't care much how soon I go to heaven."

From the Goldsboro' Tribune.

Auto-Biography.

In answer to repeated inquiries which my friends are pleased to make in regard to my auto-biography, I take leave to state, that indications are already favorable that my health will soon be sufficiently restored to warrant my undertaking the work, talked of for some time past.

I desire the reader to understand, that it is not intended to publish the work, at this time, for I would not be instrumental, in even a trifling degree, in diverting the public mind from the great subject of National Independence—Southern Independence—which has been, and is with me a passion and a principle. When that work is done, which proximates a glorious consummation, matters of a more trifling import may be properly entertained.

The biography will embrace, perhaps, two or three volumes of octavo—though I cannot tell precisely how much it will make.

My friends will please observe, that the composition of the work shall be all my own—the production of my own mind, and under the dictates of my own heart.

I do not say that I may not submit the numbers in which it will be written, to the perusal of judicious friends for their opinion—but they will not come under the dictation of any man. I feel that I need no help whatever in this regard. If I did not believe that Providence would enable me to fulfill the task, I would not undertake it.

There will be no attempt at display in style or manner. I will strive to deliver a "plain unvarnished tale," both as regards myself and the public incidents with which I have been connected. I am conscious of many occurrences regarding myself, that I would prefer not to record. In this respect my inclination would adopt the language of a friend:

If Lethe hath the power to blot,
And raze all former images;
Give me the cup—I'll envy not,
The talents of Simonedes.*

But I will nevertheless do my duty, and relate what may serve as a warning and institute a moral, however it may affect myself.

Many of the numbers, I cannot doubt, may be

but there will be others, I hope, that will be entitled to higher claims.

During the progress of the task before me, I will write for any editor, on subjects that may be useful, sustaining such principles only as I may approve. For this I expect to be paid—as a means of present subsistence.

Further remarks, on this occasion, I think unnecessary. A more full and complete exposition of my views on the subject, and the object of the publication, will appear in an Introductory, at the proper time, which I believe the press in general will insert for me.

I intend to try one volume. If it succeeds, well. If not, well.

T. LORING.

Goldsboro', N. C., Sept. 20, 1862.

*A distinguished Grecian, who taught the "Art of Memory."

THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS.—The Cumberland Presbyterian Church of the neighborhood of Greeneville, East Tennessee, at a late meeting of their Presbytery, adopted the following resolutions. Several ministers of this church, who were acting as leaders of the tory party, have been deposed. The Greeneville Banner has no doubt, from the indications of the late meeting of the Presbytery, that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church will soon purge herself of all disloyal members:

Whereas, the country is now undergoing a great revolution, and, whereas, every person has to take a political position with one or other of the contending parties, and acknowledge their right to rule and govern, and ask their protection and share their fortune in war; and whereas, our national right are identified with the Confederate States of America.

Resolved, therefore, That we, the members of the Knoxville Presbytery, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, acknowledged allegiance to no political power save the Confederate States.

Resolved, further, That while we deeply deplore the horrors of war; that our sympathies and our prayers, and our aid are due and shall be given to the Confederate States, until an honorable peace be secured in her independence, and we recommend to the membership of the congregation under our care strict obedience to the powers that be.

THE FEVER.

Although the thermometer has fallen to a little over sixty and the rain has ceased, we regret to say that the reports of the physicians for the last two days show no falling off in the number of new cases, nor from all we can ascertain, does the mortality at all diminish.

On Monday there were 87 new cases, and on yesterday (Tuesday) there were 74. We are unable to ascertain the number of deaths, but from what we have heard, we think it cannot have been less than fifteen in each of the two days just past.

The epidemic, which is no respecter of persons has invaded alike the homes of the poor and of the rich, the native and the foreign-born citizen. It has spared neither age nor sex. It has turned aside for no profession or calling, no matter how sacred or how useful. It has at last entered the sacred desk and taken off one of the most honored ministers of God, while here at his post attending to the spiritual welfare of his flock. Rev. E. B. Drane, D. D., Rector of St. James' (Episcopal) Church, died here last night at about 7 o'clock.

This is a loss which will be felt by every member of his church, and by the community at large; of which Dr. Drane was a highly respected and useful member. Those whose hands he had joined at the altar, those whom he had baptized or confirmed, will miss the face of their friend and pastor.

Dr. Drane was a native of Maryland, and, we should think, somewhat over fifty years of age.

We hear of the death of other highly esteemed friends within the last two days.—Wilmington Journal 15th.

THE PRICE OF FLOUR.—A contemporary, in considering the high price of flour, says: "The millers pay on an average about two dollars and forty cents per bushel for wheat, and yet they charge seventeen dollars for superfine flour. Now in our day, it used to be that four and a half bushels of good wheat would make one barrel superfine flour, leaving offal, and allowing an eighth for the profits of grinding. This calculation would make this quality of flour worth \$11. Then why is it held at \$17? Has wheat taken the disease of extortion, and refused to yield as formerly when ground into flour, or is it pure unadulterated ex-