

THE COURIER.

GEORGE S. BAKER. EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

All letters addressed to GEO. S. BAKER, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1874.

The Late Elections

Throughout the County joy prevails. The result of the recent triumphant overthrow of the corrupt and oppressive Radical party, permeates every recess of our vast domain, and fills the heart of every man, woman and child, who is a lover of good, free and honest government with paroxysms of delight, and joy. It has inspired new confidence in the vitality of Republican government. We are learning old sentiments anew. The old maxim that goodness of intention or public virtue is found in the people at large, in a greater degree than elsewhere, rings in our ears with a greater force and beauty than it has ever done before. Through the people may for a long time seem to be led off from the path of rectitude and that love for civil liberty inborn in them, yet there is a point beyond which they cannot be carried, and whenever tyrants and thieves encroach too much on the monuments, purchased with the blood of the long line of martyrs of Civil liberty and honest government from the days of the earliest inception of the government of our Anglo Saxon ancestry, down to the period in which we live, the people have risen up in their might, and said to those would be usurpers of power, whether king or peasant, "Hold! thou hast gone far enough, That line shall not be passed." Just now the American people are rejoicing at the happy termination of a conflict between the ruling and the ruled, in which the latter have asserted and maintained their supremacy. America is redeemed; dishonesty is rebuked. Tyrants have been foiled in their plottings against the liberties of the people. And the sun of Liberty is at its zenith of noonday splendor.

We promised our readers last week, to give them the letter of the Hon. J. J. Davis, written by request to the Raleigh Daily News, on the CONVENTION. We publish it in full, and it will no doubt be read with great interest by our people:

LOUISBURG, Nov. 5th, 1874. Major John W. Dushon:

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter of Oct. 27th, requesting me to give you "a letter for publication in the News, upon the question of the Convention," was received some days ago, but other engagements have prevented an answer until now.

The question is one of immediate interest to the people of North Carolina, and as it concerns every citizen, however humble, I feel it a duty to comply with your request. Recognizing the many defects in the present Constitution, called, by way of derision the "Canby or Carpet-bag Constitution," and anxious as I am to see some of its features wholly eradicated and others materially amended, I regret that I cannot concur with those of our friends who think that the Legislature, soon to assemble, ought to call a Convention to revise and amend that instrument. Many things are "lawful" that are not "expedient," and this is one of the questions which addresses itself to the wise discretion of the Legislature. In all matters of discretion, where there is no moral or legal obligation requiring action or non-action, it is not only right and proper, but it is a duty to consider the expediency or inexpediency of measures and if there is a probability (from whatever cause) that evil will result from action, we should not act. Is there a probability that evil will result from the call of a Convention? I fear there is, and, without going into a full discussion, I will state some of the grounds of my fears:

1. The subject was not generally discussed in the late canvass, but in some localities it was charged by our opponents that if we obtained power we would call a Convention, and, among other things, repeal the Constitutional provision securing a homestead. This was not only denied, but it was stated, at least by some of our candidates for the Legislature, that there was no purpose on the part of Democrats or Conservatives to call a Convention, if successful. I know and you know that there is not the remotest probability that the homestead provision will be interfered with, but we also know that there exist, in the minds of many people, an apprehension upon the subject, and it is of that class of fears which would not easily remove and which would be increased by a movement for a Convention at this time. Why was not the question discussed in the late canvass? I think the answer may be found in the fact that there was an

apprehension that it would prove an element of weakness and a source of defeat. The last expression of the public will upon the subject was in 1871, when the question was submitted to a direct vote of the people, and when it was voted down by a large majority, although we had had, at the preceding election in 1870, a victory almost equal to that of the present year. I know that it is said, and truly said, that many men voted against the Convention in 1871, because they did not approve the mode in which the question was submitted but it will be remembered that at the same election at which the Convention was voted down there was an election for delegates to the Convention, in the event it should be called, and, if I am correctly informed, we failed to elect a majority of Democrats and Conservatives, though we had, the year before, carried both branches of the Legislature by decided majorities.

2. You say "there is a contrariety of opinion upon the subject," and that you "seek information and ask the favor of letters from the advocates and opponents of the movement." Unfortunately, this difference of opinion exists only in the ranks of our own party. Is it wise or expedient to enter upon the movement thus divided? I know that it is insisted by many of our best men that having the power in this matter we should act without reference to our adversaries, but is this practicable? Let us see. We know the fact that the Republican party leaders in North Carolina, control, with a few exceptions, the solid negro vote. I only state a fact—there is no division in that vote on any question. No question of Homestead, of the Judiciary, of improper distribution of power between the different branches of government, of elections, of criminal law, of the restoration of the County Courts, none of these questions divide them; they vote as directed by party leaders. None of the many questions, therefore, that may arise in the canvass for delegates to the Convention, if one shall be called, will divide them. They and the Republican party will be almost a unit against the Convention, and against election of the Democratic delegates. I have heard of our one Republican of any note, who is in favor of a Convention, and he, I am informed, avows himself in favor of it with the hope that it will annul the homestead provision—whether sincere or insincere in this is not material; the effect is the same.—Can we hope, in the event of a call for Convention, which may be done by the Legislature, without any reference to the people, that there will be such unity and harmony on the part of Democrats as to secure the control of the Convention and direct its action wisely, safely and prudently? It is, I think, not assuming more than is true to say, at least for this State, that the Democrats and Conservatives constitute the independent class of voters and thinkers. It is hardly to be expected that they will agree upon all the questions of changes and amendments that will be considered in the election of delegates, and the differences of opinion that will naturally arise will be an element of weakness to us and of strength and confidence to our opponents, and we shall run the risk—more than I am willing to hazard—of having either an *ad hoc* convention or a Radical Convention; in the first event wise and judicious action will be doubtful and in the latter none of our friends can hope for anything good. I know it is said by some of them that no Convention which can be called will probably give to us a Constitution so bad as the present. Grant that to be so, yet if we fail to get good and wholesome amendments, we shall be "set back" indefinitely and the destruction of public confidence and the surrender of hope will result as evil consequences.

3. It may be said that this is putting the question purely upon its effect upon parties and upon party grounds, and that party and parties should not stand in the way of public good. I do most readily concede that no party and the interest of no party should stand for a moment in the way of the public good, but if any measure shall have the effect to defeat the only party in the State upon which any hope for the public good can rest, that measure should yield not to party for party's sake, but to party for the sake of the public good. I should be glad to know that my fears are groundless, but I know there is still an uneasiness in the public mind, and many of our people are not yet free from the apprehension of Federal interference in our domestic affairs. No one desires more than I do to see the State, in all her local, internal affairs, free from all Federal influences—ad such influences endanger civil liberty, and are an outrage upon free government, but the fear of this influence does exist and we must look at things as they are, and not as we would have them. We should be careful to do nothing to endanger the suc-

cess of constitutional principles in the great contest between centralism and liberty of the States which is to be fought in 1876. But it will be said: "If you do not call a Convention now while you have the power, what will you do?" I answer, let us "hasten slowly" and surely. The political body has been terribly diseased—it can not be healed in a day—its "tone," to use the language of the physician, must be restored. "Whatever is best administered is best," and the strengthening tonic of good and faithful Democratic-Conservative administration will soon restore all its functions to healthy and vigorous action. Let the patient regain confidence in his ability to move safely—this requires time.

A new and bright and, I trust, a glorious day for civil liberty and constitutional government is now dawning upon us. The mighty voice of the people coming up from the States is proclaiming in a commanding tone that must and will be heeded, that infractions upon the rights of the States and the freedom of the people shall cease. We must remember that our victory last August was mainly won upon Federal issues—opposition to Civil Rights and Federal interference with the rights of the States—and not upon local or State issues. I know that many of our friends say that we should act without any reference to our Federal relations; but is this wise? Let us remember that we are one of a mighty band, moving in harmony and concert with our sister States who have recently joined the Democratic ranks, and inspired with new courage and filled with new hopes by the victories of October and of Tuesday last, let us take no step that will weaken us at home or endanger the mighty column now massing to move upon the enemies of self government in 1876. When this victory is complete there will be a freedom of thought and of action in regard to our domestic affairs which has not been our fortune since the abominable days of reconstruction, when Federal power and "carpet-bag" hatred cursed us with the present Constitution, which I believe all good men in North Carolina desire to see materially amended, and which no one more than myself would be glad to see remodelled.

These are my opinions, expressed because you request them, but if the Legislature, judging more wisely, shall be of the opinion that a Convention ought now to be called, no one will pray more earnestly than I that harmony and wise counsels may prevail, and that we may have such a Convention as will reflect new honors upon our beloved State, and give us, in the place of the ill gotten offspring of the bayonet, the carpet-bag and the negro, a Constitution of which we may be proud, and under which we and our children for many generations to come, may live happy and prosperous.

Truly yours, JOS. J. DAVIS.

The Defeat of Butler.

No feature of the late election is so grateful to the people of the South as the defeat of Benjamin F. Butler. False to every instinct of virtuous humanity, and the friend in Congress of every thief who was plundering the National Treasury, his overwhelming defeat is a cause of profound joy to every honest man and a tribute to the morality and honor of Massachusetts. But it is on account of his malignant venom towards the Southern people that we chiefly rejoice at his overthrow. Since his infamous military reign in the cities of New Orleans and Norfolk, his name has been a by-word among us, for all that is villainous and despicable in the character of man. A murderer a foul calumniator of our women, a corrupt and merciless tyrant, a politician of the baser sort, who used his menial powers in furtherance of his vile passions, Butler, the Beast! Thank God for his overthrow! It came to us so unexpectedly that at first we could scarcely credit the welcome news. Even now we fail to measure the full depth of our satisfaction. It is so good, so refreshing, so delicious, so exquisitely gratifying, so exhilarating, that words fail us. His voice always raised in defence of wrong, shall be hushed. His hands always ready to aid in any corrupt scheme of plunder, shall be tied. His influence always exerted in behalf of tyranny, is gone. He is beaten down in his own home and among his own people. Slinking away into the thorny retirement of his private life, a cipher now in American politics, let him be left, like Arnold, to the avenging lashes of his own conscience, a Parish among men.

The most popular man in the country to-day, doubtless, is Mr. CHAS. P. THOMPSON, the man who defeated BEN. BUTLER on Thursday. Should Mr. THOMPSON visit the South now, he would be received everywhere with open arms, and no where with more enthusiasm than in Louisiana. Let him visit the old war grounds of the Beast, and he will see something of the glories of his victory.—R. News



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\$10 REWARD: I will give the above reward for my Huntsmans-Case Gold Watch, with white face and steel hands, which was stolen from me on the 9th inst. The above reward will be paid by leaving the watch at the COURIER office, or delivered to me, and no questions asked. Oct. 23, '74. JAMES DENT.

THE SUN.

WEEKLY AND DAILY FOR 1875. The approval of the Presidential election gives unusual importance to the events and developments of 1875. We shall endeavor to describe them fully, faithfully, and fearlessly.

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