COLUMBIA.

Friday Morning, Aug. 25, 1865.

What is to be Done?

Briefly, the Conventions of the people of the several Southern States are so to revise the existing Constitutions of each State, and without discussion or debate—for these are idle—as to abolish slavery within the limits of the State. The State Legislatures of the South are also severally required to adopt the amendment to the Federal Constitution, which declares slavery forever abolished throughout the United States. This is all which these bodies can be required to do by the Government of the United States, preparatory to their readmission to the Confederacy. In the event of the Convention refusing to enact thus, or the Legislature subsequently, the State remains in a sort of territorial condition, and continues under military government. It is for the members of the Convention to decide for themselves which *status* they shall prefer. We do not see that any other requisition is or can be made, on these several bodies, as to the work confided to their hands. In general terms, they are to devise a republican form of government. The standards for such a frame-work are to be found in any dozen of the existing Constitutions of the country—nay, in that of South Carolina itself. We do not see that our Parish system, to which objection has been so frequently made, is a subject likely to occasion Congressional animadversion, since every State is permitted to decide for itself the details of representation, according to its internal policy, and to determine with whom the rights of suffrage shall reside, and what shall be the degree of representation confided to each precinct. Not that we care, or need to care any longer for the peculiar privilege in the Senate, formerly accorded to the Parishes. This was only important while the characteristics of property were derived from the use of negro slavery. In the destruction of this interest, the condition of things must necessarily change, the standards of taxation must all change, and the numbers of the negro will take the place of his valuation as so much property. In the Parish vote in the Senate is lessened be assured it must necessarily increase in the House. Either way the difference will be immaterial to the section in question. The value of lands will diminish in the low country, and rise in the middle and upper country, in all parts above the malarial region. But we need not at present dilate on this subject. It may be well to add, what will be the further requisition of the United States Government and the Congress upon the people of the South. They are required to "accept in good faith the change in the status of the negro and to make no attempt, indirectly, to reduce the emancipated slave to a condition of practical slavery." We do not exactly see how Congress can deal with such a subject, or what will be the condition of slavery, where a system of labor exists, depending upon contracts between the parties. Men will sink or rise in the social position according to laws of mental and moral gravitation. In degree with their developments in these respects, or their failure to develope, must they rise in or descend to conditions which, whether called it slavery or not, will be a slave condition. You cannot, by any legislation, keep men in the condition to which their habits shall conduct them. That is slavery in which the individual is the level proper for his moral requisitions like these that would be the seed sown for constant contention engendered by meddling or factious usurpative parties.

The Election—Convention.

Will the people take heed of what is expected at their hands, dismiss their lethargy, and prepare their votes for members of the Convention, The election takes place the first Monday in September—Monday week next—and the Convention begins its session on the 13th proximo. There is but a small interval of time between these dates and the present. The nominations seem to be made slowly, and in the more remote rural regions, the probability is that no votes will be taken at all, and probably no election held. The truth is, our people seem to take no interest in the subject, and seem quite indifferent as to what sort of Government shall sway their future destinies. In their almost universal pecuniary distress, and the humiliations of the late overthrow, they have grown reckless and regardless of all politics. We shall urge vainly against this apathy, addressing the ears of men, so long as the pressing necessities of life so grievously weigh upon their energies. We could wish it otherwise.

Dates to the 19th inst., inclusive, from New York, afford us the following as to the condition of the cotton and gold markets:

The cotton market was more active, and prices, though not quotably higher, were some stronger, especially towards the latter part of the day, the market closing steady at our quotations below. The sales comprised 2,500 bales. We quote upland as follows: Ordinary, 36; middling, 43; good middling, 46.

The gold market has shown increasing firmness. The opening price was 142½, from which it advanced to 143, then relapsed to 142⅝, but afterwards rose 143½@⅞, at which it closed. This accession of strength is owing to the temporary suspension of gold sales by the Sub-Treasury, and the improvement in the rates of foreign exchange, which have now reached a point at which specie could be profitably exported. Leading drawers have asked 109⅞ for their sixty days' sterling; but a few sales were made, second hand, at 109⅜@⅝, early in the day. The demand, at the same time, is not large. Should no advance in 5.20's take place abroad, an early resumption of coin exports must ensue.

The money market has been easier, and loans at seven per cent. on call were less difficult to obtain by ordinary borrowers, but considerable caution with regard to collaterals is still exercised by lenders. The discount line is unchanged. Commercial paper is quoted at 7½@9, and 10@12 per cent. according to quality, but only prime signatures are in favor.

VIRGINIA DISLOYALTY.—It is known that we are indebted to certain "strife correspondents" of Northern papers for a large share of the misapprehension and distrust with which the loyalty and good faith of this noble old State is now said to be regarded, (for we believe that all the world knows that we are sincere.) The Baltimore *Sun* uses the following language:

"The class of correspondents whom the *Republic* thus rebukes, are akin to those travelers, who, having rushed through a foreign country in a word, assume to write essays on the manners, customs, laws and morals of the people, and set themselves up as oracles upon everything relating to them, or worse, are pestilent fellows, anxious to stir up strife, and controlled by deep-rooted and narrow prejudices, or base and sinister motives. They belong to the same order of persons with those who have been actively engaged recently in getting up colored conventions in Virginia to agitate the question of negro suffrage, and to denounce the President and Governor of Virginia. These restless schemers do the colored race an immensity of damage, but we agree with the Washington *Star* 'that it is hardly fair to hold the colored people, as a body, responsible for the doings of these colored conventions, which are got up and manipulated by selfish, designing whites, to aid them in pulling their own political chesnuts out of the fire.' The latter are bad men, who have not the peace of the country or the restoration of good feeling at heart, but who raise the cry of disloyalty against every one who fails to act with them, and foment detracting issues, to promote their own personal and political aggrandizement. They are beginning to be understood."

TERRIBLE HURRICANE—ISLAND DESTROYED.—The Secretary of State, on the 13th, sent to the Navy Department a communication from S. B. Dunn, the United States Consul at Tahiti, Society Islands, giving an account of a hurricane which had visited that point, entirely destroying Palmerston Island, and doing immense damage to others. The sea rose fifty feet above high water mark, and swept everything before it. Where Palmerston Island lay, there are now nothing but breakers. The reef thus formed is invisible, except when the sea is perfectly calm. A number of vessels have already been lost there.

History of the Fifth and Last Attempt to Lay the Cable.

The latest news from the Great Eastern informs us that, after laying 1,200 miles of the cable, it parted in latitude 51.40 North and longitude 38 West. The following facts embrace the history of the attempt to lay the cable, including the details of the difficulties encountered on the 24th and 29th of July:

THE FIRST DIFFICULTY, AND HOW IT WAS REPAIRED.

The Great Eastern and Caroline, which were chartered by Glass, Elliott & Co., and the Terrible and Sphynx, detailed by the English Government, and composing the cable squadron, rendezvoused at Valentia on July 19. On the 22d, the Caroline succeeded, after one mishap, requiring the underrunning of the shore end, in laying that massive cable. On the 23d, the splice of the shore end and deep sea cables was made on board the Caroline and thrown overboard, the Great Eastern slowly steaming Westward. On the morning of the 24th, she was fairly under way, when a defect in the insulation was discovered, and the Great Eastern hove to, about eighty miles from shore, in order to repair it. The difficulty was repaired in a few hours, and proved to be as curious as serious, and is thus explained:

As the lengths of wire of 100 or 150 miles were manufactured at Messrs. Glass & Elliott's, they were taken down in barges and coiled away in the tanks on board the Great Eastern. Each as it arrived was of course spliced up to that which had preceded it, and this was often done in the tanks themselves. The operation of splicing not only means joining the conductor, but also joining the outside wires, the junction of the latter being made at different lengths—the bits of wire cut out being thrown away. It seems, however, that one of these atoms of wire, about two inches long, and as thick as a stout darning needle, fell on the coil unnoticed. The weight of the layers of cable laid above this fragment pressed it firmly into the tarred hemp which forms the outside covering of the cable. To this it adhered. While in the tank it did no harm; but when this portion came to be paid out, the small diameter of the eight leading wheels which give access to the paying out machine, and the weight of the jockey pulleys over these, which keeps the rope in its place, bent the stout iron wire so sharply that it passed between the hemp, pierced the gutta percha through at least two or three of its four folds, and there remained. In this state it was found, and instantly recognized as a piece of wire from a splice joint. A short length of cable was at once cut out, a new splice made, vigilantly tested, and gradually sunk. When on the bottom it was again tested for some hours, and the signals were shown to be absolutely perfect.

THE ACCIDENT OF THE 29TH ULT.

The ship again sped on her way, and all went well until the 29th ult., when insulation suddenly ceased, about the time that seven hundred miles were payed out. The cause of this defect has not yet been explained, and doubtless will not be until the work is resumed and the cable safely laid. It was repaired in twenty-four hours, and the Great Eastern again resumed her journey. On July 30, at a quarter past 4 a. m., seven hundred and fifty miles were payed out, and on July 31, the tenth day out, nine hundred miles.

THE PARTING OF THE CABLE.

All was then going on well, but on the 2d instant the vessel encountered a stiff breeze. It is not positive, from the news brought to Heart's Content by the schooner First Fruit, whether it became necessary during the continuance of this unfavorable weather to cut the cable and buoy it, while the vessels laid by, awaiting the return of favorable weather, or whether the cable parted unexpectedly and is lost. The latest news would indicate the latter to be the case, and the buoy as shown on our map simply locates the point at which the mishap occurred.

THE BUOYS.

Such an emergency as the necessity for cutting the cable had been anticipated by the projectors of the cable, and provision made for it. Several large buoys were made and placed on the Great Eastern, each with a large flag, marked with the name of the cable, and numbered from one to five. These buoys were equal altogether to a weight of fifty tons, and capable of buoying up eleven miles of the cable. Attached to the buoys, and ready at all times to be attached to the cable, was a powerful wire rope, fully five miles long, and as strong as the cable itself. The length of this rope would admit of the sinking of the cable to the bottom of the ocean in the deepest water known, and thus secure it against danger for the time being; while the vessel, cut loose from it, could weather the storm without danger of straining the cable or endangering herself. This effort to buoy was not to have been resorted to until the last extremity. There is reason yet to hope that the Great Eastern was compelled to cut the cable and buoy it on the 2d instant, instead of losing it entirely. If such is the case, as soon as good weather sets in, the Great Eastern will doubtless resume her labors, and begin to wind in the buoy rope and raise the cable. This can be done at the rate of about a quarter of a mile an hour, and with as much accuracy and care as the cable can be payed out. Should the cable be raised, the splice can be made, and the paying out process again commenced.

[*New York Herald.*

The correspondents of the Jacobin press have been making terrible discoveries in the interior of North Carolina. They found at nearly all the court-houses stocks and pillories, not rotten and neglected, but like that famous pair of stocks erected by Squire Hazledean, in "which the hank legs of Dr. Riccabocca were temporarily encased; "neatly painted and well protected from the weather." Having exhausted their vocabulary of abuse upon "these instruments of torture, which were used by the inhuman slave holders," the illustrated papers sent down artists, who have prepared very correct drawings of these same pillories and stocks.

The only drawback to the anticipated capital which was to have been made out of these discoveries, is the unimportant fact that these pillories and stocks have for many years been kept by the North Carolinians for the use of white violators of the criminal laws of that State.

We thought that everybody in New England knew that the Old North State has always been known and dreaded by the whole fraternity of thieves as the "whipping and hanging State." They have no State prison there, but when they convict men of murder they hang them, and when they convict offenders of the crimes usually punished in this State by imprisonment in the penitentiary, they put them in the pillories and stocks which have so greatly horrified the radicals; and flog them most unmercifully.

If any correspondent of the radical papers doubts the truth of what we say, let him proceed at once to North Carolina, and then and there steal a watch or commit a burglary, and if he does not very soon find out the exactness and design of the "instruments of torture," we will take his place in the pairs of "stocks with whipping-post accompaniment," of which *Frank Leslie's Magazine* gives an admirable engraving.

A short time before the evacuation of Richmond, a noted rascal left the city and proceeded to North Carolina, where he broke into a jewelry store and carried off much valuable plunder. He was arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced, we think, to receive a sound flogging at the whipping-post. As more than the Mosaic dispensation of "thirty-nine" was awarded him, the fellow was allowed to receive his punishment in broken doses. He received an instalment, we think, of twenty-five lashes every month. We speak advisedly about this case, as the offender was needed here as a witness in one of the city courts before he had "settled his little account" in North Carolina, and when an officer was sent for him, he was politely assured that he was entirely at the service of Virginia as soon as the prior claims of North Carolina upon his rascality had been satisfied. We trust that this simple explanation may relieve the unhappiness of the philanthropists. Stocks, pillories and whipping-posts in North Carolina are infinitely more dreaded by the white than they are by the black criminals in that State.—*Richmond Times.*

SAD INCIDENT OF THE LAKE HURON DISASTER.—Mr. C. Jackson, the first engineer of the Pawabic, last winter became the husband of an idolized and idolizing wife, and this was her first trip to the upper lakes. They were together in the engine room when the collision occurred. The second engineer came to him and said: "Save yourself and wife; I can swim, and have no one to take care of but myself." Jackson, in all probability, had no idea that the boat was on the point of sinking, and thought only of his duty to stand by his post, and accordingly replied that he would not desert the engine to the last. His wife became frightened and clung to him, but he told her to be calm, saying he would take care of her. Neither of them left the engine room, so that in their doom they were not divided. Yet this sad scene was only one of many equally affecting.

Local Items.

To insure insertion, advertisers are requested to hand in their notices before 4 o'clock p. m.

LABOR AT DISCOUNT.—We are told that negroes are daily offering themselves for work, at no higher prices than food and shelter. This would be very encouraging, as a prospect, not only for house, but farm work. But they prefer town employment to the regular labor of agriculture, and the complaint is that even in housework, there is no reliance to be placed on their continuance in employment. Freedom moves them to momentary caprices, and they leave work with much more alacrity than they seek it. Nothing but absolute want will effect anything like a reform in this respect, and the pressure will need to be long continued, before it produces its proper effect.

The Soiree Musicale, on Wednesday night, was not as well attended as it should have been. The old College Chapel is too far from the generality of our residences for lady walkers, and few persons have vehicles now. Besides, the nights are dark, and the walking is a sort of corduroy exercise, like that over North Carolina bridges. We should counsel our excellent musical friends, who deserve better luck, to engage a more convenient hall, if possible, and contract for a high harvest moon. They promise a third concert shortly—a fresh bill of fare—new varieties along with old favorites—and we trust will be able to find a more central place for exhibition.

THE SEASON.—On Tuesday night last, we had a very pretty thunder storm. The pyrotechnical display was very fine, and the figures as various as the lover of grand sights could desire. The rain fell beautifully for fields and gardens, and the atmosphere, delightfully rarified, found us at morning refreshed with cool autumnal breezes, which played harmoniously around us throughout the day. So passed yesterday, and towards evening the weather became sensibly cooler. At night, the coolness continued to increase, so that, rising on Friday morn, we found ourselves veritably in an actual embrace with October. A comfort was not unpleasurable from 3 p. m. to dawn, and for aught for aught, to those who, loving cat-naps, are fond of entertain not unwelcome for breakfast. While we write, we are as pleasantly cool as if an iceberg had lazily rolled right up the Congaree, and lay waiting at the landing for the benefit of mercurial constitutions. Let invalids beware now of chill and fever. We may reasonably expect cool nights, between 2 p. m. and daylight. Easterly winds will probably become prevalent, and we should guard against them by having quilts and coverlets ready. We must not expose the animal surface to a protracted exposure to the wind of the east, which is the most noxious of all winds. [illegible] for delicate [illegible] and [illegible] your veins.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.—Attention is called to the following advertisements, which are published for the first time this morning:

M. J. Cohen—[illegible].
H. L. Corley—Fifty Hands Wanted.
Greenberg & Lewis—Spotswood Hotel.
A. [illegible]—Tin Ware.
I. O. O. F.—Meeting Palmetto Lodge.

It is generally conceded that until the advocates of negro suffrage have secured for the free negroes who reside in the Northern States all the privileges of citizenship, they will not have the "cheek" to demand it of the Southern States. The right of suffrage is limited to "white male citizens" by the constitutions of the following Northern, Middle and Western States: Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, California, Minnesota, Oregon, Kansas, Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia. In some of the Western States, persons of Indian descent are permitted to vote, but negroes are distranchised by all of the above-named States. In the State of New York, negroes, where they possess certain property qualifications, are permitted to vote, but they are not placed upon terms of equality with the white inhabitants of that State.

In Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont and Rhode Island, free negroes are permitted to vote without any special restrictions upon the right of suffrage, and at the ballot-box they are the equals of the white men of those States.

In Connecticut, only those negroes vote who were freemen prior to 1818.

From this statement, it will be seen that seventeen, and among them the largest, wealthiest and most populous of the "loyal States," deny to the negro the right of suffrage; two permit certain classes of free negroes to vote, and five place no restrictions upon the negro franchise.

The State of Oregon expressly provides "that no negro, Chinaman nor mulatto shall vote."

[*Richmond Times.*

A New Yorker has invented a little machine for the convenience of one armed persons, by which they are enabled to wash the remaining hand and arm.

A young man named Irwin brutally murdered his father and mother at Deartown, near Hamilton, Ohio, on Saturday last.