

THE DARLINGTON FLAG.

DEVOTED TO SOUTHERN RIGHTS, MORALITY, AGRICULTURE, LITERATURE, AND MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

JAMES H. NORWOOD, EDITOR.

To thine ownself be true; And it must follow as the night the day; Thou canst not then be false to any man.—HAMLET.

[JOHN F. DE LORNE, PROPRIETOR.]

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AGRICULTURE.

How blest the farmer's simple life,
How pure the joy it yields!
Far from the world's tempestuous strife,
Free 'mid the scented fields.—Everett.

[FOR THE DARLINGTON FLAG.]

MR. EDITOR: I am very glad to see that the *Flag* is taking an interest in the agricultural improvement of the country, and by judicious extracts and original communications, directing the attention of its readers to this great subject. In this way your paper may be made a useful and profitable journal.

Agriculture is an employment in which all classes of men are interested, for it is the broad substratum on which everything else rests. The lawyer and doctor, the mechanic and merchant—all the various and diversified pursuits of life depend upon it, while the planter (though we believe in and respect the mutual dependence and relations of the different classes of society) is to some extent, at least, independent of them all.

In your last number I find an article on the subject of the cotton culture, in which the subject of topping is particularly mentioned. I concur in the opinion there expressed, "that it is an operation requiring the most judicious attention to the circumstances of the crop, and that it has done great good and great injury to the plant."

With the view of drawing out some of your readers on this part of the cotton culture, I will make a few remarks, candidly acknowledging at the same time, that they are more the gleanings of the experience of others than the practical result of my own observation. A crude and hasty suggestion may become a starting point of thought, and under the plastic hand of skill and science, confer great benefit on a whole community.

Topping cotton was at first suggested by remarking that those stalks which had been accidentally broken or nipt in the cultivation, were generally better matured and more loaded with pods. Two objects are supposed to be obtained by it—1. The prevention of shedding or casting of the forms and young pods. 2. Their greater development and maturity.

Every cotton planter knows that one of the greatest difficulties in the culture of cotton, is to prevent shedding; very often after the most careful and cautious management it will occur, and seriously diminish the amount of his crop. This evil is occasioned by excess as well as the deficiency of moisture. In the former case the growth of the plant is rapid and luxuriant; and though the weed is fine and beautiful, it is not hardy, and does not produce much fruit. In the latter, especially in light sandy lands, casting is frequent and injurious, but perhaps never to the same extent as from the cause referred to above.

While speaking of shedding, I will remark that whatever may be the seasons, proper cultivation is an important means of prevention. Cotton ought never to be ploughed deep after the second time; for then the lateral roots are sent out in innumerable ramifications in search of food, and must be torn and severed by the operation.—

Merely stirring the surface is all that ought to be done, and for this purpose the scraper is an invaluable implement. Perhaps planters are in the habit of laying-by their cotton too soon, as frequent light workings with any suitable means keep the surface in a good state to allow air and moisture to act on the roots, and to prevent disease.

The proper stage in the growth of the plant for topping, is a most important consideration; in fact, everything depends on it. Perhaps it is owing to its being done too early or too late, that so many have been disappointed, and have rejected it altogether. This condition is indicated by the plant assuming a more conical shape, by blossoms appearing near the top, and particularly by the stem at the top losing its square form and green color, and becoming round and red. Hence it appears that we may top earlier one year than another, sooner in one field than in another, and at different times in the same field during the same season.

Thus, Mr. Editor, I have spun out this little essay on topping cotton, till I have tired myself with writing, and your readers in perusing it. In excuse I might urge the interest that everything has which is connected with our great staple. Cotton bags saved New Orleans during the last war with Great Britain; cotton bags is our strong defence and bulwark against the mad fury of fanatical zeal and philanthropy, and cotton bags will serve still to protect and defend and to save the South in defiance of all her foes.

Allow me to ask, through you, whether any of your readers are in possession of the interesting essay on the cotton culture, by Gen. D. R. WILLIAMS, of Society Hill;* in it will be found a vast amount of useful information on this interesting theme, communicated in a very forcible and beautiful style.

Z. A. P.

* Published some twenty-five years ago.

POLITICAL.

REMARKS OF MR. BUTLER,
Before the Convention of Southern
Rights Associations.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:
This is an occasion that has associated with it in its probable consequences grave responsibilities—such as have intensely engaged and heavily oppressed my mind.

The highest exertion of human wisdom is to make a good government. To change established institutions with a view of substituting others in their place, requires boldness, foresight and deliberate design. Whilst impulsive enthusiasm may be well regarded as the motive power, and even a wise element in such a conjuncture, it ought not to assume the tone of proscriptive impatience.

Indeed, those who have the control of reason, should endeavor to make it an associate with the dictates of judgment and experience. The feelings which I see here manifested, do honor to the hearts of those who entertain and express them. They spring from the hearts of intelligent freemen, who, knowing their rights, are willing to make any sacrifice to maintain them. In taking counsel from the highest impulses of their nature, they are impatient at any suggestion that might interfere with their free indulgence.—The venerable Cheves—who has been regarded as an adviser of both wisdom and courage—has presented to you a communication well calculated to arrest your attention. It is one that will command, I am sure, throughout the Southern States, a profound respect. Yet I have seen that paper meet with the impatience of the great and almost uncompromising excitement which prevails here; and even with some who have, no doubt, taken their heat from the fires that were kindled by his bold and commanding eloquence. Under such intimations, I might well pause in giving you my counsels.

We are, gentlemen, in a crisis that calls upon every one, especially every man who has accepted a seat in this Convention, to do his duty; and to give you the conviction of his deliberate judgment. No man should avoid responsibility, by taking refuge in

watchful silence and prudent neutrality.

Many have thought that my official position would have allowed me to remain away and take advantage of the current. I have been summoned by my fellow-citizens to mingle in the current, and help to guide it, or be overwhelmed by its violence. I embark with those who have a common destiny with me. The fate of the people of South Carolina shall be my fate—let what may come, I shall stand or fall with South Carolina, the fond mother of my birth and my affections.—In the advice and counsels that I may give, I am willing, before the tribunal of impartial history, to abide by the judgment of my countrymen.

It has been my fate, for the last five years, to take, as your representative, a responsible part in the National Councils of the Confederacy. I have been made to feel the exposure of a struggling and isolated minority to an arrogant majority, who, feeling the vulgar strength of self-sustaining numbers, have resorted to all the machinery of a taunting audience and a sordid press to put under the ban the State whose representative I was. I have always had much to sustain me in trying situations. My conviction was, that South Carolina occupied a position from which she could look down with the luxury of scorn upon truckling partisans and trading politicians, who found it convenient to assail her to subserve their selfish ends. She has been a stumbling block to many, who, if they dared, would have placed their treacherous foot upon her. I say here, that I would rather encounter all the hazard of debate with fifty Senators, or any hazards that might present themselves outside of her limits, than differ with a single sincere friend in this assembly as to any measure calculated to affect the dignity, honor, and rights of our cherished Commonwealth.

I am persuaded that our difference of opinion will, in the end, be more apparent than real, I may well question the policy of a celerity that may be too much actuated by gallant zeal and uncalculating chivalry. If, with the more prudent resolution of Ulysses, perhaps without its wisdom, I may be disposed to restrain the impetuous courage of Diomedes, I shall have none of the resentful temper of Achilles, nor the grumbling censoriousness of Thirstyles. No, my countrymen, my heart is too much in the cause you are engaged in to suffer me to do any thing but what is prompted by a solemn duty. It is true that the proceedings of this body will not have the sanction and authority of law, but they will carry with them throughout the State all the influence which eloquence, patriotism and energy can impart. They will have committed advocates to maintain and enforce them.

The address which has been read contains a recital of imposing truths, arrayed with an eloquent sternness which has commanded my admiration and respect. It is both a truthful and rebuking statement of wrongs and impending dangers to Southern institutions. Other Southern States cannot condemn it without condemning their own resolutions and solemn pledges. The paper has impressed upon it unmistakable marks of sincerity and deliberate purpose. Its author, or authors, are ready to stand by it, and make it good in the true import of the terms, "at every hazard and to the last extremity." By others, it may be differently regarded. Some who will give it their sanction, may look upon it as a paper of popular agitation only. Some may even regard it as the nucleus of a State party, to be used far and no farther. I choose to regard it as a solemn beginning, that may result in an important end, that will deeply affect the destinies and interests of this country. And as my friend from St. John's has said on another occasion, "we should take no beginning without looking to its probable end."

The proceedings contemplated will require South Carolina to tread her way through a narrow pass, as yet unexplored. Some are prepared to tread it with confidence and boldness, and to find its termination by experiment—as Sawarow was said to have found his enemy by the point of his bayonet. Others, on the contrary, insist on the prudence of reconnaissance before the probable termination shall be indicated.

The object of the address is not only to put the State on the track of separate secession, but by the measures contemplated to commit the State now to that determination; in other words, it excludes the idea that the State will have it in its power to adopt any other measure.

The legislature is required as far as these proceedings can impose an obligation, to call the Convention together, and that body then is to put the State, as soon as it can, on the trial of separate independence.

In relation to this measure, and others connected with it and which have been presented as alternatives, I have nothing to disguise—I have no opinion to retract, no sentiment to suppress. I shall at least be consistent with myself. In setting forth our wrongs and endeavoring to rouse sentiments of resentment to them, and in preparing the public mind for measures of effectual resistance to the encroachments of the Federal Government on Southern Institutions, through the breaches of a violated Constitution, I have endeavored to do my duty to the best of my ability, and I have no steps to take backwards. What steps forward is the question. Whilst measures were under consideration, in which the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States were at issue, I expressed myself freely, but with the circumspection of one who was willing to let his remarks be carried out to their consequences. The representatives of the planting States spoke out with signal unanimity in maintaining the resolutions of three different Legislatures. I am proud to say that the resolutions of South Carolina compared with some others, were in terms moderate, in tone firm, and in purpose deliberate. All these resolutions were regarded as mutual pledges and covenants for the Southern States to make common cause, and to stand by each other. The Southern members conferred together, spoke together and at one time would have been prepared to sink or swim in a common peril. They regarded themselves as engaged in a common struggle, and their destinies as involved in a common fate. For a time the minds of all true men of the South were lifted above the miserable contentions of party, and the jealousies of neighboring strife. Under the influence of this auspicious state of things, I finished one of my speeches with a high note from the Diomedes of the old Thirteen—our neighbor Georgia—"Equality or Independence." And I say now, if the Southern States had become united, they would have made good this declaration. They have it in their power to make it good at any time; and they will be untrue to themselves and posterity if they do not. I shall shrink from no trial that may be effectual, and shall only object to such measures, as, in my opinion, must result in failure and discomfiture. If measures cannot be devised—as I believe they cannot—to restore a lost equality—an equality lost by measures, brought forth to propitiate Northern prejudice—I am willing to take measures for an honorable independence of such States as by their conjunction can assume the attitude, and invest themselves with the attributes of a national sovereignty.

As this is a grave conclusion, one that will so be regarded beyond this meeting, I must submit the proposition upon which it is founded.

The constitution of these states was intended by its express and delegated powers to impose limitations on the department of the Federal Government. For some years these limitations were observed in good faith; and after it was said that some of them had been violated, it was thought that the States, by the interposition of their sovereignty, could force an observance of them. The securities of good faith have long since disappeared, and the power of the States to interpose to protect their reserved rights has not and will not be recognized by the Federal authority. All the provisions of the Constitution intended for the protection of a minority have been perverted by artful construction, or fraudulent compromise; under these combined influences the Southern States have not only lost their influence, but will become worse than dependent provinces. They will become proscribed political communities—disfranchised from the high honors of the Federal Government, and with their property and institutions liable to confiscation and unprovoked invasions.

The Southern States can no longer be the nurse of great statesmen. The ambition of the eagle's flight will be no longer seen—we may have crows and ducklings who will be ready to be satisfied with the crumbs and garbage of office. There are those who will be willing to make an easy transition to degradation, by being candidates for the secondary and subordinate offices. Suppose there were a provision in the Constitution, that no man from the South-Atlantic States should be eligible to the Presidency, it

would not change the present state of things. Such a clause might as well be in the constitution for all practical purposes.

To conclude the proposition, the Federal Government has become a despotism of an interested majority.—You will ask why have not the other Southern States been ready to join South Carolina, or rather to come into a voluntary conjunction with themselves, to devise measures for their protection.

I cannot better reply than by quoting the purport of a remark made by Demosthenes, in answer to the reproaches of Eschines, upon the disasters of his administration.

He said he had to contend with the three great enemies of free States: "The jealousy of neighboring States, the gold of Philip bestowed on corrupt orators, the combined love of pleasure and the charm of tranquility."

The Southern States have had some elements of distraction destined, I hope, to be temporary. The disunion of party, in reference to federal politics, has been all powerful; but, unless I am mistaken, must become less.

The Federal Government has a Macedonian party in the South—strong for a time through the influence of office and patronage. The greatest enemy to the South has been an indisposition to encounter the hazards of change.

As it would be out of place to dwell longer on topics that may not be immediately connected with the questions here to be discussed—topics with which this assembly is as well acquainted as I am—I will go directly to the measures which I have suggested, as the object and end of your deliberations. That is, shall this Convention, at this time, undertake to commit the State to the trial of separate secession, by imposing, as far as this Convention can, an obligation on the State Convention to take the step as soon as practicable.

I shall now proceed to state my objections respectfully to this mode of procedure.

I think, in the first place, that this Convention ought not to take cognizance of so grave a matter at this time, before there is a real occasion for decision. And in this I do not differ with a great many who hear me. This Convention consists of representatives, unequal in number, of self-constituted associations. The Convention of the people, to be hereafter convened, having the responsibility of decision, ought to be left perfectly free to form the best judgment in its power, under the actual juncture of circumstances that may exist at the time of its meeting. It ought neither to be instructed nor superseded by the pre-determination of an irresponsible body—irresponsible I mean in any official point of view. Such pre-determination will make an issue not called for by the occasion, that must result in popular agitation within the State. It will make divisions among ourselves, and disclose feelings have not heretofore existed, and ought not to exist. In fact, it will defeat, rather than promote the end contemplated. To show how it will operate on our friends in other States, I need only refer to the consequences of movements of a similar character. I say, here that from the time that prominent men in South Carolina intimated a purpose to put the State on the track of separate secession, in disregard of the co-operation of her neighbors, they deprived our real friends of the power of helping us. If they did not altogether alienate our friends from their devotion to the Southern cause, they gave their opponents great advantage over them. In fact, a Southern party at Washington, that was fast organizing, was dissolved. They were willing to move as fast and as well as they could. What would have been their final resolve and measures, I know not. But I do know that they felt that they were separated from their true friends by intimations for which their people were not prepared. Our ancestors made no such advertisement of their purposes as to enable others, opposed to them, to force and defeat them. In general, they were by their acts ahead of their resolves; and never made the latter without previously having means to accomplish them. We seem to reverse this order. We give long notice, in the form of speeches and threatening resolutions. The consequence has been that short performances have followed long advertisements, for the reason that we lost the aid of our true allies. There are now friends in other States willing to do all they can, under the circumstances of their situation. I fear they will be driven to disavow us; and, if left to themselves, they might have pursued a course to maintain the

true but much abused cause of the Southern States.

The measures intimated in the draft of the address, and in some of the resolutions, will not allow many of this body to vote upon them. All who are members of the Constitutional Convention of the people, cannot give a vote to control their future judgment. They ought not to be required to do so. I have conversed with several of them, and they have come to a common conclusion to give no vote upon any matter upon which they will have to deliberate, when there shall be a real occasion for their officially responsible judgment. I find myself in that class. What may be the situation of things when the Convention shall be called on to decide, I know not. There may be many instructive developments and revelations before that time. Madness and infatuation take their course with a blind confidence, and at the next session of Congress I shall look for some of their usual exhibitions.

Before I speak of the probable and conjectural action of the Federal Government in reference to South Carolina, should she determine to secede, I will notice some views, and submit some considerations connected with Secession as a remedy for our wrongs.

The right of Secession in the abstract, and the right of resorting to it to effect a wise and beneficial end, in a political and moral point of view, are different things. The one may be conceded as a legal proposition—whilst the other, as it may affect other communities as well as the State itself, involves high considerations and obligations of duty which no statesman can or ought to disregard.

South Carolina had the option to go in or remain out of the Union; she entered as a sovereign, to enable herself and confederates to protect their rights from Foreign powers, and to promote domestic tranquility. If these ends should not be accomplished—but in fact, if it should turn out that the Government is used exclusively for one portion of the partners to the oppression and detriment of others—the suffering parties should have the right of resuming their original position. To say otherwise would be to make free States as they entered into the Confederacy, not merely parties to a despotic Government, but victims of it against their consent. But whether secession be conceded as a legal right, or as a measure of revolution, is immaterial, if there be a real occasion to resort to it, and it can be used to effect some great political end worthy of its exercise. If it should end in merely separating the State from her former confederates, and placing her in a condition that would require her to invest herself with all the attributes and duties of a sovereign nation, both at home and abroad, then it might bring South Carolina into a situation of isolation, at war with her true interests and policy. If she should resort to this measure, with a view of bringing her neighbors into a political connection, so as to enable them jointly to form a Confederacy for themselves, that would be adequate for all the purposes of maintaining their rights at home and relations with foreign powers, then it becomes a question of the greatest magnitude, full of consequences that should be looked to with all the care and intelligence that can possibly be employed. The State should take no course that would make rivals and adversaries of her Southern neighbors. On the contrary she should endeavor by all possible means to act with them as allies. If the State should look to nothing beyond her own secession, she will enable the Federal Government to make rivals of those who in interest are, and in feeling should be, her friends.

I make the broad remark, that there is not a public man in South Carolina sensible of a responsible trust, and foreseeing the inevitable consequences of separate secession, that would put the State on trial of that experiment, if the act were to operate exclusively on the State itself such an act would not only cut off our commerce, but would place it in the hands of our rivals. In assuming such an attitude, it would be the duty of the State to make arrangements for the management of her rights abroad. Her pride would revolt at sending forth her flag, without some navy to protect it, and without ministers and consuls to represent her rights, and protect her interest abroad. No nation can rely on the forbearance of others, when there may be a collision of interests, or a temptation to violation. At any rate, I would not allow the palmetto flag to float by sufferance only. Whilst it would represent as proud, as spirited a people as ever lived, it would