

Direct Responsibility of the Representative to his Constituency.—Interesting Letter from Jefferson Davis.

From the Jackson (Miss.) Clarion.

We are gratified to have the opportunity to publish the following letter, written by Hon. Jefferson Davis in reply to inquiries designed to elicit his opinion upon a subject of vital importance: BEAUFORT POST OFFICE.

HARRISON CO., MISS., Dec. 14, 1878.

My Dear Sir:—This day I received your letter of the 12th inst. asking for my opinion as to the right of the Legislature of a State to instruct her Senators in Congress.

Personally a disinterested observer, I stand upon the political river, earnestly watching whatever it may bear, but without any purpose except to record and to back up my opinions, however, upon any subject which interests Mississippi, as they always will be, at the service of my friends who may desire to have them.

The government of the United States is essentially representative, and the consequence of the elected sovereignty of the people, and the individuality of the representative to his constituency would be to attack the foundation of our political system. The two houses of Congress represent, the one the people of the States themselves. If the people of a Congressional district were to assemble and instruct their representatives upon any particular question, who will gain any right to do so, or his duty to obey?

In the past the Union it is provided that the representatives of the States, their Senators, should be chosen by the people, and that the Legislatures do, in that connection, express the voice of the State, and the Senator who accepts his election by the Legislature, as such expression of the State would seem to be estopped from contending at any future time that the Legislature was not the proper channel through which the State should speak to him.

It has been the practice of the Democracy either to obey instructions or to resign the office held from the people so that their constituents might, if they so desired, select some one else who would more truly represent them. Nor has this been confined to the Democracy. The Statesman who has been called the expounder of the constitution, when the wild waves of abolitionism were beating against the bulwarks of the constitution, and threatening its subversion, in view of the prospects of reverting to the original system, we had no more compromising to make with abuse and with privileged classes, but were offered a clear-sight, on which the charter of human liberty and the supremacy of law might be written.

The people of each independent State, possessing sovereign power, organized for itself a government of its own, and to legislate. In the republic of Rome the government was one of order, the patriarchy and the people having conflicting powers. In neither of these could representations such as ours have been the foundation of government. Therefore we had to be a law unto ourselves. Whereas all other modern republics were founded upon a representative system, we had no more compromising to make with abuse and with privileged classes, but were offered a clear-sight, on which the charter of human liberty and the supremacy of law might be written.

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In the State governments as well as in that of the United States, power was attended by a correlative responsibility of those who from either received or exercised power. It was not a matter when it was adopted; more wise, perhaps, than the builders knew; for our experience has taught us that corruption, which works in darkness and unseen, may undermine the fabric which could not be directly examined. It is to have, by the Divine Maker, taught the danger of being led into temptation.

In the growth of wealth and luxury, we have seen arise, as the consequence, increased extravagance, waiting on the necessities of which was an army of lobbyists, the agents of powerful corporations, and the influence of a few favored power. Against the influence of these it was safer to trust the body of the people who were beyond the reach of temptation, than the few who are immediately exposed to it.

In opposition to the right of the constituency to instruct, I know of no argument which is not a mere denial of the fact which denies to the people the right to elect an agent of intelligence. If that be true, the corner-stone of our temple is crushed, and it were vain to attempt to prop the superstructure. But is it true? I hope not, I think not and repel the assumption of any man that he has more wisdom than the aggregate of his neighbors.

So, sir, I end as I began with the expression of the belief that the coexistence of liberty and power require the direct responsibility of the representative to his constituency. This is the characteristic and special merit of our political system, State and Federal.

In conclusion, let me express the conviction that unless this be maintained, and the virtue and intelligence of the people keep pace with the demand for both in the exercise of the high power they possess, we must look forward to corruption as an inevitable and fatal result, to be followed by despotism. Very truly, your friend,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

—Washington special to the New York Herald: "There are some circumstances connected with the recent change of the death penalty to imprisonment for life in the case of Blasius Pistorius by Governor Hartranft, of Pennsylvania, which show how carefully the German government looks after the rights of its people even when, as in this case, they are of a religious faith to which the German rulers are hostile." Pistorius was a German Catholic priest up to 1875. He had been for some time chaplain at Tholey, in the diocese of Trier. In that year he was, on his own application, as documents show, allowed to resign his place to come to the United States, where he went to live with his brother, a farmer near Morrisville, Pa. It was here that he became involved in some disputes between his brother—a quarrelsome man—and the neighbors, Blasius fired the shot which killed a man. He was arrested, and fearing that he would not get a fair trial by reason of his poverty and the prejudice against him, he wrote to Mr. Von Schlicher, the German Minister here, asking assistance. The Minister's information the German government at once authorized him to employ counsel at its cost, and this was accordingly done, Mr. Stephen Remak, of Philadelphia, being retained by Mr. Von Schlicher. Pistorius was condemned to death on his first trial, got a new trial on the ground of insanity, was recondemned, but his case was brought before the Court of Pardons by his counsel, and on evidence that was of unaccounted mind, the Court changed the sentence to imprisonment for life. It is remarkable that, while waging a political war against the Catholic Church at home, the German government has taken such pains to defend the life of this poor Catholic priest, about whose inferiority of mind there seems to be no doubt.

Lucius Q. C. Lamar.

A born leader of men is he whose name lends this article. A statesman in the strictest sense of that much-abused word, he has by his broad and liberal views of national policy been the strength to his country in the dangerous and crucial years which have marked the greatest political and social upheaval through which any nation has ever passed, and the biography of Senator Lamar will in the years to come be the history of the character and intelligence of the South in its struggle with bold and unflinching party.

Some groups of the Left, including the Bonapartists, will support M. Grevy, whose election will be nearly unanimous. The Legitimists will probably abstain. M. Martel, President of the Senate, will preside over the congress. MM. Gambetta and Dufaure are to congregate, while M. Grevy. It is understood the ministry will move that the Chambers, after the election, adjourn for a week, to allow time to settle pending questions. It is the general opinion of the Deputies of the Left that the present Cabinet should remain in office. Gambetta, extending his term, was decidedly the leader, but it is reported Dufaure announced his intention of retiring to private life.

4.30 p. m.—On the assembly of the Chamber of Deputies, Grevy read a letter from MacMahon announcing his resignation, amidst profound silence. He then read the articles of the constitution applicable to the situation, and announced that the two Chambers would meet in congress at 4.30 p. m. The sitting was then suspended.

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SECTION 2. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.

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PARIS, Jan. 30—4 p. m.

The present ministers will resign and a new Parliamentary Cabinet will be constituted. It is reported that Gambetta will take the premiership and the foreign portfolio. The course of the general public at Versailles is not very clear. The excitement does not compare with that of May 24, 1873, when Thiers resigned. There is no disturbance anywhere.

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KILLED BY A METEOR.—On Thursday night last, Leonidas Grover, who resides in the vicinity of New Town, Conn., was killed by a meteor, which probably without parallel in this or any other country. Mr. Grover was a widower, living on his farm with a married daughter and her husband. On the evening referred to the married couple had been absent on a visit to some neighbor and upon returning at a late hour came out on the road, and were startled by the appearance, in usual order, and supposed the daughter arose, and having prepared breakfast went to the adjoining room to call her father, and was terrified by finding on lying upon his shattered bed, a mutilated corpse.

Her screams brought the husband quickly to the bedroom, and an inspection disclosed a ragged opening in the roof, directly over the breast of the unfortunate man which was torn through as if by a cannon shot. The body was found lying on a bed of feathers, and other holes showed the direction taken by the deadly missile. Subsequent search revealed the fact that the awful calamity was caused by the fall of a meteorite and the stone itself, pyramidal in shape and weighing twenty pounds and having a sharp point, was found stained with blood, was unscarred from a depth of nearly five feet, thus showing the fearful impetus with which it struck the dwelling. The position of the corpse, with other surroundings, when found, showed that the victim was asleep when stricken and that death in him was painless.

A NEW POSTAGE STAMP.—The Post Office Department has ordered a new postage stamp to be used on letters not paid for. Heretofore a letter being sent without postage has been held in the office at which it was mailed. The postmaster at this office then writes to the individual addressed, saying that such a letter has been held in that office for him, the postage not having been prepaid. The new stamp which has just been ordered under the new regulation is put on the letters not prepaid and the postmaster at the office of its destination, who is charged with the amount due, and to collect the same from the person addressed on delivering the letter. A new stamp has also been ordered to be put on the letter referred to, and the carrier, who has been made responsible for the collection of the postage. This new stamp is intended as a check upon the carrier, who is thereby prevented from pocketing his collections. The new system accords somewhat similar to the bull-punch of the street car conductors.—Boston Herald.

A Pennsylvania man suggests a novel plan to close bar-rooms. His idea is for every man that drinks whisky to make his wife the bar-keeper; to let her buy a gallon of whisky, and retail it out to himself at the price he is accustomed to pay elsewhere. Every gallon of whisky a man buys at a saloon he pays two dollars for the whisky and four dollars and a half to the man who hands it over the counter to him. By making his wife the bar-keeper, the man pays a dollar and a half to himself at the price he is accustomed to pay elsewhere. A man who has been discovered in a saloon in California. Through a system of experimental surveys its extent is found to exceed four miles, and adorned with decorations of dazzling beauty unsurpassed in character on the Pacific slope. It is said to be a sheet of snow lying loose in large flakes on a pane of glass.

The New York Sun says: Many of the samples of coffee from New York and Brooklyn groceries, sent recently for analysis, are found to contain chichory, pure and simple, or chichory and cereals. The most disgusting discovery thus far made is that blue clay can be so ground, milled and roasted as to present a perfect semblance of the coffee bean. Fancy beginning the day by swallowing a decoction of blue clay.

A gambler belonging to a farmer of Glenburn, Me., etc. so got so drunk one day that he laid down as if dead! The farmer plucked his feathers and threw his body away, but the bird being drunk instead of dead, revived and stood shivering upon the perch when the farmer went to feed his fowls the next day.

Just think of it! New orders are now being paid in strawberries, cucumbers and tomatoes. They are sold at fabulous prices. They are earlier this year than usual.

In the Little Rock Senate, a motion to remove the portraits of Grant and Lincoln, and substitute those of Lee and Jackson, was defeated by a vote of 18 to 9.

Harriet Beecher Stowe believes in spiritual manifestations. She claims that she has received messages from Charlotte Bronte, the Duches of Sutherland and others.

The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad paid off its employees in gold, taking the gold, instead of currency, from the First National Bank of Omaha as a favor to the bank.

Baltimore has built a city hall for less than the estimate, and has a fire department that cost last year \$10,000 less than the appropriation. This thing must be stopped.—Boston Post.

Asburton Webster, grandson and the last male descendant of Daniel Webster died in New York, yesterday, of consumption.

Two men still keep a steady guard, day and night, over the grave of Brigham Young, in a small building erected near it.

It is stated that the French export annually 1,000,000 of eggs, valued at \$12,500,000, besides supplying their home market.

Dr. Linderman, Director of the Mint, puts gold product of Georgia into the market at \$100.00.

The three degrees in medical treatment—positive, ill; comparative, ill; superlative, ill.

Rev. Mr. Spurgeon will not marry a person of his congregation to one who is not a professor of religion.

France spends fifteen and a half times as much on her army as her schools.

Alabama claims \$3,000 a year working out her convicts.

Where does the weather go when it clears off.

A man takes no interest in bad investment.

BUY IT IN CASH.—Dr. Price's Cream Baking Powder should be bought only in cash, securely labeled, as it is sold by the powder in no other way. L. B. TOWERS & CO., New York, N. Y.

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