

THE CRISIS IN THE STATE.

GENERAL KERSHAW'S REPLY TO SENATOR ROBERTSON.

The Ku-Klux the Direct and Natural Result of Arming the Negro Militia.

CAMDEN, S. C., March 25, 1871.

Hon. T. J. Robertson, United States Senator: DEAR SIR—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 15th instant, and, after giving it that consideration which its grave importance demands, proceed to answer it. This I am compelled to do without that conference with those gentlemen with whom you have associated me, in the address of your letter, which I would gladly have had, if it had been practicable.

I need not assure you of my earnest desire to secure peace and order, and a just and faithful administration of the laws in this ruined and desolated State. The sacrifices I have made of time and labor, sentiment and feeling, and even of the regard of valued friends to promote those ends, are well known to you. Nor need I do more to vindicate the earnest heart yearnings of our good people for peace and security, than to point to their unanimous support of a party which sought, last year, a balm for the healing of the hideous diseases of society, in a concession of legal efficacy and obligation to the amendments of the constitution and the so-called reconstruction acts, asking nothing in return but an honest and just administration of affairs.

These concessions and all overtures for peace were scornfully rejected by the colored people and their leaders. Under the high-sounding and pretentious title of "National Guards," the negroes were armed and equipped with the deadliest and costliest weapons and munitions of war, at the expense of the people. They were excited, incensed and infuriated by the speeches of false and unscrupulous demagogues, who played upon their blind passions and prejudices, as a skillful harp upon the passive and obedient chords of his instrument, until they were ready for a carnival of blood, at the bidding of their leaders. The commissioners, managers and boards of election were so selected, and the election laws so cunningly devised, as to secure the result of the ballot, irrespective of the will of the people.

They were to be, by force and by cunning artifice, negro domination was secured, and the whites were practically disfranchised. The Legislature thus constituted, and many of the public officials, openly, notoriously and shamelessly plundered the people of the State, recklessly squandered the public money, appropriating it to their own uses, and selling their votes and their influence for the passage of laws to open the treasury to corrupt speculators. By these means the expenditures of the State Government have been increased to more than five times the amount required before the war, while the means of the people have correspondingly diminished. The taxes for two years, aggregating more than four millions of dollars, are exacted in this year, a period of greater financial distress than this people has ever experienced since 1865.

Swarms of high salaried officials have been created before unknown to us, and, for the most part, filled with incompetent, negroes or malignant and corrupt white men, who seek to perpetuate their power by fomenting discord between the races. Under these corrupting influences, the negroes, in many places, have become violent, threatening and dangerous. Murder, arson and pillage have stalked through the land almost unrebuked of justice, while every defensive act of the white victims has been magnified into a national crime. All these are facts known to you. That in consequence thereof should be a disturbed condition of affairs in some localities, deplorable though it be, is not to be wondered at. Let us rather be thankful that it has been confined to the Counties of Laurens, Union, Spartanburg, York and Chester. We will consider these disturbances for a moment.

In Laurens and Chester there were collisions between the armed militia, or national guards (negroes), and the whites, in open daylight, the circumstances of which are well known to you. In the other counties disguised parties have, from time to time, within the last three months, administered Lynch law in certain cases. While these occurrences are greatly to be deplored, and some of them merit and have received almost universal condemnation, the most serious of them all, are regarded by the best men who know the facts, as necessary and justifiable acts of self-defense on the part of the whites. It is very generally believed that their prompt action prevented the general war of races, which thoughtful men have regarded imminent for some years past.

While these things have occurred in the counties mentioned, which are all now quieted by the disarming of the militia, in other counties, profound peace has prevailed. Here, for instance, we have enjoyed an unbroken reign of quiet and order. There was, at the last Court of Sessions, not one act of violence demanding investigation, a circumstance which elicited the congratulations of the presiding judge.

There has been no organized and threatening demonstration of the militia, who, though armed, have not, I am informed, been furnished with ball cartridges. On the other hand, I am satisfied there has never been in this county any organization corresponding in any way to what is termed the "Ku-Klux Klan," or any other unlawful association. I take it that this condition of things exists in by far the larger portion of the State. But like causes produce like results, and, therefore, any demonstration on the part of the negroes, and especially the armed militia, which would render our people apprehensive of an attack, would very probably induce organizations for defensive or preventive operations, and possibly lead to similar disastrous conflicts as ensued at Laurens and Chester.

Now you desire my "aid in arousing and concentrating the opinion of all good citizens in favor of law and order." You attribute to me, in common with the other gentlemen whom you have addressed, "intelligence and good intentions." Let me remark by the way, as illustrating one of the many anomalies of the day, that, notwithstanding the confidence thus expressed, the most liberal amnesty bill yet reported by your committee does not propose to place at the disposal of the State, in any official capacity, those qualities which you suppose me to possess. Nevertheless, disfranchised and "unpardoned rebels" though we be, I claim, in common with others similarly situated, to have done more to promote peace and order in South Carolina, than all the so-called loyal people within her borders. I am still for peace—a lasting peace—such as you rightly suppose can only be preserved—in any community by a wholesome "public opinion." My co-operation shall not be wanting in any feasible plan for harmonizing society here. But to be perfectly candid with you, I must declare my settled conviction, that while I do not apprehend any further disturbances, unless there be fresh irritations, there can never be that security which will ever preserve the peace of society, until some of the errors of the past be corrected, and some of our grievances be removed. All class legislation should be repealed. Taxpayers ought to be secured a representation in the Legislature, adequate to their protection. Honest, capable and competent men should be placed in office. Accomplish these things, and this whole people will rise up and call you blessed. Less than this would leave the same causes at work which have produced the prevailing discord, and there could not be that security which constitutes the essential foundation of society. The white people of South Carolina are now enslaved by their former slaves. "Taxation without representation" was the battle cry accepted by our Revolutionary sires—unrepresented and politically disfranchised, we are taxed for want and corrupt purposes beyond all precedent and without even the poor privilege of protest or appeal. Cannot our rulers understand that, sooner or later, even our endurance must give way under such a monstrous imposition?

I propose to invite a meeting of prominent and influential men from each county, to consider the condition of things, and to consult for the common weal. If you, or any of your political associates, can propose anything that will tend to satisfy the demands and necessities of the case—to harmonize and to ameliorate the condition of the people, I doubt not they will consider your suggestions most carefully and respectfully. I shall be most happy to be the medium of any such communications as you may desire to make to them. I trust this proposed measure may meet your approval, as it accords with your own suggestion. I shall invite the co-operation of the other gentlemen named.

Appreciating the sincere and patriotic purpose which induced your communication, and thanking you personally for your good opinions, I am, very respectfully, yours,

J. B. KERSHAW.

HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS!

GLIMPSES OF "SOCIETY" IN COLUMBIA UNDER THE NEW REGIME.

"First Circles" of the State Capital—An Interview with the Leaders of the "Low White Men" of the Radical Party—What they think of Moses, Whitmore and Governor Scott—Their Admiration for Brooklyn and Beecher, &c.

Correspondence of the New York Sun.]

COLUMBIA, S. C., March 18.

"If you want a thorough posting upon political affairs in South Carolina, you must call on the Rollins," said a gentleman with whom I was conversing the other day.

"The Rollins who are they?" I inquired. "Oh, they know everything about the political machine here, and they are the leaders of the colored ton, you must know," said the gentleman. "Society here, since the advent of the new régime, has been completely reorganized. As in New York, so here, money exercises a most potent influence in fixing the status of the people socially, and the money just now is in the hands of carpet-baggers and their colored brethren."

THE ROLLIN FAMILY.

"But who are the Rollins?" I inquired. "They are the élite of our colored society. There are three of them unmarried, and they reside near the State House, the one being the Hon. Charles H. Rollins, Charlotte Corday, and Louisa Muhlbach—very aristocratic names, are they not? The young ladies were educated in Boston, and they have imbibed many New England notions. The one named Corday, that white man who was created for the sole purpose of aiding and supporting the blacks. Their house is a kind of a Republican headquarters. They entertain very handsome, and they are the only white people in Columbia who are on a par with the colored element. It is a grand place, a brother-in-law, and as he is the old hand Stevens of the lower house, the Legislature flocks there to meet him."

REMARKABLE COLORED LADIES.

"Are these young ladies highly colored?" I inquired. "Well, no, not black exactly, but a most beautiful complexion. They are very bright, however, and, aside from certain little faults of a personal nature, which you will not fail to detect, you will find them entertaining. They know all the leading people of the white race, and they wish to know with regard to this Legislature. They know it all. These people used to talk all their secrets before the young ladies, and now that the colored element is at the point of view, they tell all they know, and I can assure you some of their remarks are very rich. You see the spoils have been fairly divided, and you will find that the man begins to get into the white race, and is a castaway. He naturally rebels, and trouble is the result. Then there are little things that are constantly occurring to mar the social harmony of the leading people of the white race. There are some white offenders here, while they were perfectly willing to meet Pompey Augustus at the Statehouse on terms of social equality, were not willing to invite Mrs. Pompey Augustus to their own homes. But the Rollins said that they had a brother-in-law, and as he is the old hand Stevens of the lower house, the Legislature flocks there to meet him."

BEHIND THE SCENES IN COLUMBIA.

The Negroes Still Drilling—How the Administration Keep their Pledges—Northern Newspaper Men on the Field—A Question for the Joint Committee.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

COLUMBIA, S. C., April 1.

Our peaceful and peace-loving citizens took large comfort from Governor Scott's declaration of his intention to withdraw the State arms from the negro militia all over the State. That comfort is well worth worn out by the constant drilling of armed negro troops in our midst. In Columbia this drilling goes on now almost entirely at night, and in their exclusive halls; and this feature adds to the surmise that officers somewhere in the government connive at it, if it is not done directly by order. Across the river, in Lexington, they drill in full outfit of arms and accoutrements in the streets by day. Last Saturday, a week ago—the 15th of March—there was such a drill in this village. My informant saw it.

The entire importance in this matter lies in the fact that the military branch of the State government with the people. The people do not care a button whether the negroes have guns and drill with them or not; but they do care for bad faith, because in that lies all the insecurity involved in this matter. South Carolina is evidently looked to as about to become an important stage for the great drama of sensation; at least, the Northern press seem to take that view of it. There are now more representatives of Northern journals here than usual. In Columbia there are now Mr. A. Pugh, of the New York Sun, who is writing the most telling letters upon our status that have yet gone from the South to any journal not Democratic; and Mr. E. Outbort, of the New York Herald, who is now in other parts of the State for some weeks, and who is getting at the very core of Ku-Kluxism and the negroistic despotism generally; and Mr. H. V. Beecher, who represents the Cincinnati Commercial.

The Legislative committee to "investigate" the affairs of the treasurer, comptroller-general and financial affairs, is in session here, we are told. No interest attaches to their work, for they (or a majority of them) have been selected by the very body that prepared the avenues to the frauds to be investigated. Their names have not been printed in the usual style by their organs, which looks odd. Will this committee dare to produce and publish the registry of those bills of the Bank of the State that Messrs. Neagle, Crews, Rainey and Bosmon, many months ago counted, registered and burned? Will they? Messrs. Rainey and Bosmon ought to demand it.

It is rumored that poor Joe is only awaiting General Sherman's movements, and that he proposes to return to Laurens just so soon as General Sherman will transfer the headquarters of the Army of the United States from Washington to Laurens. Poor Joe has been Kershawed out of every respectable gathering until he looks a little soured.

SPARKS FROM THE WIRES.

—In the boat race between Oxford and Cambridge, the latter won.

—Isthmus of Darien news represent a newly discovered canal route only twenty-two miles long.

—Ex-Senator Howard, of Michigan, was stricken with apoplexy, at Detroit, on Saturday.

—The Commonweal Fire Insurance Company, of New York, suspended on Saturday.

—Orders have been sent from the Navy Department to the commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard to fit out for sea immediately seven vessels.

THE STATE OF THE WEATHER.

WASHINGTON, April 2—7.30 P. M.

The rising barometer and clearing-up weather were reported Saturday evening in the lower Mississippi Valley, spread last night rapidly north and eastward. Heavy or light rains were experienced along the Atlantic coast, with snow in the extreme east. The weather this morning was clear in the Gulf and South Atlantic States, and still continues so; but with falling barometer, and fresh southwest winds, the clearing-up weather on the Middle and East Atlantic and lower lakes is now succeeded by clouds and a falling barometer. A heavy fall in the barometer is reported on the upper lakes. Probabilities: It is probable that stormy weather, with high winds, will be followed on Lake Michigan, threatening weather on the lower lakes and Mississippi Valley, and partially cloudy weather and fresh winds on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts.

THE REBELLIOUS REDS.

BISMARCK OFFERS TO PUT HIS FINGER IN THE PARIS PIE.

Thiers Wants More Time—What the Commune is Doing—High-Handed Measures—A Heavy Payment to Germany—The Return of the French Prisoners, &c.

LONDON, April 1.

Bismarck asks Thiers, in a note, to define a time in which he would accomplish the suppression of the insurrection in Paris. Thiers restated the demand by an expression of the hope that he would succeed in his efforts of conciliation, and concluded by asserting the right to judge when other measures are necessary.

A dispatch from Berlin says, the Kreis Zeitung of to-day announces that a proposal of the French Government to Germany, for an increase of French troops in Paris in consequence of disturbances in that city have been agreed to. The German Government has also promised in case of spread of disturbances to Paris to place the departments occupied by German troops in a state of siege, according to French laws. The number and disposition of German troops in France is not to be changed.

Communications between Paris and Versailles is interrupted. No letters or papers passed between the two cities on Friday. Rumors having arisen that a body of troops, intended for an attack on Paris, had reached Neuilly and St. Cloud, all the western gates of Paris were closed, and several officers of the ordinary eighth battalion of the National Guards were arrested. Complete isolation of Paris is momentarily expected. The Journals Français and Electeur Libre have ceased to appear. The Commune has summoned Colonel Chailleton, who surrendered Fort Mont Valerien to the Prussians, to appear for trial, but he has refused to obey.

Paris advices of the 31st contain information that a committee will leave the Hotel de Ville for Luxembourg. Members of the Commune now administer the affairs of the different arrondissements. The inhabitants continue to come to Paris. Many streets look deserted. The Constitutional was seized yesterday. Bismarck consents to the augmentation of the Paris army to 80,000 men.

SPEAKER MOSES'S HORSE RACE.

"Wasn't Moses one of them, sister?" spoke up the less cautious Louisa. Miss Lottie frowned, but finally said, "Yes, Moses is a very respectable person, although I am ashamed to say so." "Wasn't he a member of the House of Representatives?" I inquired. "No, he was not," she replied. "He was a member of the House of Representatives spoken of so disrespectfully, and I therefore questioned the propriety of his name being put on the race."

"Moses frequently gave \$1000 for a donation," she said, "and in that and other ways he has accumulated a fortune so rapidly. He owns several fast horses, and is a sportsman of no mean order. The other day the whole Legislature adjourned to attend a horse race between one of Moses's horses and another in town. The Moses horse lost the race, and Moses himself lost \$3000. He put the \$3000 loss into the legislative appropriation bill that Governor Scott vetoed. Moses goes into no society here—not even with the whites. He has done his best to get into the white race, and he has long since been expelled from it. He is a-c-a-m-p. I presume you have heard of that detestable man. He exercises a great power over our ignorant colored people, and he uses it for his own advantage. He and Moses are great friends, and they are at the head of all the swindling schemes in the Legislature. Then there is that shocking Dennis; that man, you know, who is a most horrible scoundrel. Dennis is the worst man in the Legislature except Moses. He is worse than Crews, because he is smarter and can work more evil. Dennis is a very frequent visitor to the Statehouse, and he is very unblushing that we were afraid he might compromise us in some way, and so we snubbed him."

WHAT THE FAMILY THINK OF GOVERNOR SCOTT.

"What do you think of Governor Scott's proposal?" I asked. "The Governor is between two fires now. He is endeavoring to please both parties. You see, the Governor sees, as we all do, that change of the State constitution is a firm thing here, and while he wants to avoid an open rupture with the powers that be, he is very anxious to prepare the way to an easy march into Senator Sawyer's place."

THE RESIDENCE OF THE ROLLINS.

Accordingly, when evening arrived we set out to call upon these secret springs of the government of the State. The Rollins residence is a large double house, snugly embowered in shrubbery, and has an air of great thrift. As we entered the gate, I remarked to my companion:

"These Rollins must be wealthy," I said. "I don't know how that is," he replied; "they may be very poor, but they all hang their heads in a very dignified way. They are an imposing class; General Whipper, their brother-in-law, is in the lower house, and McIntyre, to whom another of the girls is engaged, is a white senator from Barnwell. You will see the Rollins in a very different way. They are driving in splendid style. They own a beautiful carriage and horses. And so saying, he pulled a silver-plated bell handle of most enormous size, and the door opened. He bore in his hand a silver tray that nearly touched the floor as he carried it.

"Are the young ladies at home?" said my companion. "Guess they'll walk in de parlor," was the reply, and the immense silver salver was brought to a dead level to receive our cards. They were placed upon it, and Scipio, as I afterwards heard him called, departed for the inner apartment.

INTERIOR OF THE ROLLINS MANSION.

Unlike the parlors of the intelligent white people here, and who have not their fingers in the public purse, with the choice of items, an orange-colored carpet, and a few of the houses of those in Columbia who formerly were rated among the wealthiest in the land, and who were then surrounded by every luxury the art of the day could furnish, the Rollins residence is a very different matter. The walls and bare floors greet the visitor's eye, and the plainest of furniture constitutes the only household comfort. Not so, however, in the Rollins mansion. An Italian marble table, and legislative documents, bound in rich morocco, gave evidence of the tastes and inclinations of their fair possessors. While admiring all this, a faint voice was heard at the door:

"Good evening, gent-l-e-m-e-n!" My friend turned to the door.

"Ah! Miss Kate; good evening. Permit me to present my friend, Mr. P., of the New York Sun."

"Miss Catherine de Medici made a most impressive sweep of her hair, and courted in a very elegant manner. Recognizing the importance of the occasion, I made my very best bow."

"I am delighted to meet Miss Rollins." Before this ceremony was finished Miss Charlotte Corday and Louisa Muhlbach entered the room, to each of whom I was presented.

THE QUEEN OF SOUTH CAROLINA SOCIETY.

The eldest of the young ladies is a bright mulatto of about 25. She is tall, somewhat spare, and affable and agreeable in her manner. She was dressed in black silk dress, with a white apron, which followed her into the room like a wave on the beach. She talks very intelligently, although so rapidly as to be sometimes nearly unintelligible. This difficulty is somewhat increased also by a peculiar mode of pronouncing the letter "y" with a sound almost like "i," and by a Southern pronunciation of the last word of every sentence.

the Sun in South Carolina," said Miss Catherine de Medici, as she drew her chair near to me. "There is so much going on here in the political world that must be of interest to the Northern people. Besides, the great unhealth in the social existence of the people of South Carolina will present many features to your mind, sir, that are quite new, and may seem almost i-m-p-o-s-s-i-b-l-e."

The force of this self-evident proposition I didn't propose to dispute, so I quietly remarked, "Yes, I have seen them already, and am disposed to regard them as facts."

"I don't know," said Miss Lottie, "whether the mere emanation of the North, or except enforce-me-n-t. Some of the worst chagrins here at the North have come down here and brought great contempt upon the colored people by their outrageous conduct and their selfishness. We have by their ambition and selfishness."

SOME OF THE LOWEST WHITE MEN here in office that I have ever come in contact with; men who have come into power solely by the purchase of colored votes; men who antecedent to that, and who are now generally regarded as thieves and scoundrels. I have no patience with General Whipper for noticing some of them."

"I am glad," I finally said, "that the intelligent colored people are beginning to see the evils of this abnormal, dishonest system of government."

"Oh, yes," Miss Kate answered. "We can assure you that we who represent the greater portion of all that is most good for the race of the head that is the colored population—determined to exert every effort on behalf of equal rights to our race. We were educated in Boston, and we are now so dear to us."

"Have you had any difficulty in securing those rights for yourselves individually?" I ventured to inquire.

"No, sir," said Miss Lottie instantly. "I do not misunderstand our position. We are and always have been of the best blood in South Carolina, and, sir, have been rather in a position to regret that to invite the social advances of the white people. Some of them, you see, sir, are so very low that we did not care to hold intercourse with them. We have been quite fortunate with the faculty of Government, and we are now a-c-a-m-p. I presume you have heard of that detestable man. He exercises a great power over our ignorant colored people, and he uses it for his own advantage. He and Moses are great friends, and they are at the head of all the swindling schemes in the Legislature. Then there is that shocking Dennis; that man, you know, who is a most horrible scoundrel. Dennis is the worst man in the Legislature except Moses. He is worse than Crews, because he is smarter and can work more evil. Dennis is a very frequent visitor to the Statehouse, and he is very unblushing that we were afraid he might compromise us in some way, and so we snubbed him."

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