

VIIRGINIA FREE PRESS AND FAMILY JOURNAL.

Virginia Free Press.

BY GALLAHER & CO.

CHARLESTON TOWN,
Thursday Morning, Jan. 17, 1861.
TO PATRONS.

Large amounts will be made out up to the first of April. This paper will be open and ready for all. We will expect letters addressed to us, or else to "G. & C." The funds incident to our business require at least a portion of what we do.

Dec. 25, 1860. GALLAHER & CO.

PUBLIC MEETING.

We have been requested by many citizens to call a meeting of the People of Jefferson County, at the COURT HOUSE in Charlestown, on Monday next the 21st instant, to suggest two fit and proper candidates for the State Convention which will assemble on the 13th of February—gentlemen who are capable of doing that which will *preserve the Union and stop rebellion and secession*. Let the Union loving people of the county meet without regard to party differences, and select such men only as are known to be Conservative.

As the election will take place on the 4th of February next primary meetings should be held in all the precincts on Saturday next, so that the sentiment of the people may be represented on Monday.

The people of the Charlestown District are requested to meet at the Court House on Friday, to-morrow, at 2 o'clock, for consultation.

The News of the Day.

The mails and telegraph bring us tidings of many startling events that we must give up our editorial space to enable us to record even a tithe of them.

In our own Legislature there seems to be something of precipitancy on the subject of Secession, though the word as yet does not stand so prominently. The game of "precipitancy" as initiated by Yancey of Alabama, is being played whilst the bloodiest and last sullen reflection may induce a pause.

The committee of fifteen have reported a bill to the House of Delegates, to provide for electing members of Convention and to convene the same, and the 1st of February is the day fixed for the election of delegates and the 13th as the time for assembling. Rather short notice to members from the interior mountain counties.

The object of the Convention as stated in the first section is "to consider and propose such measures as may be expedient for this Commonwealth to adopt in the present crisis of State and National affairs."

The Convention is to consist of one hundred and fifty two members, elected as members of the House of Delegates are chosen. A letter from Richmond to the New York Herald says:

The whigs in the legislature manifested some show of opposition to the bill, but were overwhelmed, but they are overwhelmed in the general sense every thing which rings through the State and is so faithfully reflected in the Legislature. This opposition however, does not seem to contemplate a dissolution of the Union, but consists mainly in efforts to save the Union, and to gain time for deliberation; but although as slow progress would imply doubt as to the policy of the movement and, perhaps, timidity, the secession members are unwilling to risk the moral prestige of their action by such a pause.

Gov. Letcher on the 7th introduced by letter to the Legislature the House Arthur E. Hopkins and F. M. Gilmer, both natives of Virginia, as Commissioners from Alabama to the State of Virginia. They have doubtless written to the Assembly and sent their addresses to the nature and extent of our sufferings.

Dull people as we are, it requires residents of the "sunny South" to fire our hearts and warm us up to the striking point.

Senator Mason seems to have been well pleased upon what was likely to be done by the Secedes and he made haste to pronounce authoritatively that "Virginia can be neither neutral nor passive. That was the way of non-resistance. The despotism overrunning is to be through war, he says."

The proposed an abolition President by a sectional abolition party has succeeded, compelled the Southern states to rally for their independence and thus we have seen in the exigency of the occasion the Southern states separated from the Union. Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Georgia will certainly follow within the next thirty days and probably in the order named.

In this condition of things Virginia can be neither neutral nor passive. The instinct of the people is to rally around her, and the first act of separation and the first act of the convention will be given for the abolition of the Slave system.

Consequently the Convention bill will now be speedily passed as ought to be and then the whole matter of election of delegates and all reduced to the people. Let the Legislature pass the bill hurriedly and proceed to other business.

Count the Cost.

Every prudent man in private life attends to this maxim, whether he aims to build a house or right & wrong. It would be well for the public servants who now undertake to speak for Virginia on the subject of secession to give attention to this preliminary. A discussion of the Union is spoken of as *disparingly* as if the leaders were merely engaged in a holiday pastime. We have not yet heard one of them attempt to enlighten the people *as to the cost and consequence of division.*

They have no outline of the manner in which the vital interests of the border States are to be guaranteed or secured. They do not inform us how slaves are to be recompensed when we surrendered the right to retain them, nor how much it would cost to keep a guard along the whole Potowmack border, even if we should have no Abolition army to contend with. They do not tell the already overburdened tax payers that the laws must be doubled that the taxes to be taken from his workshop and the student from his books, to manage in the clash of arms.

Those who are keen for a *Secession Convention*, that is what they propose to make it, do not tell the amount of the present indebtedness of the State, the cost of holding the Convention, the amount necessary to put the State on a war footing, nor how much it will cost for the standing army indispensable to a defense of Abolition.

They do not inform the people of Virginia that the secession agitation has already brought State stocks down from 96 to 45 cents in the market, nor that no dollar can be borrowed for the Treasury in a time of general panic. If the government of the United States cannot borrow money at less than twelve per cent, how is Virginia to get it at all, in the midst of an impending war?

Let us give an illustration of what is in store for us. Our neighboring County of Clarke, one of the richest in the State, in proportion to size, in lands and negroes, has expended a large amount of crops for several years. Money is necessarily scarce and the year's taxes, to a large amount, are yet uncollected. The Sheriff puts forth an imploring letter to the tax payers to pay up, and not allow him to appear as one of the delinquent officers of the State, of which there is now great danger. What will be the condition of affairs when the taxes are paid off? Each man can judge for himself.

SIII Further Secession.

The Conventions of Alabama, Mississippi and Florida have severally passed Ordinances of Secession, declaring themselves out of the Union. They proclaim that they "rescind their sovereignty."

How then can it be which never existed a problem which the game of "precipitancy" as initiated by Yancey of Alabama, is being played whilst the bloodiest and last sullen reflection may induce a pause.

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FOR HIRE.
BRICK HOTEL.

TERM FOR SALE.

CONFIDENTIAL BUILDING.

FOR SALE.

VALUABLE ESTATE.

FOR SALE.

HOME.

ST. CECILIA'S HOTEL.

HOTEL.

FOR RENT.

APPS.

