

"THE TRUE INWARDNESS."

Of Frank Burkitt's Resignation As One of the Democratic Electors At Large in Kentucky.

A friend writes me inquiring "the true inwardness" of my resignation as one of the Democratic electors of the State-at-large.

Thinking perhaps there were others desiring the same information, I have chosen to give the public the benefit of frank and candid answer.

My first vote was cast for Seymour and Blair in 1868, and since that time I have consistently voted the Democratic ticket without scratching; always obeying loyally the behest of a majority of the party, no matter whether it met my personal approbation or not. I have been constrained through sense of duty, frequently in the past, to differ with leading members of the party, and have often criticised policies adopted and methods employed to carry them out, thinking that any Democrat had the right to express his views unreservedly prior to a nominating convention, and in that convention even, if in conflict with the opinion of the majority, without detriment to his Democracy. I had believed the Democratic party was fair and honest and big enough, broad enough, deep enough and high enough, in patriotic thought and purpose to permit the discussion, within its ranks, of any economic question, which any number of its members might honestly believe would promote the welfare of the people, without being subjected to gross misrepresentation and vile abuse, and so long as I willingly yielded to the decision of the majority I did not suppose the party would attempt to suppress free thought and free speech. I knew that our National platforms contained an anti-sumptuary law clause, yet I knew many good Democrats were prohibitionists. I knew the Democratic party pronounced against a protective tariff, but Mr. Randall and his followers persisted in the support of high tariff legislation. I knew the Democratic party had declared with a wonderful unanimity in favor of free silver, and

that Mr. Cleveland and his Wall street friends were vehemently opposed to it. Nobody so far as I am advised, ever dreamed of reading the prohibitionists, the Randall protectionists or the mugwump contingent of the money power out of the Democratic party, and hence, I concluded, that as the Democratic party had always laid claim to the honorable distinction of being the party of the people, I might in my humble way advocate measures, which in my judgment would promote the interest of the masses, without forfeiting any right in the party I had earned by a loyal adherence to the principles laid down by Jefferson, for a quarter of a century. Imbued with these convictions I made a canvass last year in favor of the Ocala demands. Mississippi declared against them, and I acquiesced imagining that I would not be required to stultify myself by abjuring the only policy which in my opinion will bring relief to our suffering people and inveighing against my old friends. Under this delusion, I advised those Democrats who believed as I did, not to think of a third party affiliation, but to fight for their principles "in the union." I argued that the Democratic party had declared in favor of some of our demands, and that as conditions changed, the party had in the past changed or extended its policy, in accord with the wish of the majority of its votaries, and that it would do so again, and I urged my friends to contend within party ranks for what they believed to be right and abide the result, thinking those who differed with us, would do the same thing should our views prevail. In this frame of mind, I was appointed by the State convention an elector, and I overlooked the fact at the time, that of the thirty-six delegates and alternates in the National convention and nine Presidential electors, I was the only representative of a class of Mississippi Democrats admitted to have cast one-third of the votes of the party last year. But even this selfish appropriation of the honors of the party might have been forgiven, if the hope I entertained that partial justice would be done the farmers, could have been realized.

That I was mistaken in the belief that the men who controlled the Democracy would be actuated by a spirit of fairness, let the conduct of the party managers in the Chickasaw election case attest. That a want of personal and political honesty prevail, especially in the South, is evidenced by the numerous official defalcation reported in the public press. That intolerance and wrong is oftener upheld than rebuked by the powers that be in the State, a history of the political contests in this country for the past eighteen months will suffice to show. That the constitution fastened upon this people by an arrogant machine, without their consent, deprives a large number of white as well as colored men of their political rights cannot be successfully denied. That the party's desire to do the bidding of Wall street, rather than promote the public good seemed to me to be almost certain when Cleveland was nominated, and when the platform was put forth it was apparent to the most casual observer of American politics, that there was little in it to inspire hope in the breast of the earnest reformer. And as if to demonstrate how utterly unreliable were the pledges of the National Democracy, and how completely the party was dominated by gold bug influences, a Congress with 148 Democratic majority deliberately falsifies its record, turns its coat and votes down the free coinage bill. Another measure—the anti-option bill dear to the hearts of the 20,000,000 agriculturalists of this country, having slipped through the House, is likely to meet the same fate at the hands of Democrats and Republicans alike in the Senate, and in my great disappointment I could but cry out: How long, O Lord! how long?

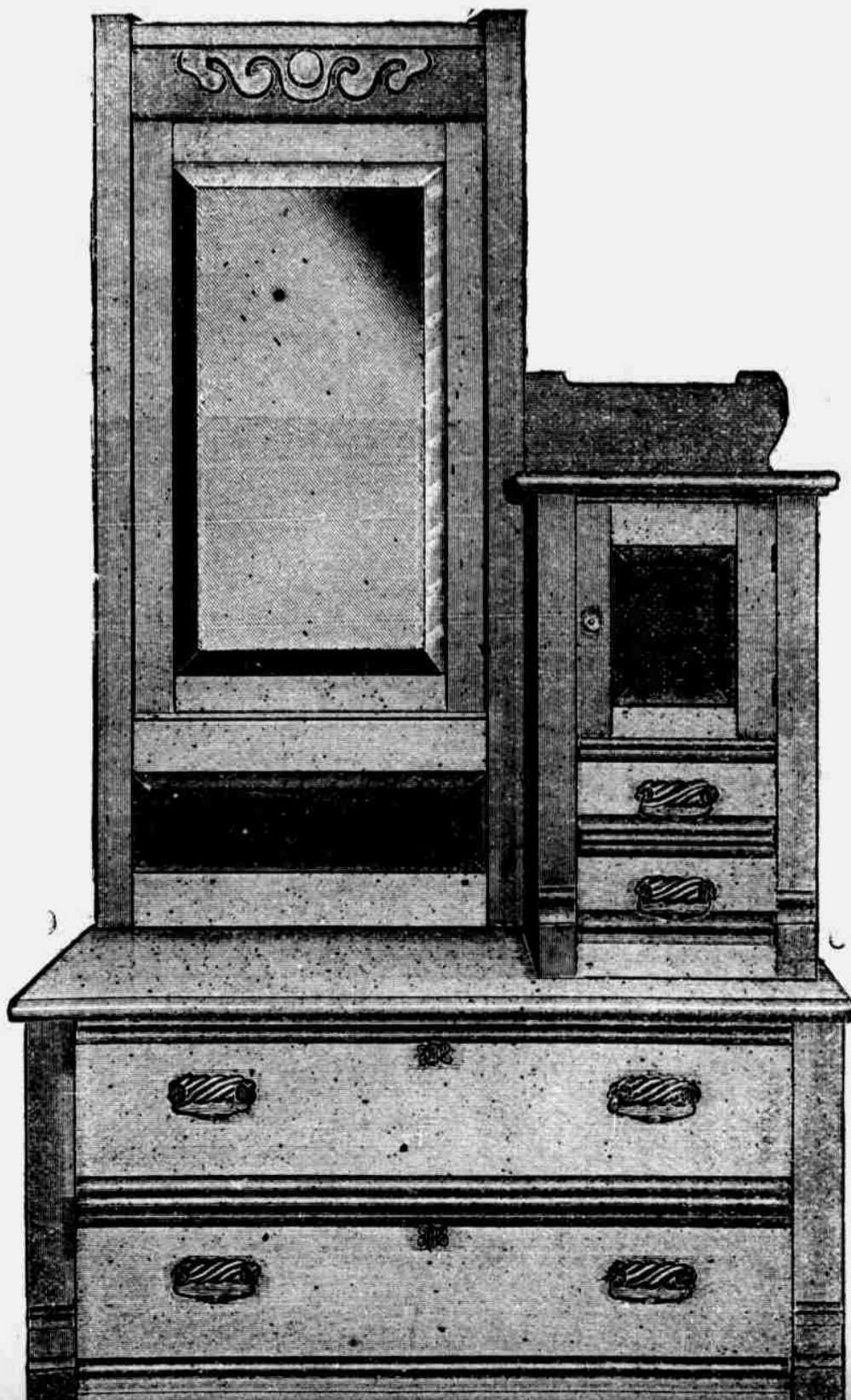
It may be a misfortune of mine, but it should not be considered a crime in a free government, that I was born a plebeian. I inherited my sympathy for the laboring classes, and the material of which I am composed in such that I could not forget the injustice heaped upon the wealth producers of this country, even if the fickle Goddess should smile upon me until I became

a National banker, a railroad king, or a manufacturing Baron. And when I could no longer hope for relief for my people at the hands of the party in whose service I had spent more than twenty of the best years of my life, I could not conscientiously ask my friends to longer delay a movement, which they, because of their superior political sagacity, saw must be made in defense of their wives and children, homes and firesides, and hence there was no honorable course left to me, save to resign the position I held.

When the war cloud lowered in 1861, I was a boy less than eighteen years of age. I knew nothing of the doctrine of secession and I cared less. The boys with whom I played around the log school house, hunted game in the woods, and fished along the silvery streams of my native State, enlisting under the stars and bars, and the only question for me to consider was: "Would I share their fate on the tented field, or would I remain neutral in a contest involving the destiny of Dixie." Hundreds of gray-haired veterans of the "Lost cause"—some of them in Mississippi—can tell how I answered that question. And now a new political organization has arisen. Its ticket, which is a blending of "the Blue and the Gray," has been nominated. Its platform of principles, which invokes the blessings of Almighty God, expresses its sympathy for, and promises relief to the toiling millions of America. The truest and most devoted friends of my manhood have enlisted under the banner of Weaver and Fields, and "sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish." I say to them as Ruth said to Naomi: "Whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." FRANK BURKITT.

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