

PROVISIONAL CONGRESS OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES.

[REPORTED EXPRESSLY FOR THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER.]

SIXTH DAY.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., Feb. 9, 1861.

Congress met this morning at 11 o'clock. Prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Basil Manly, [which, for want of space, we are compelled to omit.]

The Chief Justice of the State of Alabama then administered the following oath to the Hon. Howell Cobb, President:

"You do solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution for the Provisional Government of the Confederate States of America."

THE PRESIDENT. I will now proceed to administer the oath of office to the members of the Congress.

Mr. MEMMINGER. I respectfully suggest that in the administration of the oath, each member shall rise.

THE PRESIDENT then administered the above oath to all the deputies, by States:

THE PRESIDENT. The first business is the call of States, for the presentation of memorials, or other matter.

Mr. MEMMINGER—I conceive, Mr. President, this a fitting occasion to discharge a commission which has been entrusted to me by some of my constituency of South Carolina. I have before me a flag which some of the young ladies of South Carolina present to this Congress as a model flag for the Confederate States of America.

Now, Mr. President, the idea of a cross no doubt was suggested to the imagination of the young ladies by the beautiful constellation of the Southern Cross, which the great Creator has placed in the Southern Heavens by way of compensation for the glorious constellation at the North pole.

I have also, Mr. President, another commission from a gentleman of taste and skill, in the city of Charleston, who offers another model, which embraces the same idea of a cross, but upon a different ground.

THE PRESIDENT—The chair understands that no action will be taken, at present, in relation to the flag which has been presented.

Mr. STEPHENS—I suggest that the States be called, and the deputies select the member for the committee.

The States were called, and the following committee was announced: Messrs. Shorter, of Ala., Morton, of Fla., Bartow, of Ga., Sparrow, of La., Harris, of Miss., and Miles, of S. C.

Resolved, That the President appoint the following committees to consist of five members each, to wit: A committee on Foreign Affairs, on Finance, on Military and Naval Affairs, on the Judiciary, on Postal Affairs, on Accounts, on Engrossments, on Patents, and also a committee on Printing.

On motion of Mr. CRAWFORD, the Congress then went into secret session.

After remaining in secret session for about half an hour, the doors were opened, and Congress proceeded to the election of a President and a Vice President of the Confederate States of America under the provisional government.

The election resulted unanimously for Jefferson Davis, of Miss., for President, and A. H. Stephens, of Ga., for Vice President.

The announcement of the election was followed by warm demonstrations of applause.

Mr. TOOMBS moved that a committee of three be appointed to inform the Hon. Jefferson Davis, of Miss., of his election.

Messrs. Toombs, Rhett and Morton were appointed as the committee.

Mr. PERKINS moved that a committee of three be appointed to inform Hon. A. H. Stephens, of Ga., of his election.

Messrs. Perkins, Harris and Shorter were appointed.

Mr. RHETT moved that Congress go into secret session.

During the secret session the following business was transacted, from which the secrecy was removed before adjournment.

Mr. T. R. R. COBB offered the following resolutions were adopted.

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed from the members of this Congress, representing the State of Alabama, which shall inquire and report to this body upon what terms suitable buildings in the city of Montgomery can be secured for the use of the several executive departments of this Confederacy under the Provisional Government.

Resolved, That the same committee be charged with the duty of estimating and reporting to Congress the necessary expenses for fitting and furnishing such apartments for the official business of such departments.

The committee consists of Messrs. Shorter, Chilton and McRae.

Mr. HARRIS, of Miss., presented the following bill, which was read three times and passed:

SEVENTH DAY.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., Feb. 11, 1861.

Congress met this morning at 11 o'clock. Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Battle, President of the Tuscaloosa Central Female Institute.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we humbly recognize thy hand over us. We would humbly acknowledge thy Providence in the events of this world's history; and we would gratefully acknowledge thy kind care and providence over us at this present hour.

In performing this pleasing duty, allow us to express the hope that you will accept, and we beg to suggest that it would be most agreeable to the body we represent, as you are a member of the Congress, that you should signify to it in person, your consent to serve the country in the high position to which you have been elected.

We have the honor, to be very respectfully, yours, JOHN PERKINS, JR. W. P. HARRIS, JOHN GILL SHORTER. To Hon. A. H. STEPHENS.

From this it appears to be the general desire that I should in person make known to this body, in a verbal response, my acceptance of the high position to which I have been called.

This I now do—in this august presence before you, Mr. President—before the Congress, and before this large concourse of people—under the bright sun and brilliant skies which now smile so auspiciously upon us. I now take the occasion to return my most profound acknowledgements for this expression of confidence on the part of Congress.

It might be expected that this time that I should indulge in some remarks upon the state of our public affairs, the dangers that threaten us, and the most advisable measures to be adopted to meet pressing exigencies.

I am now ready to take the oath of office.

The President then administered to Mr. Stephens the following oath:

"You do solemnly swear that you will faithfully execute the office of Vice President of the Confederate States of America, and will, to the best of your ability, preserve, protect and defend the constitution thereof—so help you God."

Mr. BARNWELL—Mr. President, I move you, sir, that the letter addressed by the committee of this Congress to the Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, informing him of his election as Vice President of the Confederate States of America, with his reply, be entered on the journals of Congress.

Mr. PERKINS—I move that Congress do now adjourn until the usual hour of meeting to-morrow.

Mr. RHETT—I move to amend the motion of the gentleman from Louisiana, by making the adjournment until 12 o'clock to-morrow.

Mr. RHETT's motion prevailed, and Congress adjourned until to-morrow at 12 o'clock.

During the secret session a committee of two from each State was appointed to report on a permanent constitution.

The committee are as follows: Alabama—R. W. Walker and R. H. Smith. Florida—Jackson Morton and J. B. Owen.

Georgia—Robert Toombs and T. R. R. Cobb. Louisiana—A. DeClouet and Gen. E. Sparrow. Mississippi—A. M. Clayton and W. P. Harris.

South Carolina—R. B. Rhett, sen., and J. Chesnut, jr.

Is the Congress of Seceding States a Legislative Body?

It is strange that a question, the answer to which seems so obvious, should admit of any radical differences of opinion. Yet a small portion of the press assume that the Congress now in session is restricted in its powers to certain specified objects, and that its functions terminate with the establishment of a provisional government and the formation of a Constitution.

The Congress is, in fact, a conference of the several conventions by whom it is called into existence, and the deputies of each State represent the ultimate sovereignty of the Convention, as whose plenipotentiaries they act.

So far, I imagine, there can be little difference of opinion among thinking men. The question then arises whether the Congress should make a full grant of all these powers, or only of such as it cannot conveniently and efficiently exercise.

Were we assured of a perfectly peaceful solution of pending difficulties, there might indeed be little practical inconvenience in leaving the provisional federal government without a legislative branch until a permanent constitution goes into operation.

Another difficulty is thus removed. The power of the provisional executive, so far as they can now be granted by the Congress, extends only over the States which that Congress represents.

TELEGRAPH TO LITTLE ROCK—ARKANSAS RIVER.—The Memphis Enquirer, of the 27th inst., says: The lightning bolts have at Little Rock, and we learn that the first dispatch sent over them, was received last evening by Capt. Larry Harmstead.

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