

Spirit of Jefferson

BENJAMIN F. BEALL, Editor. CHARLESTOWN, VA.

Tuesday Morning, April 9, 1867.

THE COUNTY SEAT.

An article which appeared in this paper two weeks ago...

One of those who signs himself "X," has intimated upon the readers of the Shepherdstown Register...

As to the remark of "X" upon the probability of a removal of the county seat being equal to that of taking the county back to Virginia...

Loudoun County. From the Leesburg papers we learn that the people of Loudoun were to have held a Southern Relief Meeting yesterday...

We notice that the Washingtonian states that Jefferson county has given twenty-one hundred bushels of corn...

EDITORIAL BRIEVITIES. The Baltimore Sun of Tuesday says: "We understand that application will shortly be made to the United States Supreme Court...

The New York World, noticing the miserable partisan slander propagated in their own interests by the few radicals of the Maryland Legislature...

The Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Age writes as follows a few days since: "An interesting and animated discussion occurred to-day in the House on the whole question of impeachment..."

Mon. Lewis R. Parsons, one of the Senators elected from Alabama, in writing home from Washington used the following language respecting the military reconstruction bill...

Gen. Lep has sent his check for twenty-five dollars to the Ladies' Memorial Association of Petersburg, as a contribution...

WHITE SWAN KILLED. We learn from the Shepherdstown Register, that Mr. Levi Williamson, residing near Vanleavesville, Berkeley county, killed a white swan...

AMERICAN FARMER. The April number of this magazine has been received, and as usual, is full of matter of much interest to the farmer...

LAND SALE. About fifty acres of land were sold at the sale of the property of the late George Rhodes in Loudoun county...

REMOVAL. Yesterday morning we lost our friends and near neighbors, Ransom & Duke, who have quit their portion of the town and fitted themselves up in the large room of Maj. W. J. Hawk's Coach Factory...

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LOCAL MISCELLANY.

Southern Relief Concert. The Concert for the relief of the destitute of the South, at Hawks' Hall, on Friday evening, was another decided success...

The "Testing on the Old Camp Ground" in which nearly the full strength of the corps was brought out, under the lead of Capt. Brown...

CONGRESSMEN. The Conservative party of Connecticut have done well. The majority of their candidates for Governor is 579...

APPEAL TO THE SUPREME COURT. The important bill, on the part of the State of Mississippi, against the President of the United States, and Gen. E. O. C. Ord, has been filed in the Supreme Court of the United States...

THE AMOUNT TO BE DISTRIBUTED. The amount to be distributed is \$8,018.76. Of this amount Charlestown Township receives \$307.65; Averill, \$405.64; Bolivar, \$558.50; Chapline, \$600.75; Harpers Ferry, \$598.08; Osborn, \$433.81; Shepherd, \$624.83.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN returned from Charlestown township—whites 436, blacks 94; Averill—whites 441, blacks 70; Bolivar—whites 447, blacks 95; Chapline—whites 453, blacks 130; Harpers Ferry—whites 419, blacks 142; Osborn—whites 343, blacks 78; Shepherd—whites 514, blacks 121.

Accompanying this statement we received the following note from Mr. Barry, which will explain itself: "To the Editor of the 'Spirit of Jefferson'..."

JOSEPH BARRY, County Superintendent. HARPER'S FERRY, April 4, 1867.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT. We have received a message from some of "the ladies who took part in the concert" last Friday evening...

FRANKLIN INSURANCE CO., WHEELING, VA. The attention of our readers is invited to the Franklin Insurance Co. of Wheeling, Va., in another column of today's issue.

This Company was organized in 1862, has had a very successful career, having on hand an earned capital of \$75,000. Its stock, commanding in Market \$500 per share for \$100 paid in...

Southern Relief. A meeting was held in Shepherdstown, on Saturday, the 30th ult., with a view to co-operation with the portion of the county in contributing to the relief of the destitute white people of the South...

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Public Meeting.

An adjourned meeting of the citizens of Jefferson county, for the relief of the suffering destitute of the South, was held in the lecture room of the Presbyterian Church, on Saturday, 8th inst.

Resolved, That the thanks of this meeting of citizens, be tendered to the Executive Committee, and to the Ladies of the South, for the purpose of desiring means for the relief of the sufferers of the South...

Resolved, That the Executive Committee be requested to confer with and urge upon the District Committees continued efforts to increase as rapidly as possible contributions.

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Contested Will Case—The Shepherd Estate.

One of the most important suits now pending in this Court, says the New Orleans Picayune, involving between two and three millions of dollars, is the case of the heirs of James H. Shepherd against the heirs of Rezin Davis Shepherd.

James H. Shepherd, a very wealthy merchant of New Orleans, died in July, 1837, leaving a large estate, which he bequeathed all his estate, real and personal, to his brother, R. D. Shepherd, who was his former partner in business.

A sealed letter, written, signed, and dated by James H. Shepherd, was enclosed in the same envelope with the will, which directed that the mother of the deceased should receive all claim to the estate, and that after the payment of some small legacies mentioned, the residue of the estate should be divided among his nephews and nieces.

The children of Moses and Abraham Shepherd, deceased brothers of the late Jas. H. and R. D. Shepherd, and consequently the nephews and nieces of the two late named deceased brothers, now claim that the will of James H. Shepherd is null and void, upon the ground that the bequest involved a substitution, or a fidei commissum, and that as the sealed letter never was probated or carried into effect, the said Jas. H. Shepherd, must be considered as having died intestate, and his estate devolve upon his legal heirs.

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Affairs in Berkeley.

From the last issue of the New Era, we extract the following items of Berkeley intelligences.

COURT PROCEEDINGS. Kitchen vs. Graham. We referred to this case in our proceedings last week. It is a war between us and when we closed our report the jury had not agreed upon a verdict. Damages claimed, \$5,000. The jury seem however to have concluded that this was rather an extravagant demand, and brought in a verdict of one cent damages, which, we think has given very general satisfaction in the community.

SHARON vs. Nadebousch. False imprisonment. This was also referred to in our last week's report. Damages claimed, \$5,000. Verdict of the jury, \$2,000. Motion made for a new trial upon the following grounds: That the damages were excessive, and that the defendant was an officer in the Confederate Army—that the Confederate Government was a Belligerent Power, and that acts done under its authority, exonerate the party from personal liability. This surprised and astonished pretty generally all whom we conversed with.

SUDDEN DEATH. Mrs. Ringer, an aged lady and old resident of this city, died very suddenly Tuesday evening. She had walked out to visit her daughter, and on her return was taken suddenly ill on the street near Robinson's Drug Store. She was carried into the store and medical assistance summoned, but it proved of no avail—she expired in a few moments thereafter.

Big Corn. An ear of corn, grown upon the land of the heirs of the late Wm. Hill, near Hainesville, has been sent us, which "tops" anything of the kind we have seen this season. It counts 1200 grains. Hard to beat.

A match game of base ball will come off next Saturday between the first nine of the Star Club and the first nine of the Virginia Club. This will be the opening game of the season, and although the players are out of practice we may expect an interesting and exciting contest.

James A. Boyd, Esq., of this place, has been appointed Assistant U. S. Assessor for this county. No better appointment, or one that will give more general satisfaction, could have been made.

Another Confederate General's Views on Reconstruction. Major General Wm. T. Martin, of Mississippi, writes to the Natchez Courier: Natchez, March 9, 1867.

I have been mortified to learn that in certain portions of this State I have been represented to be an advocate of approving acquiescence in the recent legislation of Congress affecting the Southern States.

I am not willing to be classed with Brown, of Georgia, and others, who, having proved false to the South in their hour of need, are now willing to barter their birthright for a mess of pottage.

Powerless now, we have only to bear with the tyranny to which we are to be subjected, by a majority which overrides the Constitution, and would debase and ultimately destroy our government by leaving the rights of the citizen to the mercy of an accidental majority of Congress, in which a little more than two-thirds of the States are represented.

I prefer to take my place on the roll of honor, with the disfranchised of my native land. Very respectfully, WILL T. MARTIN.

West Virginia Enterprise. An enterprising young West Virginian has been distinguishing himself down South. His aim seems to have been to qualify himself for a seat in the Legislature at home. If he will return here, can be elected. The facts are these:

James Clay Potts, a young man of twenty years of age, having from Simpson Station, on the Northwestern Virginia Railroad, employed by the Southern Express Company as messenger on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, absconded from West Point, Mississippi, on the 13th ult., taking with him a pouch containing over \$20,000. The Company offer a reward of \$2,500 for his arrest.

Clay Potts are frail ware, at best, and the petter who had power over the clay in this instance seems to have made the vessel "unto dishonor." James was evidently composed of poor material; he was "of the earth, earthy," and his will prefer vessels of a different composition. Doubtless they already incline to iron Potts.—Wedding Register.

HASTY BURIAL. An Italian in Mobile was put in his coffin while in a trance, as he was supposed to be dead. Upon arriving at the graveyard the friends of the deceased found the coffin had been partially broken open, apparently by force exercised within. They at once held a consultation, which resulted in the opening of the coffin, when the apparently dead man showed unmistakable signs of life. Although there was evidently life, there was no consciousness. The whole strength of the almost buried man had been thoroughly exhausted by his efforts to make his condition known to his friends, and his consciousness deserted him simultaneously with the bursting of the lid by his frantic exertions to save himself, for he was certainly dead when the physician who was sent for arrived on the ground.

The New Orleans Times relates: "A book keeper" who had served his employer faithfully, was continually disappointed in his application for advancement, the employer telling him, "Never mind I'll mention you in my will." In the course of years, the book-keeper meantime rendering faithful services, the employer died, and the book-keeper finding that he had not been mentioned in the will, he thereupon brought suit. Witnesses testified his claim was just, and that these promises had been made. The consequence was that he recovered \$15,000 of the estate."

DREAFUL DISASTER.

Great Colliery Explosion—More than Seventy Persons Killed. DETAILS OF THE CATASTROPHE. Most of our readers are familiar with the coal dug from the Clover Hill Pit in Chesterfield county, about twenty-one miles from Richmond by road, and thirty-one by rail, the company's branch railroad nineteen miles in length, connecting at Chester, 12 miles from this city, with the Richmond and Petersburg railroad. These mines, which have been worked for many years, consist at present of three pits, known respectively as the Bright Hope, Raccoon and Hall's pits, and from these pits were raised last year about 900,000 bushels of coal. Both of the last named pits having been for some time submerged, operations in them were temporarily discontinued, and the Bright Hope mine was the scene of a terrific explosion on Wednesday last, which, without a moment's warning, buried nearly a hundred human beings in its grasp. What was the cause of the disaster must ever remain an impenetrable secret, for the lips of all who might have explained the mystery, are closed by the death which spared none to tell the tale. It is supposed however, to have been caused by the neglect of a drunken gasman to discharge the duties of his office, which are to examine, with one of his safety lamps, the condition of the air, and attend to the proper ventilation of the pits, this ventilation being kept up by means of doors opening on various portions of the pits, the purification of the air in this mine being additionally secured by a powerful fan driven by the pit engine.

There are, however, many other causes which may produce an explosion in the mines, one of these being a tumble, or (as it is technically termed by the miners) a fall, which occurs when a portion of the roof falling in, admits into the mine the impure gases which may have accumulated above, and which, taking fire from the lights used by the workmen, is sometimes the cause of an explosion; but, as we have already said, the cause of the late disaster will never be ascertained.

We are informed, however, that a few days since a portion of this pit threatened "a fall" and that Mr. Owen was preparing to put in scaffolds to prevent the danger. The pit has two shafts (used respectively for ascending and descending) running 850 feet beneath the surface of the earth, but so powerful was the explosion that the over-seers on the platform at the entrance to the shaft were greatly jarred, and so terrific the heat of burning gas that the tops to the buckets in which two or three poor fellows were at the time ascending to light and life, was instantaneously severed as though by a knife, and the unhappy men with lightning-like rapidity were hurled back to an awful, but happily, a speedy death.

The number of operatives in the employ of the Clover Hill Company is nearly 200, and a little village, with a population of about one thousand, has sprung up on the side of the pits, and when the tidings of the disaster, which had killed some seventy men, spread through the village, the excitement, suspense, and agony were intense.

The mouth of the pit was soon surrounded by some hundreds of persons, and the shrieks, moans and lamentations of the female friends of the victims were indeed horrible to hear. Stern men, who had faced the horrors of many a battle field, were unable to bear the heart-rending scene, and weeping like children, turned away utterly unmanned.

The following letter, which was received on yesterday, will enable our readers fairly to imagine the extent and the horrors of the catastrophe. CLOVER HILL, April 4, 1867. D. S. Woolridge, Esq.

Dear Sir:—When the pit bottom was reached last evening it was ascertained that the lumber house in the pit, which contained some powder, was on fire. I endeavored to get the men to put it out, which, no doubt, could have been done; but the men feared the danger of another explosion, and were unwilling to work. The pit has been again examined this morning, and the fire is so small that it could be managed if the men were willing to risk the danger. Under all the circumstances, I have determined to save the pit by closing both shafts. We are now engaged in this work.

All of the men, about seventy in number, and all the mules that were in the pit are of course lost. The bodies cannot be recovered until the fire is extinguished and the pit is reopened. Very respectfully, J. H. Cox.

Of the victims of the explosion some twenty or twenty-five were whites, the remainder being negroes.

How to be Radical. Hug a wench, damn a Democrat, join church, want to get everybody ho "can't see it" just as you do, steal something and elude the vigilance of officers, hollow out buttons every chance, carry one vest-pocket full of chloride of lime and the other full of nigger "hair," to kill the stench arising from off-whisky-drinking Democrats, avoid intercourse with anybody but yourself, and then not too long at a time, for fear that your "loyalty" may become contaminated by disloyalty as, sometimes, being a member of the "hoop" for the man and the brother, the rebellion would not have brought on an end, "friz" your hair and don't wash your face, so that you may look as little like a Democrat and as much like a nigger as possible. Follow these rules out and you will at once become a "sweet-scented peppermint drop" in the jug of unadorned, unbleached and thick-lipped abolition principles.—People's Defender.

Trial of Mr. Davis.—The Washington correspondent of the New York Tribune, writing last Friday, says: Judge Underwood of Virginia has been here for several days, in conference with the Attorney-General, respecting the trial of Jefferson Davis. It is the intention of the Court to have this case tried at the May term, and it is understood that Chief Justice Chase will preside. The objections which were made by the Chief Justice in regard to the military having control of that State, are likely to continue for some time under the Reconstruction act. General Schofield, it is said, will shortly address a letter to Chief Justice Chase, in which he will state that the Court can hold its sessions and proceed with the trial whenever he is ready, and that this matter is disposed of in some way at its next term of the Court, it is pretty certain that the President will release Mr. Davis.

Congress having appropriated \$50,000 to purchase seeds to be distributed throughout the Southern States, Hon. Isaac Newton, Commissioner of Agriculture, is now making preparations to distribute them, and during the present month a large portion will be forwarded to farmers and planters in the South. It is the desire of Mr. Newton that the farmers shall receive the seeds as soon as possible, in order that they may be immediately used.

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