CHAPTER XXII.

THE SECESSION CONVENTION DESCRIBED BY SURVIVING MEMBERS.

AS SEEN BY M'GREW OF PRESTON.

Hon. James C. McGrew of Kingwood, West Virginia, was a member of the Richmond Convention of 1861, colleague of Hon. William G. Brown. He is now at the age of eighty-eight the president of a bank in active service, the possessor of a large property which he cares for, and is more active and capable than many men at fifty. Learning that Mr. McGrew was still in good health and activity, the author wrote him in June, 1900, to ask if he would contribute for these pages his recollections and impressions of the Convention and of some of the Western members. His reply (written on type-writer with his own hand) was addressed to the author; and except the address is given without alteration. The day he mailed it, Mr. McGrew says in a P. S., he completed his eighty-seventh year.

Kingwood, W. V., September 14, 1900.

Not until now, since writing you in July, have I been able to command sufficient leisure to fulfill the promise to tell you something about the Virginia Secession Convention; and now that I have set myself about it, I find that I cannot be sure of entire accuracy in stating facts which occurred near forty years ago; having to depend largely on a memory somewhat impaired by age. I believe a full and complete report of the
Proceedings of the Convention, including the many able speeches, has never been published. It would be interesting reading now.

Although there existed great dissatisfaction in the western part of the State growing out of the inequality of taxation, there was no demand among the people at the time for an extra session of the General Assembly. Under the Constitution, that body sat biennially, and the winter of 1860-61 was the period of vacation. Various reasons for convening the Legislature were given in the Governor's proclamation—such as "State legislation," "ratification of the sale of the James River and Kanawha Canal to a body of French capitalists," and "to take into consideration the condition of public affairs." These were mere pretexts, the sole purpose being to open the way to secession of the State.

The calling of the Convention was in open disregard of well-established precedents and was clearly a usurpation. Never before in the history of the State had a State Convention been
called for any purpose without the question being first submitted to a vote of the people and sanctioned by a majority of the voters. There was no demand by the people at the time for a convention; and there is no room for question that at the time the legislature passed the bill requiring the Governor to issue his proclamation calling a convention, it was known to the secession conspirators with a good degree of certainty that a large majority of the good people of Virginia were opposed to secession; and that if the question of holding a Convention for the purpose of considering the right and expediency of the State to secede from the Union and join the Southern Confederacy were submitted to the voters, there would be a large majority against it. At the then recent presidential election, the electoral vote had been carried for Bell, the candidate of the Whig party; and when the members of the Convention came together it was ascertained that out of the number one hundred and fifty-two, eighty-five were adherents of Bell; the remainder being almost equally divided between Douglas and Breckenridge.

When the bill authorizing the Convention to be called was under consideration in the House of Delegates, a proposition was submitted to first take a vote of the people. This was fiercely opposed and defeated by the Secessionists. It did not accord with the wicked plans of the conspirators to consult the wishes of the people; they had determined that nothing should stand in the way of their diabolical purpose to carry the State out of the Union. This was declared by that arch conspirator, Henry A. Wise, when in the first speech he made in the Convention he made this declaration: "It is perfectly immaterial, gentlemen, whether you carry the State out of the Union by ordinance or not. If you do, it is well; if you do not, we will carry her out by fire and sword; and by all the gods, ye shall have war!"

The Convention assembled on the 13th of February; and it soon became apparent that there was a large preponderance of sentiment among the members in favor of Virginia remaining in the Union. This was made manifest in some degree by the election of John Janney, a Union man, over Valentine W. Southall, a Secessionist, President of the Convention by a vote of 70 to 54, and was confirmed in a degree by the vote on a
resolution thanking John J. Crittenden—which was fiercely resisted by Henry A. Wise—for his efforts in the United States Senate to bring about an adjustment of the then existing national difficulties; which vote stood 108 for and 16 against.

John Janney had been all his life a Whig, but had never been prominent in politics; and consequently was unfamiliar with the devious way of politicians. It has been said of him that he was "a man of pure heart, undoubted probity, and possessed of great practical wisdom." In his remarks on taking the chair he alluded to the "important position Virginia had occupied in framing the Constitution and forming the Union of the States." He said that under that instrument many blessings had been enjoyed, and feelingly alluded to the "old flag" then floating above them, which he trusted would remain on the capitol of Virginia forever." The Union men felt encouraged.

On the 16th, in obedience to a resolution passed the previous day, the President proceeded to appoint a "Committee on Federal Relations," to which should be referred all resolutions touching Federal relations and kindred subjects. Unacquainted with most of the members and their opinions on the subject of secession, President Janney readily accepted such suggestions as the conspirators saw proper to make regarding appointments on this Committee; hence its composition is readily accounted for—fourteen Secessionists and seven Unionists. It was composed of the following: Robert Y. Conrad, Henry A. Wise, Robert E. Scott, William Ballard Preston, Lewis E. Harvie, W. H. McFarland, William McComas, Robert L. Montague, Samuel Price, Valentine W. Southall, Waitman T. Willey, James C. Bruce, William W. Boyd, James Barbour, Samuel C. Williams, Timothy Rives, Samuel McDowell Moore, George Blow, Jr., Peter C. Johnson, John B. Baldwin, John J. Jackson—21.

Resolutions—some by Union members, but mostly by Secessionists—were rapidly offered and referred. Those offered by the latter, while expressing divers sentiments and great regard for the Constitution and the Union, generally found the remedy for what they called existing wrongs in secession of the State; and they bore such a strong resemblance to each other in verbal construction as to create a suspicion that they had a common origin in the councils of the secession cabal and had
been put into the hands of their friends from different sections of the State for presentation so that they might have the greater effect on the minds of weak Union members.

The plans of the conspirators were adroitly laid, and successfully put into operation. They evidently knew from the beginning that they would have a strong Union sentiment to combat in the Convention and to overcome, if possible. A part of the machinery prepared for this purpose was the introduction to the Convention, five days after it met, of three commissioners from Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi: Henry L. Benning, John S. Preston, and Fulton Anderson; each of whom addressed the Convention, evidently by pre-arrangement with the conspirators. These addresses were eloquent, especially that of Benning; and not only eloquent but adroit. He appealed to the passions of his hearers and to their pride as Virginians; and pictured in glowing colors what their State would surely become as a member of the Southern Confederacy. He promised honor to her sons and prosperity to the State; security against the North for the institution of slavery, and many other things. The addresses had their intended effect on the minds of a number of Unionists, producing some defection from their ranks, but not sufficient to overcome their majority or to make it safe for the conspirators to relax their efforts further to deplete it.

On the 9th of March the Committee made a partial majority report in which "sovereignty" was declared to "rest in the States," slavery was held to be "a vital element in Southern socialism," and any interference by State or Federal government was offensive and dangerous. The eighth resolution claimed it as "the right of the people of the States for just causes to withdraw from their association under the federative head, and to erect new governments; and that the people of Virginia would never consent that the Federal power should be exercised for the purpose of subjecting the people of such States to the Federal authority." The ninth resolution recognized the right of the Gulf States to secede; and the eleventh resolution contained a threat that if certain demands named in other of the resolutions were not complied with by the Federal government, then Virginia would resume the powers granted under the Constitution of the United States "and throw herself upon her reserved rights."
This committee report, which was made on the 14th of March, was made the order of the day in committee of the whole and at once became the signal for a general onset between the Union men and the Secessionists. The debate began at once and continued for about twenty-two days. It was characterized by great heat and great ability on both sides. The vehemence and malignancy of the conspirators was met by the sturdy determination and eloquence of the Unionists in defense of all that was revered in the history of the country, and all that went to make the country prosperous and strong and the people contented and happy. The resolutions were voted on separately. Some were stricken out, others amended on a basis generally favorable to the Union cause.

During the contest, a Secessionist offered a substitute for the sixth resolution providing that an ordinance of secession from the Federal Union should be submitted to the people of Virginia at the annual election in the following May. This proposition was defeated by a vote of forty-five for and eighty-nine against. The Unionists were elated by the result of their fierce contest, which seemed to show such a decided opposition to disunion; but it aroused the conspirators to greater activity than before, if such were possible.

Alarmed at the strength of the Union sentiment in the Convention, the conspirators had early in the session quietly sent out instructions to their friends in the several counties and boroughs in which Union delegates had been elected by small majorities to hold meetings and pass resolutions instructing their delegates. Accordingly reports were sent in from thirty-seven counties and boroughs purporting to be the proceedings of largely attended meetings of constituents of Union members, instructing—and even commanding—them to favor secession measures and vote for an ordinance of secession. These pretended proceedings of public meetings were uniformly read in open Convention and referred to the Committee on Federal Relations. Some of the weaker members were deceived by this device and gave in their adhesion to the cause of secession. Notwithstanding these defections, the friends of the Union still had the majority, and the conspirators found it necessary to adopt still other methods to overcome it. Accordingly a secret circular, signed by six of the conspirators who were members of
the Convention, and two who were members of the House of Delegates, was sent throughout the State to such of the citizens as they thought they could rely upon to cooperate with them, requesting them in significant language to present themselves in Richmond on the 16th day of April, to "consult with the friends of Southern rights as to the course Virginia should pursue in the present emergency; and to send from each county a full delegation of reliable men." This brought to the city hundreds, if not thousands, of desperate characters, who were prepared to do the bidding of the cabal, whatever it might be.

The purpose of the conspirators in this cannot be misunderstood when viewed in the light of subsequent events, which were made to take place as links in the chain of combinations which had brought about such a disordered state of public affairs, and which was designed to accomplish secession even without the semblance of the forms of law.

This camarilla, thus brought together, held meetings behind closed doors in a hall not far away from the capitol, where the Convention was sitting, to which none but the faithful were admitted, whilst the conspirator Wise and his co-conspirators alternated between the two bodies, no doubt keeping the revolutionary meeting accurately informed of everything that transpired in the lawful one, although the latter was sitting in secret and the members were under their parole of honor to disclose none of its proceedings. This rabble was not in Richmond for any lawful purpose, but for that of carrying out, if need be, Wise's threat, made early in the session of the Convention, which I have already quoted; and there can be not the slightest room for doubt that if the Convention had refused on the 17th to pass the ordinance of secession, it would have been violently thrust out of the capitol and the revolution begun.

The conspirators had early adopted a system of tactics calculated and intended to arouse the passions of the "lewde fellows of the baser sort," who at once began to carry out the devilish plan, and were soon joined by others of the more respectable classes of the populace; and soon the city became a perfect pandemonium. Howling mobs paraded the streets at night, with drums and horns and cow-bells, "frightening the ear of night" with discordant noises; going from place to place, denouncing with opprobrious epithets the Unionists of the
Convention, one of whom they burned in effigy in the street, others of whom they tried to intimidate by suspending ropes with nooses attached to limbs of trees or lamp-posts near their lodgings at night, calling them from their beds and kindly informing them that the halters were for them! Until the Convention went into secret session, the lobbies and galleries of the hall were crowded with this same excited, angry mob—hounded on by negro-traders—who hissed and howled whilst Unionists were speaking, sometimes compelling them to desist. Upon leaving the hall, Union members were sure to encounter a similar mob in greater numbers about the door outside, who would greet them with insulting remarks, sometimes with threats of personal violence. No epithet milder than "submissionist" or "black Republican" found a place in their vocabulary of abuse.

This state of affairs continued up to the passage of the ordinance of secession. the mob continually increasing in numbers and violence. From every place in the city except the capitol the National flag was torn down and dishonored and that of the Southern Confederacy hoisted in its stead. Small Confederate flags were suspended from the windows and balconies of many of the houses, so that Union members passing along the streets to and from their lodgings would be compelled to undergo the humiliation of walking under the secession emblem or take to the middle of the street. So well was this understood that the mud of the street was frequently preferred to the alternative. John F. Lewis, a sturdy Union man (now dead), as brave as the bravest, uniformly left the pavement for the street when passing, making long strides, and often denouncing in no measured or polite terms the tricks and devices used to insult and if possible intimidate.

After the flag of the Union had disappeared from every other place in the city, it was kept permanently floating from the dome of the capitol, not being lowered when the Convention was in session, as had been previously done. When the "reliable men" began to assemble, they found to their disgust the stars and stripes floating from the flag-staff on the capitol. This they could not tolerate. Convenient access to the top of the building could be had only through a single door, which led from the library to the third story. This door was kept
locked by the librarian. One evening, immediately after the Convention adjourned, the mob rushed in through the library, and with axes hewed down the door and went on up to the roof. The flag was violently torn down, amid yells of the maddened crowd below, and the secession emblem hoisted in its place—the canaille cheering as it arose. From that time on the Convention sat under it.

The newspapers of the city were for secession, and freely joined the mob in abuse of the Unionists. About this time there appeared in the Charleston Courier the following significant paragraph:

"If there are any among us who yet consider South Carolina not in earnest or in the right, it is full time they seek safety in a more congenial climate. Those who are not for us are against us, and we can and shall take care of ourselves."

This was copied by the Daily Enquirer, which added the following:

"If there are about Richmond or anywhere else in Virginia, any persons occupying the position described in the above extract from the Courier, they will consult their own interest and safety by seeking a more congenial climate at the earliest possible moment. A hint to the considerate is all sufficient. Those who are not considerate must take the consequences."

By methods such as these a number of Union members were dragooned into supporting the cause of the conspirators, while others were seduced into a shameful betrayal of their constituents, some by flattery and some by even more disreputable means. Thus what was a decided Union majority when the Convention first came together gradually melted away.

While these scenes were being enacted, a special messenger was despatched to Charleston, South Carolina, to announce to the leaders there that everything was in readiness in Virginia for the final act, and that they (the Carolinians) must strike the first blow, and in an hour thereafter "by Shrewsbury clock" Virginia would be with them! This was a welcome announcement to the secession leaders. Preparation to begin the conflict had already been made, and the bombardment of Fort Sumter began immediately—April 12th—and on the day following Governor Pickens, in a telegram, boastingly conveyed the tidings to Governor Letcher declaring "War commenced, and
we will triumph or perish." The telegram was read in the Convention, and the news it conveyed soon found its way to the public, producing intense excitement both in the Convention and in the city; adding fresh fuel to the flame which, in a large portion of the populace, had already consumed every patriotic sentiment of regard for the Constitution and the Union. The city was illuminated; bonfires were lighted in the streets and public squares; stores, offices and public places were closed; and the populace thronged the streets to give vent to their feelings of rejoicing and of hatred of those who were known to be opposed to secession. The throngs in the streets were largely increased in numbers by strangers who rushed to the city from the surrounding country to join in the wild orgies of a maddened people rushing on to ruin—a seething mass of humanity—a veritable hell!

On the 16th of April the Convention went into secret session. This increased the excitement and added to the alarm among the remaining Unionists. Scenes rarely witnessed in a deliberative body in the history of civilized governments were being enacted in the hall where the Convention was sitting. The Union men could now comprehend fully their hopeless position, when they saw those who had been elected as Unionists and who earlier had acted and voted with them, yielding to the storm so furiously raging about them and beating about their heads. In vain was every appeal to their sense of duty to their constituents, their patriotism, their manhood. They had yielded to the satanic influences about them, and had no power to retrace their steps.

On the morning of the 17th, Henry A. Wise came into the hall, carrying a large horse-pistol, which, with a flourish, he placed before him on his desk, and proceeded to harangue the Convention in the most vehement and denunciatory manner; and, looking at his watch, he declared that at that very hour events were occurring "which caused a hush to come over his soul." It was then the Union men of the Convention saw clearly the object of the other assemblage which had been, and was then, sitting with closed doors, and whose concealed hand was in the act of seizing the reins of government, leaving them the form without the power to resist.
It was at this juncture that W. T. Willey, with all the fervency of his noble nature, and the burning eloquence of which he was a master, and the zeal of a patriot, made his last thrilling appeal to his colleagues to stand by the Constitution and the Union. During its delivery, there was seen all over the hall old men, with the frosts of winter on their heads, sobbing like children. But this and similar efforts were unavailing. A few days before the Committee on Federal Relations had reported "An Ordinance to repeal the ratification of the Constitution of the United States of America by the State of Virginia, and to resume all rights and powers granted under said Constitution." On the afternoon of the 17th of April, the Convention came to a vote on the ordinance. The vote stood eighty-eight for and fifty-five against. Subsequently at different times the following members asked and obtained leave to record their votes for the ordinance: John R. Kilby, Addison Hall, John Q. Marr, Robert E. Grant, Alfred M. Barbour and Allen C. Hammond; and the following at different times asked and obtained leave to change their votes from the negative to the affirmative; W. C. Wickham, Algernon S. Gray, Hugh M. Nelson, Alpheus F. Haymond, George W. Berlin and George Baylor—and possibly others in the list.

Attached to the ordinance was a schedule providing for a vote to be taken upon it at the May election; and accordingly a vote was taken on the day fixed upon by the schedule. But wherefore? The State had been already turned over by the Convention to the Southern Confederacy before the schedule was prepared and attached to the ordinance. Its enactment was only another of the many acts of duplicity of which the conspirators were guilty. There was no waiting for this vote to be taken and the result fairly ascertained. The conspirators had secured the passage of an ordinance of secession, and its purpose must be carried out whether ratified by a majority of the voters or not. The people were not to be taken into the account.

Robert E. Lee had been conferred with even before the passage of the ordinance, and he was now promptly appointed commander-in-chief of the naval and military forces of the State, and accepted. A committee on military affairs and a military advisory board had been appointed, military officers commissioned; companies and regiments enlisted and organ-
IZED; rebel troops were found in many of the counties; actual war existed in the State, and war upon the loyal inhabitants.

Many of the newspapers of the State (notably the Richmond Enquirer) threatened confiscation of property and personal violence to any who dared to oppose secession; the State was in a turmoil; the Union people were bewildered, intimidated, and comparatively few of them voted; and, as was to be expected, a majority in favor of ratifying the ordinance was reported by the Secessionists at Richmond.

At the time these events were transpiring, persistent efforts were made—and are still occasionally made—to create the belief that the people of Virginia were in favor of seceding from the Union at the time the Convention was called; and that a majority of the votes of the State was cast at the May election in favor of ratification. What this vote was will most likely never be known with exactness by the public. It is possible there was a majority of the votes cast in favor; but it was a majority of a minority of the entire voting strength of the State. Whatever it was, I regard the figures published at Richmond unworthy of belief except in so far as they show that a minority only of the entire vote was polled. Had a majority of all the votes of the State been cast against ratification, it would have availed nothing. Already the Convention had (April 25th) "ratified" the constitution of the Confederacy and entered into a union with it.

I think it appropriate to this communication to quote what the Baltimore American said at the time regarding the Convention and the result of its action, brought about by the "inauguration of mob violence and a reign of terror":

"In Virginia, the fairly and legally expressed wishes and opinions of an overwhelming majority have been openly and wantonly violated and disregarded. A State Convention upon which was conferred power only to submit propositions to the people has betrayed the trust confided to it, bartered away the most sacred rights of the people of the State, and actually invested another government with absolute military control and dictatorial power over the inhabitants of the Old Dominion. By the action of this body of traitors to their constituents, Virginia has been disfranchised, the prerogatives of the people have been nullified, the expressed will of an overwhelming
majority has been overridden by fraud and force and treason; and under the flimsy pretext of avoiding coercion to obedience to the Federal Constitution and laws, the State has actually been subjugated by a miserable junta of reckless politicians and her people made subjects and hewers of wood and drawers of water for a despotic oligarchy of broken-down Democratic politicians."

The secession ordinance was passed in the afternoon of the 17th of April, as I have already stated. Late in the afternoon of Saturday, the 20th, some one made the quiet suggestion that the Union members from the Northwestern part of the State get together for consultation, and the Powhatan Hotel, near the capitol, was named as the place of meeting. Accordingly, about twenty, who were hastily notified, quietly and promptly met in Sherrard Clemens' bedroom in the hotel, and organized by electing Gen. John J. Jackson (father of the present United States District Judge of the same name) chairman. After careful deliberation, the meeting decided unanimously that the members present, and such other Union members from the western counties as might be willing to join in the movement (leaving only two in the Convention to give information), should quietly withdraw from the Convention, go home to their constituents, call public meetings, put on foot measures to resist secession, and ultimately bring about, if possible, what had long been talked about and desired—a division of the State.

John S. Carlile, who life was thought to be in danger, had been taken by some of his friends the previous day and put on board a railway train and started for his home; and a few other Union members had already left the city. It had now become necessary for those intending to leave to procure permission from the Governor in order to procure railway tickets and get out of the city. Eight members went in a body to the Governor for this purpose, and after being sharply interrogated, a permit signed by the Governor was given them. They were informed by the Governor that they could not get out over the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, as he had given orders the night before to burn the bridge over the Potomac at Harper's Ferry.

On Sunday morning, the 21st, a party of fourteen (including two ladies), after encountering some difficulty, got out of the city by two railroads. When they arrived at Alexandria in the
afternoon, they found the city in an uproar—streets guarded, all public conveyances by land and water discontinued; and consequently they were compelled to remain over night. James Burley managed to elude the guard in the late evening and made his way on foot to Washington, where the writer found him next morning at the railway station, sitting on a wheelbarrow, smoking his pipe, apparently very happy to be out of "Dixie," and once more under the protection of the stars and stripes.

It soon became known that a party of "Black Republicans," trying to make their way out of the State, were stopping at Green's Mansion House. About ten o'clock, after the guests of the hotel had retired, and the night clerk and the writer were in the office, arranging about a missing trunk, six or eight great rough fellows came rushing into the place and proceeded at once to examine the hotel register, inquiring of the clerk the political status of each guest, and making uncomplimentary remarks about those known to be Union men. When they came to the name of W. T. Willey, they inquired: "How about this fellow?" The clerk replied: "I don't know; there is a member of the Convention," pointing to myself; "he can tell you." To their inquiry I replied: "He is all right." Their response was: "Damn him, he had better be, or he goes into the Potomac before morning." Whereupon they proceeded to discuss the proposition made by one of their number to put the entire party in the river, and do it without delay. Finally a postponement was decided upon, and the mob left the hotel without attempting to carry their threat into execution. Under these conditions I thought prudence required that I give information to my friends, members of the party, of what I had just witnessed, and to provide in the best way I could for my own personal safety. The party chose to remain and await developments. I informed my colleague, Hon. W. G. Brown, of my purpose to leave the city, if I could, at an early hour in the morning, and suggested that he accompany me; but he decided to remain. I left Alexandria next morning at two o'clock for Washington, in a buggy with a brisk team driven by a white man who was well known in the city. We were stopped in the suburbs once by the guard, but had no further difficulty until we reached the Long Bridge over the Potomac, which we found guarded by a
battery of artillery. There we were again halted and closely interrogated by the officer in command, and finally allowed to proceed. After two or three slight adventures in Baltimore and at Harper's Ferry, I reached home the third day after escaping from Richmond, worn in body and sick at heart.

The party that remained at Alexandria were not permitted to come on to Washington, but were compelled to turn their faces again toward Richmond. Instead of returning to Richmond, when they reached Manassas Junction, they left the railway train and hired conveyances across the mountain to Winchester, whence they traveled by rail to Harper's Ferry and so on home. I do not now remember the names of all who were in this party, but I do remember W. T. Willey and his wife, Chester D. Hubbard, James Burley, George McC. Porter, Campbell Tarr, Caleb Boggess, William G. Brown, Marshall M. Dent, John J. Jackson, Chapman J. Stuart, and, I think, John S. Burdett, and myself.

Some time in the summer of 1863 I met, in Wheeling, W. H. B. Custis, a Union member of the Convention from Accomac, of whom I inquired what he thought would have been the result had not the Union members from the Northwest escaped from Richmond as they did. His reply was: "I think they would not have hung you, but you would be in Richmond now."

About two months, June 14th, after the hegira of the Northwestern members, B. F. Wysor, member from Pulaski, offered a resolution, which was promptly adopted, instructing the Committee on Elections, of which A. F. Haymond was chairman, to inquire and make report of the number and names of members whose seats were vacant, and the cause of such vacancies. Six days later, Chairman Haymond reported, among other things, that—

"It appearing to the satisfaction of the Committee that William G. Brown, James Burley, John S. Burdett, John S. Carlile, Marshall M. Dent, Ephraim B. Hall, Chester D. Hubbard, John J. Jackson, James C. McGrew, George McC. Porter, Chapman J. Stuart, Campbell Tarr and Waitman T. Willey have been engaged in conspiracy against the integrity of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and are now engaged in aiding and abetting the open enemies of Virginia; therefore,
"Resolved, That the said William G. Brown (and the others named above) be and are hereby expelled from the Convention."

When the resolution was taken, the names were voted on separately and all were expelled except Mr. Willey, whose case was recommitted, and, I believe, never again reported. This probably grew out of Haymond's personal regard for Mr. Willey. Caleb Boggess and Sherrard Clemens were expelled afterwards. By some sort of fiction, others were declared elected to fill the vacancies thus created, all of whom were Secessionists, of course, and all were admitted to seats, and all signed the ordinance, and their names appear on the numerous copies distributed throughout the country as though they were original members, lawfully elected; and they go to swell to that extent the claim of the Secessionists that the people of the State were in favor of separation from the Federal Union.

In answer to some of the questions in your letter of June 27th:

I have no knowledge of how many members of the Convention were living when John Goode, Jr., wrote the article published in the *Washington Conservative Magazine*, to which you refer in your letter; nor do I know the number now living; but it must be very small, as most if not all of them were then past middle age, and more than the life of a generation has passed since. Goode was a rabid Secessionist, and could not be expected to write without a strong bias upon the subject of secession. I have not seen the article referred to. Goode was the man whom Jubal A. Early challenged while he (Early) was a professsed Unionist, for some offensive language used by Goode in one of his speeches. Goode said he meant no offense; Early said he was not mad—and there was no blood split.

Governor Letcher may have been "a Union man at heart," as he claimed to have been in his interview with Burdett after the war was ended, and possibly was; but it looks like a "death-bed repentance." He gave some slight evidence of his respect for the Union in his proclamation convening the General Assembly in extra session, January 7, 1861, in which, after declaring the Union "already disrupted," placing the blame on the North, and asserting that "South Carolina, a sovereign State, had a right to adopt the line she had chosen"—that is,
secede—he discussed the proposition for a call of a State Convention to determine the position Virginia should take, and declared his firm conviction to be in opposition to the measure; that no necessity existed for it; nor did he conceive that any practical good would be accomplished by it; and then he apologized for the opinion! Letcher was weak in moral courage. His proclamation was an anomalous one; and it was thought at the time by some that it had been forced from him by the secession cabal, and that a refusal would have gone hard with him. Having yielded to the first demand of the conspirators, he continued (perhaps unwillingly) their tool to the end.

George W. Summers was a man of extraordinary ability. He did valiant battle in the Convention for the Union; but as you know, he gave little encouragement to the Western movement, and literally no aid. He lacked one essential quality of a leader in emergencies—courage.

John S. Carlile was a Douglas Democrat—elected as a Unionist to the Convention—and tried to represent his constituents as such, but entertained strong pro-slavery opinions; was in favor of maintaining the Federal Union, but it must be a Union with negro slavery guaranteed by the Constitution and the laws; and he was anti-coercion. Early in the session he offered this:

"Resolved, That since the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Chisholm vs. The State of Georgia, and the adoption of the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution, we are at a loss to understand how the impression that the Federal government possessed the power to coerce a State could have obtained credence."

You know what his course was in the Convention at Wheeling and in the United States Senate, when the admission of the new State was under discussion in that body.

Caleb Boggess was elected by the Unionists of Lewis County and was true to his constituents in his votes in the Convention, voting uniformly with his Union colleagues. He was, I believe, a true manly man.

I remember little of George W. Berlin. He was elected by a Union constituency and voted against the secession ordinance. He continued a member of the Convention to its final adjournment, December 6, 1861.
John N. Hughes was elected as a Unionist, but proved recreant to his trust. Seduced by the blandishments of the conspirators, he voted for the ordinance of separation. He was a man of some ability. After he came from the Convention, while trying to escape from some Union soldiers whom he supposed to be in pursuit of him, he suddenly came in contact with a company of rebel troops, and, mistaking them in the dark for Union soldiers, proclaimed himself a Union man; whereupon he was shot and killed. Such was the story of his taking off, as told at the time.

Benjamin Wilson was regarded as lacking the courage of his convictions. He was not active in the proceedings of the Convention. His attention was directed more to matters relating to the government of the State than to its secession from the Union. He appeared quite willing that the State should remain in the Union, but wanted reform in its constitution and laws; and at the same time had no particular objection to the State seceding, providing it were done without his vote. In his attempt to stand neutral, he was regarded with a lack of confidence by both parties. He had left the Convention previous to the 22nd of November, and on that day a resolution was introduced instructing the Committee on Privileges and Elections to inquire into the cause of his absence and also that of Boggess and Clemens. Upon the report of the Committee, Boggess and Clemens were expelled; but the Committee reported that it had "no evidence of the disloyalty of Benjamin Wilson, nor to explain the cause of his absence from the Convention, and they ask to be discharged from further consideration of the case of Benjamin Wilson."

It is stated above that the case of W. T. Willey was remitted to the Committee on Elections, and never again reported—which is literally true; but I find that on the 16th of November, Miers W. Fisher offered this resolution, which was adopted:

"Resolved, That Waitman T. Willey be and he is hereby expelled as a member of this body on account of his disloyalty to the Confederate States and his adherence to the enemies of the same."

You had a personal knowledge of all the important events which transpired in the western portion of the State from the time the Union members returned until the State of West
Virginia was organized, and for some years thereafter. I need not, therefore, mention them here.

After some little research, the foregoing has been written somewhat hastily; and while it may contain a few immaterial errors as to statements of facts, it will be found substantially correct. In addition to these eleven sheets, I send you lists of names—one of members of the Virginia Convention, the other the names of those who voted for and against the ordinance of secession. Both are authentic, as I have original copies.

Kingwood, W. Va., September 19, 1900.

Soon after writing you on the 14th I received your esteemed favor of the 12th, with magazine article by John Goode, Jr. I have given the article a hasty perusal and find it to be cleverly written, and plausible withal, but lacking in candor—I might say, truthfulness. Let me quote one statement: "It is a great mistake to suppose that so far as Virginia was concerned the war between the States was waged for the purpose of perpetuating slavery." For what, then, was it waged? Was it simply for the purpose of making good the claim that the State had the right under the Constitution to withdraw at her will from the Federal Union? Hardly. If it were not to secure the "right" to perpetuate slavery in the States where it existed, and to carry it into the Territories and "perpetuate" it there, what was it? What did the Committee on Federal Relations mean by appending to their report on the 9th of March the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States so thoroughly to perpetuate slavery in the States where it then existed, and permitting it to be established in the Territories north of 36° 30', and forbidding its abolition in the District of Columbia, and requiring fugitive slaves escaping into free States to be returned to their owners by legal enactment? What other "right" were they proposing to fight for? I know the South threatened nullification because of the tariff, and wanted free trade; but could that be called a "right"? It is too late (or, I ought to say, too early) in the history of these times for Mr. Goode or any other defender of African slavery, and the war of the rebellion, to inculcate the belief that slavery was
not the moving cause of Virginia secession as well as that of all
the so-called slave States; and next to that was the unholy
ambition of Southern politicians, who saw political power in
the general government slipping away from them.

MEMBERS OF THE VIRGINIA STATE CONVENTION.

(SECESION CONVENTION) 1861.

Accomac .................. William H. B. Custis.
Albemarle .................. Valentine W. Southall,
                        James B. Holcombe.
Alexandria .................. George W. Brent.
Alleghany and Bath ........ Thomas Siftington.
Amelia and Notaway ........ Lewis E. Harvie.
Amherst ..................... Samuel M. Garland.
Appomattox .................. Lewis D. Isbell.
Augusta ........................ A. H. H. Stuart,
                      John B. Baldwin,
                      George Baylor.
Barbour ...................... Samuel Woods.
Bedford ........................ William L. Goggin,
                        John Goode, Jr.
Berkeley ....................... Edmond Pendleton,
                        Allen C. Hammond.
Botetourt and Craig ........ Fleming B. Miller,
                          W. W. Boyd.
Braxton, Nicholas and Clay.... Benjamin W. Byrne.
Brooke ........................ Campbell Tarr.
Brunswick ...................... James B. Mallory.
Buckingham ..................... William W. Forbes.
Cabell ........................ William McComas.
Campbell ....................... John M. Speed,
                          Charles R. Slaughter.
Caroline ........................ Edmund T. Morris.
Carroll ........................ F. L. Hale.
Charles City, Jersey City and
New Kent ........................ John Tyler.
Charlotte ........................ Wood Bouldin.
Chesterfield .................. James H. Cox.
Clarke ........................ Hugh M. Nelson.
Culpeper ..................... James Barbour.
Cumberland and Powhattan... William C. Scott.
Dinwiddie .................... James Boisseau.
Doddridge and Tyler .......... Chapman J. Stuart.
Elizabeth City, Warwick, York
    and Williamsburg .......... Charles K. Mallory.
Fairfax ........................ Richard H. Dulany.
Fauquier ........................ Robert E. Scott,
    John Q. Marr.
Fayette and Raleigh .......... Henry L. Gillespie.
Fluvanna ........................ James M. Strange.
Franklin ........................ Jubal A. Early,
    Peter Saunders, Sr.
Floyd ............................ Harvey Deskins.
Frederick ..................... Robert Y. Conrad,
Giles ............................ Manilius Chapman.
Gloucester .................... John T. Seawell.
Goochland ..................... Walter D. Leake.
Gilmer, Wirt and Calhoun .... C. B. Conrad.
Grayson ........................ William C. Parks.
Green and Orange ............. Jeremiah Morton.
Greenbriar .................... Samuel Price.
Greensville and Sussex ...... J. R. Chambliss.
Halifax ........................ Thomas S. Flournoy,
    James C. Bruce.
Hampshire ..................... Edward M. Armstrong,
    David Pugh.
Hancock ........................ George McC. Porter.
Hanover ........................ George W. Richardson.
Hardy ........................... Thomas Maslin.
Harrison ........................ John S. Carlile,
    Benjamin Wilson.
Henrico ........................ Williams C. Wickham.
Henry ........................... Peyton Gravely.
Highland ...................... George W. Hull.
Isle of Wight ................ Robert H. Whitfield.
LIST OF MEMBERS.

Jackson and Roane ............ Francis P. Turner.
Jefferson .................... Alfred M. Barbour,
                           Logan Osburn.
Kanawha ...................... George W. Summers,
                           Spicer Patrick.
King George and Stafford..... Edward Wallar.
King William .................. Fendall Gregory, Jr.
Lancaster and Northumberland. Addison Hall.
Lee ........................... John D. Sharp.
Lee and Scott ................. Peter C. Johnson.
Lewis ........................ Caleb Boggess.
Logan, Boone and Wyoming ... James Lawson.
Loudon ........................ John Janney,
                           John A. Carter.
Louisa ........................ William M. Ambier.
Lunenburg .................... W. J. Neblett.
Madison ...................... Angus R. Blakey.
Marion ....................... Alpheus F. Haymond,
                           Ephraim B. Hall.
Marshall ..................... James Burley.
Mason ........................ James H. Couch.
Matthews and Middlesex ...... Robert L. Montague.
Mecklenburg .................. Thomas F. Goode.
Mercer ........................ Napoleon B. French.
Monongalia ................... Waitman T. Willey,
                           Marshall M. Dent.
Monroe ........................ Allen T. Caperton,
                           John Echols.
Montgomery ................... William Ballard Preston.
Morgan ........................ Johnson Orrick.
Nansemond .................... John R. Kilby.
Nelson ........................ Frederick M. Cabell.
Norfolk City .................. George Blow, Jr.
Norfolk County ................ William White,
                           J. G. Holladay.
Northampton .................. Miers W. Fisher.
Ohio ........................ Sherrard Clemens,
                           Chester D. Hubbard.
Page ........................ Peter B. Borst.
Patrick ...................... Samuel G. Staples.
THE RENDING OF VIRGINIA.

Pendleton ......................... Henry H. Masters.
Pocahontas ......................... Paul McNeil.
Petersburg ......................... Thomas Branch.
Pittsylvania ....................... William T. Sutherlin,  
                                William M. Treadway.
Pleasants and  
Ritchie ........................... Cyrus Hall.
Preston ............................ William G. Brown,  
                                James C. McGrew.
Prince William ..................... Eppa Hunton.
Princess Anne ...................... Henry A. Wise.
Prince George and Surry .......... Timothy Rives.
Pulaski ............................ Benjamin F. Wysor.
Putnam ............................. James W. Hoge.
Randolph and Tucker .............. John N. Hughes.
Rappahannock ...................... Horatio G. Moffet.
Richmond City ..................... William H. Macfarland,  
                                Marmaduke Johnson,  
                                George W. Randolph.
Richmond County and Westmore-
land .................................. John Critcher.
Roanoke ............................ George P. Tayloe.
Rockbridge ........................ Samuel McD. Moore,  
                                James B. Dorman.
Rockingham ........................ Samuel A. Coffman,  
                                John F. Lewis,  
                                Algernon S. Gray.
Russell and Wise ................... William B. Aston.
Scott ............................... Colbert C. Fugate.
Shenandoah ........................ Samuel C. Williams,  
                                Raphael M. Conn.
Smyth ............................... James W. Sheffey.
Southampton ....................... John J. Kindred.
Spotsylvania ....................... John L. Marve, Sr.
Taylor ............................. John S. Burdett.
Tazewell ........................... William P. Cecil,  
                                Samuel L. Graham.
Upshur ............................. George W. Berlin.
Washington ......................... Robert E. Grant,  
                                John A. Campbell.
VOTE ON THE ORDINANCE.

Wayne .......................... Burwell Spurlock.
Wetzel .......................... Leonard S. Hall.
Wood ............................. John J. Jackson.
Wythe ............................ Robert C. Kent.
Prince Edward.................... John T. Thornton:—152.

The following named members of the Virginia State Convention, which assembled in the City of Richmond February 13, 1861, voted for the ordinance of secession, April 17, 1861.

William M. Ambler,  
William B. Aston,  
James Barbour,  
Angus R. Blakey,  
George Blow, Jr.,  
James Boisseau,  
Peter B. Borst,  
Wood Bouldin,  
William W. Boyd,  
Thomas Branch,  
James C. Bruce,  
Frederick M. Cabell,  
John A. Campbell,  
Allen Caperton,  
William P. Cecil,  
John R. Chambliss,  
Manilius Chapman,  
Samuel A. Coffman,  
Raphael M. Conn,  
James H. Cox,  
Richard H. Cox,  
John Critcher,  
Harvey Deskins,  
James B. Dorman,  
JohnECHOLS,  
Miers W. Fisher,  
Thomas S. Flournoy,  
William W. Forbes,  
Napoleon B. French,  
Peter C. Johnson,  
Robert C. Kent,  
John J. Kindred,  
James Lawson,  
Walter D. Leak,  
William H. McFarland,  
Charles K. Mallory,  
James B. Mallory,  
John L. Marye, Sr.,  
Fleming B. Miller,  
Horatio G. Moffatt,  
Robert L. Montague,  
Edmund T. Morris,  
Jeremiah T. Morton,  
William G. Neblett,  
Johnson Orrick,  
William C. Parks,  
William Ballard Preston,  
George W. Randolph,  
George W. Richardson,  
Timothy Rives,  
Robert E. Scott,  
William C. Scott,  
John T. Seawell,  
James W. Sheffey,  
Charles R. Slaughter,  
Valentine W. Southall,  
John M. Speed,  
Samuel G. Staples.
Ben Wilson of Clarksburg, Harrison County, was excused from voting at his own request.

The following members of the Virginia Convention voted against the ordinance of secession,—April 17, 1861.

John Janney, (president.)
Edward M. Armstrong,
John B. Baldwin,
George Baylor,
George W. Berlin,
Caleb Boggess,
George W. Brent,
William G. Brown,
John S. Burdett,
James Burley,
Benjamin W. Byrne,
John S. Carlile,
John A. Carter,
Sherrard Clemens,
C. B. Conrad,
Robert Y. Conrad,
James H. Couch,

Alpheus F. Haymond,
Chester D. Hubbard,
George W. Hall,
John J. Jackson,
John F. Lewis,
William McComas,
James C. McGrew,
James Marshall,
Samuel McD. Moore,
Henry H. Masters,
Hugh M. Nelson,
Logan Osburn,
Spicer Patrick,
Edmund Pendleton,
George McC. Porter,
Samuel Price,
David Pugh,
The members named below did not vote:

John Q. Marr,
Peter Saunders, Sr.
Thomas Maslin,
Benjamin Wilson,
Alfred M. Barbour,
*Addison Hall,
Paul McNeil,
John J. Kindred,
Robert E. Grant,—9.

*Addison Hall, subsequently asked and obtained leave to record his vote in favor of the ordinance and preamble.

CRISP COMMENT BY BURDETT OF TAYLOR.

Hon. John S. Burdett, who was a member of the Virginia Convention of 1861 from Taylor County, is another of the few survivors of that body. He is now resident at the West Virginia capital, past his 82d year, in good health and faculty. He was one of the most fearless and determined of the loyal Virginians in the Convention, and one of the most active and outspoken, after the return
of the delegates from the Northwest, in organizing resistance to its edicts, as references and quotations made elsewhere amply show. Mr. Burdett received at the hands of President Lincoln appointment as Captain and Quartermaster, and served with credit and distinction with the Army of the Potomac. The author wrote him about the first of May, 1900, making inquiry for his recollection on some doubtful points and received a reply dated May 5th, written in characteristic vein and showing that the writer of it was "chipper and peart" as many a man twenty years his junior. In this letter Mr. Burdett makes this allusion to Mr. Carlile:
Now, in regard to the portentous and dark days of the rebellion, I cannot say much that will be useful to you, but I will say I was there from its inception to its Appomattox, taking part in early discussions and meetings looking to the restoration of the government of Virginia, culminating in aiding to form West Virginia; this completed while serving as Captain in the Army of the Potomac, with an honorable appointment from the immortal Abraham Lincoln, and confirmed by the United States Senate. Carlile was a member and voted for my confirmation. Poor Carlile! died in Clarksburg; turned against the New State bill and lost all his glory of the Rebellion by denying the record in the matter. With all his faults, I love his memory. Much about him to commend. So drop a tear and let him go.

Mr. Burdett continues:

My connection and history with the rebellion was outspoken and bold, and elicited bitter denunciation from the Richmond press, the Enquirer denouncing me as "the execrable, damnable Burdett, whom we missed capturing at Phillippa, and, had we got him, would have spent no time guarding him." Well, I am here, thank God, to repeat the story how they did not "got" me; but we got a saved country and a new map of Virginia, minus gallant West Virginia—a glorious outcome of the villainous effort to destroy the greatest nation on earth.

The ordinance was passed on the 16th of April, and we recalcitrants lit out on first trains we could catch—some twelve or fifteen of us—Carlile, Clemens, Dent and others. A dispatch from Governor Letcher failed to arrest us at Fredericksburg. When we got to Washington, some went North. I came to my home on the Baltimore & Ohio, and John Seddon and Alf. Barbour sat in my front, with bottles of whiskey. When they saw me, they said: "Burdett, you seceded at Richmond, did you?" They were members and on the way to Harper's Ferry to grab the armory and open up revolutionary devilment. Barbour was a member from Jefferson County, in which Harper's Ferry is situated.

My good wife reminds me, while attempting to write you, that I could have written a book of interest of the times from regular letters sent her during service of three years in the
war; but when I moved from my old house in Pruntytown, I burned all up, and left others to do our memory justice. I am seldom mentioned. Others take the cake and the credit of resistance to secession in the Convention at Richmond and formation of the New State. I was one of five—Campbell Tarr, Crothers, John Shuttlesworth of Clarksburg (forget the other)—who, in 1861, went up to Wellsburg and landed those two thousand guns on the Island at Wheeling. I proposed it. Old Burdett is forgotten. Be it so. Excuse egotism. It is the offhand effusion of an old veteran.

After receipt of his first letter, I asked Mr. Burdett to give me a more detailed account of the exodus from Richmond, and any other points of interest about the Convention he could recall, asking him particularly about Hughes of Randolph, who had been one of my teachers and of whose tragic death I had never been able to get a definite account. In a second letter, written May 21st, Mr. Burdett says:

You allude to the time and manner of our leaving Richmond after the passage of the ordinance. Well, a day or two before the 16th we were threatened with an assault from the opposition on the floor of the Convention if we did not pass the ordinance; but ascertaining that gold and bribery, negro traders, faro banks, gamblers and other villainous appliances had reversed majorities so that they had eighty secession against fifty-six opposed—when we met at first the loyal Union men had eighty against rebel fifty-six—after the passage of the ordinance, on the 16th, on the morning of the 17th, the loyal element of West Virginia hustled for their lives; and each fellow, leaving clothes in wash, found his way to the first train on Broad street, via Fredericksburg, etc., for home. We scattered at Washington and Baltimore, in different directions, by different lines, some via Pittsburg. I went it alone and made for the Baltimore & Ohio for my home at Pruntytown, near Grafton. At Harper's Ferry I found great excitement. The platform was black with a frenzied crowd. John Seddon and Alf. Barbour
were on the train, and plenty of whiskey bottles in front of them. They soon recognized me, and said: "Burdett, you seceded—eighty for and fifty-six against?" "Well," said I "what about the injunction of secrecy?" No reply. Thinks I to myself: I will see whether I have any locks on my mouth to keep rebel secrets from loyal West Virginia.

So, you see, we got to Wheeling in a scattering manner, and soon found about four hundred brown-fisted fellows in Wheeling, cogitating ways and means of resistance to the rebellion. Went home and sent up regular delegates into Convention; restored the government by making Peirpoint, Governor, regarding John Letcher as in abdication at Richmond; and from one step to another went on forming lines and a bill for a new State, which was finished by Congress, and signed by A. Lincoln as a New Year's present. Your humble servant was generally there in those days, but long since forgotten. We assumed to be Virginia, and was so recognized by the Washington powers.

By the way, at the time of hurrying out of Richmond, John Letcher, who was then Governor (but Letcher always was a Union man at heart), sent a dispatch to arrest us runaway members of the Convention; but took good care to see that the despatch was a few minutes too late. After the war was over, I met Letcher at his home at Lexington, and talked hours with him. He said he was always with us in heart, but had to appear nominally with the South. The roughs of Richmond ran up a rebel flag on the capitol and Letcher made them haul it down, as we had not up to that time seceded. So John was not so bad.

Those who stayed behind were: E. B. Hall, loyal to the backbone; Willey, weak. There was a Hall from Wetzel, who sold out for a gold-headed cane. He was a sure "gold-bug"—voted for secession.

John Goode stopped off at Washington with Alf. Barbour, so Barbour could resign the office of Superintendent of the Armory at Harper's Ferry. At Harper's Ferry, Barbour stepped off the train and said something and up went a tumultuous shout. I stepped off and said: "Barbour, what did you say?" He did not reply, and to avoid arrest I stepped back on the train and guessed he was there to grab the arsenal and steal all its valuable and costly machinery. It turned out that way. Revolutionary devilment took the locks off our mouths.

Va.—35
When I got home, the Rockbridge Cavalry of the South dashed around my house at Pruntytown; had a writ from Colonel Porterfield to take me, "dead or alive." I was not there. My wife and boy of sixteen boldly defied them, and wife said, "Thank God, he is not in the house." And the little boy wrenched his gun out of their hands, and the officer told him he was "a brave boy," and might keep his gun. The Richmond Enquirer came out and said: "The execrable and damnable Burdett we missed by a hair's breadth; but had we got him, would have spent no time in guarding him!" All that class of men—Jew, gentile, dog and devil—have all passed to their wicked level; and, thank God, I am still in the land of the living.

The incident of Carlile's gold chain I forget. But his conduct as to loyalty was golden up to the critical hour of secession, and he was assaulted and insulted for his bold opposition to it. Willey, who stayed behind and figured with the vile end of the Convention, was always wishy-washy—short on backbone; and God only knows what soft talk was done; but some said he was weak enough to hint a purpose to organize when he got back to Western Virginia the squirrel-gun boys of the mountains to aid the rebels. But when he got back he seemed almost dazed at the general enthusiasm and loyalty of West Virginians; and at Wheeling, on the balcony of the McLure, being called for, opened up by declaring a lock was on his mouth, alluding to the injunction of secrecy put on us on the passage of the ordinance. It fell still-born. Some fellow bawled out: "Hang him!" In obedience to a loud and universal call, your humble correspondent was called to follow him; and my first remark was that I had no lock on my mouth, or lips hermetically sealed as to keeping secrets of rebels. Thunders of applause followed, as did with almost each sentence in our continued remarks. I simply shot from the shoulder and boldly uttered defiance to the damnable and wicked act of secession.

Mr. Willey attempted the same speech at Morgantown, and was hooted at and was called on clamorously to "Talk Union!" Well (would you believe it?), to stiffen his backbone, Kramer and a few white-washing friends rushed up to Wheeling—the Legislature being in session—and in the confusion of the hour, actually put him into the United States Senate—because, with
all his faults, he was an orator and talented, and would adorn
the station! So pluck and nerve counted for nothing. Such is
human frailty. He is dead—peace to his ashes!

John N. Hughes was elected as an ultra Union man, with
circular and speeches declaring he would suffer arms torn off and
body immolated on the altar of his country before he would
vote for an ordinance of secession, taking his State, Virginia,
out of the Union. It is a ghastly story to tell. Burley, of
Moundsville, Hughes and myself, all loyal men, roomed together,
and all vied with each other as to our loyalty and devotion to
the United States. But in a short time, Hughes, for some rea­
sons I will explain, came in one day and in an exulting manner
said he was going to vote for an ordinance separating Virginia
from the Union. I replied: "If you do, in the face of solemn
pledges to your Randolph constituents, you will never prosper
in this world or the world to come." He threatened me with
violence. I defied him and told him that a man guilty of such
treachery and infidelity could not whip any one. Well, he
voted for the ordinance, and skedaddled from Richmond; and
at McClellan's fight at Rich Mountain, in Randolph County,
he was in the act of rushing on horseback, as he thought, to
the United States lines, and hallooed, "Hurrah for Lincoln!" It
turned out to be the rebel lines, and they shot seventeen bul­
lets into his body. Thus do the judgments of an avenging God
overcome us!

James Burley, if alive, could attest what I say, and we
deplored his terrible crime at the time. And now for the
reasons. He was, soon after getting to Richmond, found embar­
rassed with the faro banks; and for the few paltry dollars that
he fell behind with the gamblers was so weak as to be "yanked"
by them. I offered, after finding it out, to pay the pitiful claims,
and it met his anger and scorn.

Well, six or seven others unfaithful met early deaths, while
not a hair of the heads of the God-and-country glorious fifty-six
loyal delegates that voted against the wicked act of secession
ever was touched; and I am here to-day, a living monument of
the providential incidents of the madness of the days of 1861.