

avowed purpose of the President to defeat the will of the people by the Executive perversion of the Constitution. They insinuated that only the lowest personal motives could have dictated this action :

The President [they said], by preventing this bill from becoming a law, holds the electoral votes of the rebel States at the dictation of his personal ambition. . . . If electors for President be allowed to be chosen in either of those States, a sinister light will be cast on the motives which induced the President to "hold for naught" the will of Congress rather than his governments in Louisiana and Arkansas.

They ridiculed the President's earnestly expressed hope that the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery might be adopted :

We curiously inquire on what his expectation rests, after the vote of the House of Representatives at the recent session and in the face of the political complexion of more than enough of the States to prevent the possibility of its adoption within any reasonable time; and why he did not indulge his sincere hopes with so large an installment of the blessing as his approval of the bill would have secured?

When we consider that only a few months elapsed before this beneficent amendment was adopted, we can form some idea of the comparative political sagacity of Mr. Lincoln and his critics. The fact that the President gave the bill of Congress his approval as a very proper plan for the loyal people of any States choosing to adopt it seemed to infuriate the authors of the bill: they say, "A more studied outrage on the legislative authority of the people has never been perpetrated." At the close of a long review of the President's proclamation, in which every sentence came in for its share of censure or of ridicule, this manifesto concluded :

Such are the fruits of this rash and fatal act of the President—a blow at the friends of his Administration, at the rights of humanity, and at the principles of republican government. The President has greatly presumed on the forbearance which the supporters of his Administration have so long practiced, in view of the arduous conflict in which we are engaged, and the reckless ferocity of our political opponents. But he must understand that our support is of a cause and not of a man; that the authority of Congress is paramount and must be respected; that the whole body of the Union men of Congress will not submit to be impeached by him of rash and unconstitutional legislation; and if he wishes our support he must confine himself to his executive duties—to obey and to execute, not make the laws—to suppress by arms armed rebellion, and leave political reorganization to Congress. If the supporters of the Government fail to insist on this they become responsible for the usurpations which they fail to rebuke, and are justly liable to the indignation of the people whose rights and

security, committed to their keeping, they sacrifice. Let them consider the remedy of these usurpations, and, having found it, fearlessly execute it.

HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION.

NOT least among the troubles and the vexations of the summer of 1864 was the constant criticism of sincere Republicans who were impatient at what they considered the slow progress of the war, and irritated at the deliberation with which Mr. Lincoln weighed every important act before decision. Besides this, a feeling of discouragement had taken possession of some of the more excitable spirits, which induced them to give ready hospitality to any suggestions of peace. Foremost among these was Horace Greeley, who in personal interviews, in private letters, and in the columns of the "Tribune" repeatedly placed before the President, with that vigor of expression in which he was unrivaled, the complaints and the discontents of a considerable body of devoted, if not altogether reasonable, Union men. The attitude of benevolent criticism which he was known to sustain towards the Administration naturally drew around him a certain number of adventurers and busybodies, who fluttered between the two great parties, and were glad to occupy the attention of prominent men on either side with schemes whose only real object was some slight gain or questionable notoriety for themselves. A person who called himself "William Cornell Jewett of Colorado" had gained some sort of intimacy with Mr. Greeley by alleging relations with eminent Northern and Southern statesmen. He was one of those newspaper laughing-stocks who come gradually to be known and talked about. He wrote interminable letters of advice to Mr. Lincoln and to Jefferson Davis, which were never read nor answered, but which, printed with humorous comment in the "New York Herald," were taken seriously by the indiscriminating, and even quoted and discussed in the London papers. He wrote to Mr. Greeley in the early part of July from Niagara Falls, and appears to have convinced the latter that he was an authorized intermediary from the Confederate authorities to make propositions for peace. He wrote that he had just left George N. Sanders of Kentucky on the Canada side.

I am authorized to state to you [he continued], for our use only, not the public, that two ambassadors of Davis & Co. are now in Canada with full and complete powers for a peace, and Mr. Sanders requests that you come on immediately to me at Cataract House to have a private interview; or, if you will send the President's protection for him and two friends, they will come and meet you. He says the

whole matter can be consummated by me, you, them, and President Lincoln.

This letter was followed the next day by a telegram saying :

Will you come here? Parties have full power.

Mr. Greeley was greatly impressed by this communication. The inherent improbabilities of it did not seem to strike him, though the antecedents of Sanders were scarcely more reputable than those of Jewett. He sent the letter and the telegram to the President, inclosed in a letter of his own, the fervid vehemence of which shows the state of excitement he was laboring under. He refers to his correspondent as "our irrepressible friend Colorado Jewett." He admits some doubt as to the "full powers," but insists upon the Confederate desire for peace.

And therefore [he says] I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country also longs for peace; shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood. And a widespread conviction that the Government and its prominent supporters are not anxious for peace, and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm now, and is morally certain, unless removed, to do far greater in the approaching elections.

He then rebukes Mr. Lincoln for not having received the Stephens embassy, disapproves the warlike tone of the Baltimore platform, urges the President to make overtures for peace in time to affect the North Carolina elections, and suggests the following plan of adjustment: 1. The Union is restored and declared perpetual. 2. Slavery is utterly and forever abolished throughout the same. 3. A complete amnesty for all political offenses. 4. Payment of \$400,000,000 to the slave States pro rata for their slaves. 5. The slave States to be represented in proportion to their total population. 6. A National convention to be called at once.

The letter closes with this impassioned appeal:

Mr. President, I fear you do not realize how intently the people desire any peace consistent with the national integrity and honor, and how joyously they would hail its achievement and bless its authors. With United States stocks worth but forty cents in gold per dollar, and drafting about to commence on the third million of Union soldiers, can this be wondered at? I do not say that a just peace is now attainable, though I believe it to be so. But I do say that a frank offer by you to the insurgents of terms which the impartial will say ought to be accepted will, at the worst, prove an immense and sorely needed advantage to the national cause; it may save us from a Northern insurrection.

In a postscript Mr. Greeley again urges the President to invite "those at Niagara to ex-

hibit their credentials and submit their ultimatum."

Mr. Lincoln determined at once to take action upon this letter. He had no faith in Jewett's story. He doubted whether the embassy had any existence except in the imagination of Sanders and Jewett. But he felt the unreasonableness and injustice of Mr. Greeley's letter, while he did not doubt his good faith; and he resolved to convince him at least, and perhaps others of his way of thinking, that there was no foundation for the reproaches they were casting upon the Government for refusing to treat with the rebels. That there might be no opportunity for dispute in relation to the facts of the case, he arranged that the witness of his willingness to listen to any overtures which might come from the South should be Mr. Greeley himself. He answered his letter at once, on the 9th of July, saying:

If you can find any person, anywhere, professing to have any proposition from Jefferson Davis, in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery, whatever else it embraces, say to him he may come to me with you, and that if he really brings such proposition he shall at the least have safe conduct with the paper (and without publicity, if he chooses) to the point where you shall have met with him. The same if there be two or more persons.

Mr. Greeley answered this letter the next day in evident embarrassment. The President had surprised him by his frank and prompt acquiescence in his suggestions. He had accepted the first two points of Mr. Greeley's plan of adjustment—the restoration of the Union, and the abandonment of slavery—as the only preliminary conditions of negotiations upon which he would insist, and requested this vehement advocate of peace to bring forward his ambassadors. Mr. Greeley's reply of the 10th seems somewhat lacking both in temper and in candor. He thought the negotiators would not "open their budget" to him; repeated his reproaches at the "rude repulse" of Stephens; referred again to the importance of doing something in time for the North Carolina elections; and said at least he would try to get a look into the hand of the men at Niagara, though he had "little heart for it." But on the 13th he wrote in a much more positive manner. He said:

I have now information, on which I can rely, that two persons, duly commissioned and empowered to negotiate for peace, are at this moment not far from Niagara Falls in Canada, and are desirous of conferring with yourself, or with such persons as you may appoint and empower to treat with them. Their names (only given in confidence) are Hon. Clement C. Clay of Alabama, and Hon. Jacob Thompson of Mississippi.

He added that he knew nothing and had proposed nothing as to terms ; that it seemed to him high time an effort should be made to terminate the wholesale slaughter. He hoped to hear that the President had concluded to act in the premises, and to act so promptly as to do some good in the North Carolina elections.

On the receipt of this letter, which was written four days after Mr. Greeley had been fully authorized to bring to Washington any one he could find empowered to treat for peace, and which yet was based on the assumption of the President's unwillingness to do the very thing he had already done, Mr. Lincoln resolved to put an end to a correspondence which promised to be indefinitely prolonged, by sending an aide-de-camp to New York to arrange in a personal interview what it seemed impossible to conclude by mail. On the 15th he sent Mr. Greeley a brief telegram expressing his disappointment, saying, "I was not expecting you to send me a letter, but to bring me a man or men," and announced the departure of a messenger with a letter. The letter was of the briefest. It merely said :

Yours of the 13th is just received, and I am disappointed that you have not already reached here with those commissioners, if they would consent to come, on being shown my letter to you of the 9th inst. Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms stated in former, bring them. I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but I intend that you shall be a personal witness that it is made.

This curt and peremptory missive was delivered to Mr. Greeley by Major John Hay early on the morning of the 16th. He was still somewhat reluctant to go ; he thought some one not so well known would be less embarrassed by public curiosity ; but said finally that he would start at once if he could be given a safe conduct for four persons, to be named by him. Major Hay communicated this to the President and received the required order in reply. "If there is or is not anything in the affair," he said, "I wish to know it without unnecessary delay."

The safe conduct was immediately written and given to Mr. Greeley, who started at once for Niagara. It provided that Clement C. Clay, Jacob Thompson, James P. Holcombe, and George N. Sanders should have safe conduct to Washington in company with Horace Greeley, and should be exempt from arrest or annoyance of any kind from any officer of the United States during their journey. Nothing was said by Mr. Greeley or by Major Hay to the effect that this safe conduct modified in any respect the conditions imposed by the President's letter of the 9th. It merely carried into effect the proposition made in that letter. On arriving at Niagara, Mr. Greeley placed

himself at once in the hands of Jewett, who was waiting to receive him, and sent by him a letter addressed to Clay, Thompson, and Holcombe, in which he said :

I am informed that you are duly accredited from Richmond as the bearers of propositions looking to the establishment of peace ; that you desire to visit Washington in the fulfillment of your mission ; and that you further desire that Mr. George N. Sanders shall accompany you. If my information be thus far substantially correct, I am authorized by the President of the United States to tender you his safe conduct on the journey proposed, and to accompany you at the earliest time that will be agreeable to you.

No clearer proof can be given than is afforded in this letter that Mr. Greeley was absolutely ignorant of all the essential facts appertaining to the negotiation in which he was engaged. As it turned out, he had been misinformed even as to the personnel of the embassy, Jacob Thompson not being, and not having been, in company with the others ; none of them had any authority to act in the capacity attributed to them ; and, worse than all this, Mr. Greeley kept out of view, in his misgiving thus shot at a venture, the very conditions which Mr. Lincoln had imposed in his letter of the 9th and repeated in that of the 15th. Yet, with all the advantages thus afforded them, Clay and Holcombe felt themselves too bare and naked of credentials to accept Mr. Greeley's offer, and were therefore compelled to answer that they had not been accredited from Richmond, as assumed in his note. They made haste to say, however, that they were acquainted with the views of their Government, and could easily get credentials, or other agents could be accredited in their place, if they could be sent to Richmond armed with "the circumstances disclosed in this correspondence." It is incomprehensible that a man of Mr. Greeley's experience should not have recognized at once the purport of this proposal. It simply meant that Mr. Lincoln should take the initiative in suing the Richmond authorities for peace, on terms to be proposed by them. The essential impossibility of these terms was not apparent to Mr. Greeley ; he merely saw that the situation was somewhat different from what he had expected, and therefore acknowledged the receipt of the letter, promised to report to Washington and solicit fresh instructions, and then telegraphed to Mr. Lincoln the substance of what Clay and Holcombe had written. The President, with unwearied patience, drew up a final paper, which he sent by Major Hay to Niagara, informing Mr. Greeley by telegraph that it was on the way. This information Mr. Greeley at once sent over the border, with many apologies for the delay.

Major Hay arrived at Niagara on the 20th

of July with a paper in the President's own handwriting, expressed in these words:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, July 18, 1864.

To whom it may concern: Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe conduct both ways.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Mr. Greeley had already begun to have some impression of the unfortunate position in which he had placed himself, and the reading of this straightforward document still further nettled and perplexed him. He proposed to bring Jewett into conference; this Major Hay declined. He then refused to cross the river to Clifton unless Major Hay would accompany him, and himself deliver the paper to the Confederate emissaries. They therefore went together and met Mr. Holcombe in a private room of the Clifton House (Mr. Clay being absent for a day), and handed him the President's letter. After a few moments' conversation they separated, Mr. Greeley returning to New York and Major Hay remaining at Niagara to receive any answer that might be given to the letter. Before taking the train Mr. Greeley had an interview with Jewett, unknown to Major Hay, in which he seems to have authorized Jewett to continue to act as his representative. Jewett lost no time in acquainting the emissaries with this fact, informing them of the departure of Mr. Greeley, of "his regret at the sad termination of the initiatory steps taken for peace, in consequence of the change made by the President in his instructions to convey commissioners to Washington for negotiations, unconditionally, and that Mr. Greeley would be pleased to receive their answer" through him (Jewett). They replied to Jewett with mutual compliments, inclosing a long letter to Mr. Greeley, arraigning the President for his alleged breach of faith, which Jewett promptly communicated to the newspapers of the country without notice to Major Hay, informing him afterwards in a note that he did this by way of revenging the slight of the preceding day.

In giving the letter of the rebel emissaries to the press instead of sending it to its proper destination, Jewett accomplished the purpose for which it was written. It formed a not ineffective document in a heated political campaign. It would be difficult to ascertain, at this day, whether Mr. Greeley ever communi-

cated to Jewett or Sanders, and whether they, in their constant flittings to and fro over the Suspension Bridge, ever made known to Clay and Holcombe the conditions of negotiation laid down by Mr. Lincoln in his letters of the 9th and 15th of July. At all events they pretended to be ignorant of any such conditions, and assumed that the President had sent Mr. Greeley to invite them to Washington without credentials and without conditions, to convey to Richmond his overtures of peace. They did not say with any certainty that even in that event his overtures would have been accepted, but expressed the hope that in case the war must continue there might "have been infused into its conduct something more of the spirit which softens and partially redeems its brutalities." They then went on to accuse the President of a "sudden and entire change of views," of a "rude withdrawal of a courteous overture," of "fresh blasts of war to the bitter end"; attributing this supposed change to some "mysteries of his cabinet" or some "caprice of his imperial will." They plainly intimated that while the South desired peace, it would not accept any arrangement which bartered away its self-government; and in conclusion they called upon their fellow-Confederates to strip from their "eyes the last film of delusion" that peace is possible, and "if there were any patriots or Christians" in the North, they implored them "to recall the abused authority and vindicate the outraged civilization of their country."

Even this impudent and uncandid manifesto did not convince Mr. Greeley that he had committed an error. On the contrary, he adopted the point of view of the rebel emissaries, and contended after his return to New York that he regarded the safe conduct given him on the 16th of July as a waiver by the President of all the conditions of his former letters. Being attacked by his colleagues of the press for his action at Niagara, he could only defend himself by implied censure of the President, and the discussion grew so warm that both he and his assailants at last joined in a request to Mr. Lincoln to permit the publication of the correspondence between them. This was an excellent opportunity for Mr. Lincoln to vindicate his own proceeding. But he rarely looked at such matters from the point of view of personal advantage, and he feared that the passionate, almost despairing appeals of the most prominent Republican editor in the North for peace at any cost would deepen the gloom in the public mind and have an injurious effect upon the Union cause. He therefore proposed to Mr. Greeley, in case the correspondence should be published, to omit some of the most vehement

phrases of his letters and those in which he advocated peace negotiations solely for political effect; at the same time he invited him to come to Washington and talk with him freely. Mr. Greeley, writing on the 8th of August, accepted both suggestions in principle, but he querulously declined going to Washington at that time, on the ground that the President was surrounded by his "bitterest personal enemies," and that his going would only result in further mischief, as at Niagara. "I will gladly go," he continued, "whenever I feel a hope that their influence has waned." Then, unable to restrain himself, he broke out in new and severe reproaches against the President for not having received Mr. Stephens, for not having sent a deputation to Richmond to ask for peace after Vicksburg, for not having taken the Democrats in Congress at their word, and sent "three of the biggest of them as commissioners to see what kind of a peace they could get." He referred once more to Niagara, and said magnanimously, "Let the past go"; but added the stern admonition, "Do not let this month pass without an earnest effort for peace." He held out a hope that if the President would turn from the error of his ways he would still help him make peace; but for the time being, "knowing who are nearest you," he gave him up. The only meaning this can have is simply, Dismiss Seward from your Cabinet and do as I tell you, and then perhaps I can save your Administration.

The next day, having received another telegram from the President, who, regardless of his own dignity, was still endeavoring to conciliate and convince him, Mr. Greeley wrote another letter, which we shall give more fully than the rest, to show in what a dangerous frame of mind was the editor of the most important organ of public opinion in the North. He begins by refusing to telegraph, "since I learned by sad experience at Niagara that my dispatches go to the War Department before reaching you."

I fear that my chance for usefulness has passed. I know that nine-tenths of the whole American people, North and South, are anxious for peace — peace on almost any terms — and utterly sick of human slaughter and devastation. I know that, to the general eye, it now seems that the rebels are anxious to negotiate and that we refuse their advances. I know that if this impression be not removed we shall be beaten out of sight next November. I firmly believe that, were the election to take place to-morrow, the Democratic majority in this State and Pennsylvania would amount to 100,000, and that we should lose Connecticut also. Now if the rebellion can be crushed before November it will do to go on; if not, we are rushing to certain ruin.

What, then, can I do in Washington? Your trusted
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advisers nearly all think I ought to go to Fort Lafayette for what I have done already. Seward wanted me sent there for my brief conference with M. Mercier. The cry has steadily been, No truce! No armistice! No negotiation! No mediation! Nothing but surrender at discretion! I never heard of such fatuity before. There is nothing like it in history. It *must* result in disaster, or all experience is delusive.

Now I do not know that a tolerable peace could be had, but I believe it might have been last month; and, at all events, I know that an honest, sincere effort for it would have done us immense good. And I think no Government fighting a rebellion should ever close its ears to any proposition the rebels may make.

I beg you, implore you, to inaugurate or invite proposals for peace forthwith. And in case peace cannot now be made consent to an *armistice for one year*, each party to retain unmolested all it now holds, but the rebel ports to be opened. Meantime let a national convention be held, and there will surely be no more war at all events.

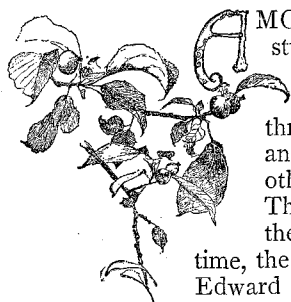
In a letter of the 11th of August, Mr. Greeley closed this extraordinary correspondence by insisting that if his letters were published they should be printed entire. This was accepted by Mr. Lincoln as a veto upon their publication. He could not afford, for the sake of vindicating his own action, to reveal to the country the despondency — one might almost say the desperation — of one so prominent in Republican councils as the editor of the "Tribune." The spectacle of this veteran journalist, who was justly regarded as the leading controversial writer on the antislavery side, ready to sacrifice everything for peace, and frantically denouncing the Government for refusing to surrender the contest, would have been, in its effect upon public opinion, a disaster equal to the loss of a great battle. The President had a sincere regard for Mr. Greeley also, and was unwilling to injure him and his great capacities for usefulness by publishing these ill-considered and discouraging utterances. His magnanimity was hardly appreciated. Mr. Greeley, in this letter of the 11th of August, and afterwards, insisted that the President had in his letter and his dispatch of the 15th of July changed his ground from that held in his letter of the 9th, which ground, he asserted, was again shifted in his paper "To whom it may concern." This was of course wholly without foundation. The letter of the 9th authorized Mr. Greeley to bring to Washington any one "professing to have any proposition from Jefferson Davis, in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery"; the letter of the 15th repeats the offer contained in that of the 9th, saying, "Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms

stated in former, bring them." The next day Major Hay gave Mr. Greeley a formal safe conduct for himself and party, and neither of them thought of it as nullifying the President's letters. Indeed, Mr. Greeley's sole preposterous justification for his claim that his safe conduct superseded the President's instructions was that Major Hay did not say that it did not.

It was characteristic of Mr. Lincoln that, seeing the temper in which Mr. Greeley regarded the transaction, he dropped the matter and submitted in silence to the misrepresentations to which he was subjected by reason of it. The correspondence preceding the Niagara conference was not published until after the President's death; that subsequent to it sees the light for the first time in these pages. The public, having nothing of the record except the impudent manifesto of Clay and Holcombe, the foolish chatter of Jewett, and such half-statements as Mr. Greeley chose to make in answer to the assaults of his confrères of the press, judged Mr. Lincoln unjustly. Some thought

he erred in giving any hearing to the rebels; some criticized his choice of a commissioner; and the opposition naturally made the most of his conditions of negotiation, and accused him of embarking in a war of extermination in the interest of the negro.¹ So that this well-meant effort of the President to ascertain what were the possibilities of peace through negotiation, or, failing that, to convince the representative of a large body of Republicans of his willingness to do all he could in that direction, resulted only in putting a keener edge upon the criticisms of his supporters, and in arming his adversaries with a weapon which they used, after their manner, among the rebels of the border States and their sympathizers in the North. Nevertheless, surveying the whole transaction after the lapse of twenty-five years, it is not easy to see how any act of his in relation to it was lacking in wisdom, or how it could have been changed for the better. Certainly every step of the proceeding was marked with his usual unselfish sincerity and magnanimity to friend and to foe.

NILS'S GARDEN.



AMONG a thousand students in a university town there will always be two or three in whom science and poetry hold each other at a deadlock. The headquarters for these few was, in my time, the delightful room of Edward Tenniman on the spot where the new Law School now stands. He himself was the high priest of this double altar, the professor of these incompatible elective studies. The room was in an old colonial house of the humbler description, the ceiling was low with a cross-timber, the walls were wainscoted, and there was a large, open fireplace. The arrangements of the room followed half unconsciously the double bent of the owner's mind. All one side was devoted to serve botanical science: tin boxes, specimens, herbaria, microscopes, and a recess filled with Latin and German botanical works. The middle of the room was, as it were, transitional: there was a desk with an

Æschylus forever open, and a great copy of Liddell and Scott's lexicon, then a novelty. On the other side one passed into high philosophy and dreamland: a portrait of Coleridge, his framed autograph, a picture of his study, and a whole library of mystical philosophy, including, I remember, the folio edition of Jacob Behmen in five volumes, over whose symbolic plates we used to pore. With what delight after a rather stiff lesson in botany—for he took a few of us as private pupils—did we turn to the other side of the room, when Tenniman would unfold for us Behmen's "Aurora, or Day-Spring," and, better yet, the "Signatura Rerum, or the signature of all things, showing the Sign and Signification of the several Forms and Shapes in the Creation; and what the Beginning, Ruin, and Cure of every Thing is, it proceeds out of Eternity into Time, and again out of time into Eternity, and comprehends all Mysteries. Written in High Dutch, 1622, by Jacob Behmen, alias Teutonicus Phylosophus." No doubt this side of the room was very unscientific, in the modern sense, but it was certainly refreshing after an hour or two at the microscope. It

¹ On the morning that the letter of the rebel emissaries was printed Major Hay, returning to Washington, heard this colloquy between two draymen on a Jersey City ferry-boat: "Have you heard the news?" "No; what is it?" "Old Abe and Jeff. Davis have been trying to make peace." "How did they make out?" "Old

Abe, he says, 'Let the niggers go free, and we'll stop fighting.' Jeff, he says, 'I'll let them be free that's free now, and the rest stay as they are.' Old Abe, he says, 'No, they got to be all free'; and so they broke up on that." These draymen were not the only citizens who gave this brief and dramatic form to the negotiations.