EDITORIAL SENTIMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA IN THE CAMPAIGN OF 1860

By Edgar B. Cale
University of Pennsylvania

He who seeks riches in old mines usually returns empty-handed. This inquiry into the campaign of 1860 may prove such a venture, for on that subject much has been written and much has been conjectured. Yet it is still possible that something may be said about the campaign and its issues as they were presented and discussed in the editorial pages of Pennsylvania newspapers. Any discussion of the significance to be attached to editorial opinion in general must be confined to a minimum. Emphasis on this type of evidence varies with the attitude of the individual historian. One may rely almost entirely on the press, another will attempt to balance the press with other sources, another will give but passing attention to this sort of evidence. I am of the belief that most editors were able spokesmen for large groups of their fellow citizens. Indices to the comparative importance or influence of a newspaper may be found in the circulation figures, the frequency of republication of editorials by sympathetic journals, and the frequency with which the opposition selected it for attack. And above all, if after a paper began vigorously to support certain doctrines, its history shows that it did not lose subscribers or prestige or perhaps that it began to expand, it is quite safe to assert that a large number of individuals shared the editor's convictions. Holding this to be true, it is possible that certain interpretations of the campaign of 1860 can be considerably modified by research into such sources. The restrictions of this paper, however, forbid anything more than a treatment of some of the more obvious aspects.

1 The materials for this paper are to be found in an extensive collection of editorials from over six hundred free and border state newspapers, selected for the purpose of tracing northern sentiment from the summer of 1860 through secession to the beginning of hostilities. The collection is the property of Professor Howard C. Perkins, of Findlay College. It is the basis of his forthcoming Beveridge Fund publication, Northern Editorials on Secession.
Few campaigns have equaled that of 1860 in complexity. At least four parties offered presidential candidates to the voters of Pennsylvania. Minor issues peculiar to a certain locality, spirited contests for state office, and heated battles between the two wings of the Democratic party tended to confuse matters. Spider-like, each party spread its web, weaving fine issues, threading heaviest where most was to be gained. To make sure that in the pages following we do not become involved and finally enmeshed in some obscure portion of one of the webs, brief notice will be taken here of the problems to be treated.

Protection to industry, slavery and sectionalism, the split in the Democratic party, and attempts at fusion, constitute the most discussed topics of the day. As a preface to any remarks on these topics, some comment should be presented on the attitude of Pennsylvania editors toward Buchanan. Professor Howard C. Perkins suggests that antipathy for the incumbent administration ranked close to protection as a force in converting voters to the Republican party. Secession sentiment in Pennsylvania was so colored by such other considerations as the tariff and disgust with corruption of the federal administration, that one hesitates to present sentiment in the state as typical of the North. This writer, for one, eagerly awaits the publication of Professor Perkins' findings on this question.

Most writers who have dealt with the campaign agree that the Republican position on the tariff was the most important single factor in the success of the party in Pennsylvania. With the exception of George Fort Milton, no one has ventured to identify it as one of the highly important issues insuring national victory for the Republicans. Fite declares that the tariff was a subsidiary topic in the Republican program, and that in the campaigns of other parties it was completely disregarded. Any prominence that the question held, he points out, was due to the Keystone state and New Jersey with their large iron interests. This viewpoint, varying in emphasis, characterizes the usual treatment. That the "Iron States" were responsible for the inclusion of a tariff plank in the Republican national platform seems well established, but the significance of the move does not. The electoral vote of Pennsyl-

vania plus but two votes from New Jersey given to any candidate except Lincoln would have thrown the election into the House. Such an occurrence would probably have meant defeat for Lincoln, and was the strongest hope of the opposition. Milton admits that Lincoln did not absolutely have to win Pennsylvania’s vote to be elected, but insists that, practically speaking, he had to carry it. The Republicans, well aware of their excellent chances to win the Presidency and equally alive to the necessity of carrying Pennsylvania, utilized fully the appeal of their high tariff plank in developing their campaign.

The Republican press of the state developed the benefits of protection from every conceivable angle. The Philadelphia North American, a dignified party organ, edited by Morton McMichael, printed (between September 3rd and October 11th) sixteen lengthy editorials on the question. Benjamin Bannan, editor of the Pottsville Miners’ Journal, was even more assiduous than McMichael in expounding the need for protection. From the beginning of the state campaign in April until victory was a reality, Bannan failed not in a single issue to include at least one editorial on protection. Flanigen of the Philadelphia News, Bergner of the Harrisburg Daily Telegraph, and Errett of the Pittsburgh Gazette, were others in the Republican editorial ranks who emphasized and re-emphasized the need for protection and how it could be obtained.

The editorial debate on the tariff question was divided into two rather distinct phases. In the first place the Republican press had to establish its stand on protection, refute Democratic charges of insincerity, and in general wage a campaign upon the comparatively petty arguments inherent in a state-wide campaign. The other phase involved the philosophy of protection and its necessity as a part of the national program. In both cases the Republican

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3 Should the opposition have succeeded in maneuvering the election into the House, the chances were that Joseph Lane, Breckinridge’s running mate, would have become the practical President through his selection as President pro tem of the Senate while the House divided on the Presidency. Such a possibility was forecast by the drawn out contest over the Speakership in the House the same year. See George Fort Milton, Eve of Conflict (Boston and New York, 1934), pp. 81 ff. See also “A Candid Confession” in the Philadelphia North American, September 8, 1860. Henry Raymond made much of this possibility in the New York Times.

4 George Fort Milton, Eve of Conflict, p. 482.
press had the advantageous position throughout the campaign. With no past record to defend, with a favorable plank incorporated in their national platform, and with the ironmasters of the state clamoring for relief, it was not difficult to wage an effective campaign.

Democratic leaders, realizing that they could not ignore the demand for protection, attempted to establish their party as the true high tariff party. A protective plank was inserted in the state platform and duplicated in many of the county platforms. The most determined effort of the Democratic party to steal Republican thunder was made in connection with the campaign for the governorship. Henry Foster of Westmoreland county, the gubernatorial candidate, was given the sobriquet of “Tariff Harry.” Although never an outspoken high tariff man, he had said and done some things in the past in favor of protection. Every favorable scrap of evidence, no matter how insignificant, was repeatedly used. J. Lawrence Getz, editor of the Reading Gazette, made much of the fact that Foster in 1844 had voted against a bill proposing to admit railroad iron free of duty. Widely quoted also was a Foster statement in favor of the principle of the tariff of 1842. Foster’s interest in securing passage of the Morrill Bill without delay was responsible, so Democratic editors explained, for his frequent trips to Washington. Editor Meyers of the Bedford Gazette epitomized all such efforts when he wrote: “Foster has spoken, voted, and worked for protection. . . . He has a sound record on the subject.”

Most of the Democratic attacks on the Republican position were based on accusations of insincerity. Most prominent was the declaration that the protective plank in the Republican platform was susceptible of double interpretation. Getz argued at length in an editorial on “The Double-Faced Tariff Resolution” that the wording allowed either free trade or protection to be understood in the proper localities. Later in the campaign he asked the Re-
publican candidate for governor, Andrew Curtin, for a direct answer to the question: "Did he interpret the plank as meaning free trade or protection?" Probing the membership of the Republican party, Democratic editors found further proof of insincerity. Was not Bryant of the [Republican] New York Evening Post a notorious free trader? And Hamlin? Lincoln was pictured as indifferent to tariff demands, but inclined to be a free trader. And to make it conclusive there seemed little doubt in the minds of such editors that it was the Republican party, and not the Democratic, which was opposing the Morrill Bill.

Such efforts were simply and easily met. Republican editors pointed to the free trade record of the Democrats and bade their readers familiarize themselves with the Cincinnati platform of 1856. The low tariff declarations contained therein had been re-adopted with the whole for the current campaign. The pages of the journals of the Houses of Congress revealed all too clearly which party was really supporting the Morrill Bill. McMichael explained Foster's trips to Washington with a curt paragraph, saying:

Mr. Foster went to Washington and supplicated any stand from his Democratic friends to enable him to stand on this question at home. Candidate as he was, they spurned his entreaties, and sent him back without the poorest pretence of recognition or regard.

When trying to appear as the high tariff party in Pennsylvania, the Democrats were fighting an uneven battle. The cards were stacked.

An unusual situation confronted Pittsburgh editors. The Ohio River carried a great deal of Pittsburgh's trade southwestward and influenced the development of some pro-Southern sentiment. Errett of the Pittsburgh Gazette, of course, was immune. James P. Barr, the exceptionally able editor of the Pittsburgh Post, thought, however, that it was not to the best interests of Pennsylvania to pursue

10 Ibid., September 1, 1860.
11 Ibid., October 6, 1860.
12 George Fort Milton observes that "Keystone voters were alarmed by the attention focused on the Democratic platform of 1856." Eve of Conflict, p. 483.
13 Philadelphia North American, October 9, 1860.
too stringent a campaign for protection. He emphasized the importance of the trade to the South and believed it necessary to maintain harmony with that section. 4 Other circumstances, however, prevented the growth of such feelings to any unusual magnitude. The Pittsburgh *Evening Chronicle* voiced the opinion that the South was eager to get out of the Union in order to avoid paying their ever mounting debts to Northern business men. 5 In addition to this feeling of mistrust, entrepreneurs of the city were becoming aware of the new importance of Pittsburgh to the Ohio Valley since the Pennsylvania railroad had opened a new route to the East. Commercial ties with the Ohio Valley did cause Pittsburgh editors, with the exception noted, to soften their pleas for protection, but any specific gains made by the Democrats in that direction were more than offset by new economic forces which were tying Pennsylvania's western metropolis hard and fast to the industrial North.

When editors considered the tariff issue in its national setting, they were influenced by forces which had been developing for some years. Pennsylvania in 1860 was one of the leading industrial states of the Union. Within the decade of 1850-1860 the industries of the state had gone through a period of rapid expansion followed by a severe depression. Employer and employee alike attributed their ills to foreign competition from which they were unprotected. Economic revulsion had been general throughout the nation, but the agricultural South had emerged from the depression with comparative rapidity. Prosperity in the South in 1860 so far as the cotton planters were concerned was no fabrication of the southern nationalists. For such a situation there was one reason apparent to every ironmaster: free trade favored an agricultural society. Southern leaders, perhaps a bit amazed at the recuperative powers of their economic system, now became confirmed free traders, and refused to assist in any upward revision of the existing tariff law. The stiff opposition of southern leaders to any measures designed to relieve suffering industrialists seemed to the industrialists, at least, most inconsistent with their efforts to pose as citizens of an "oppressed" section.

4 *Pittsburgh Post*, April 10, 1860.
5 *Evening Chronicle*, October 25, 1860.
The editors favoring a higher tariff were convinced by this state of affairs that the idea of "oppression" was not one-sided. They, along with the industrialists and laborers, accepted this opposition to an essential of their well being as a challenge. J. R. Flanigen, editor of the Philadelphia Daily News, put the issue rather well when he wrote:

... Unless a man shall be in favor of the indefinite extension of slavery, for slave codes in the Territories, and for whatever else the South may demand, he is to be regarded as a sectionalist. He must, to gain their good will, be a supporter of Southern men and measures exclusively, and must be willing to sacrifice Pennsylvania and her great interests to Southern dictation and arrogance.

This, to our mind, is sectionalism of the worst kind—it is in truth little else than a morbid political fanaticism, without any redeeming trait. The dominant sentiment of the South is opposed to... industrial protection and other measures of great moment to the interests of the free States. ... The only policy that the South, as a section, favors is that which is favorable to its interests alone. ...

It is interesting to conjecture what would have happened had not the war precipitated matters. A dominant capitalistic class in the South led that section into a war to preserve its economic and social structure. The Industrial Revolution came late in America; a group of strongly established industrialists might well have done the same thing in the North at a later date. Surveillance of the numerous editorials written during the campaign by Republican editors, and one may add, many Democratic editors, reveals many traces of the same psychological complex which helped make Southern nationalists. A surprising universality of opinion on the matter had permeated the state by 1860; add another boom period, another depression, the whole well mixed with years of propaganda, and you will have compounded an attitude capable of ordering Pennsylvania soldiery to oust the Federal authorities from the Port of Philadelphia. By 1860, no party dared openly

16 September 28, 1860.
and aggressively to oppose protection in Pennsylvania and hope for success.\textsuperscript{17}

Disgust with the Buchanan administration, clearly marked in Lincoln and Douglas organs and significant in the independent press, was a potent force in creating Republican voters in 1860. Well timed, the Covode investigating committee unburdened its findings to the public early in the campaign. One hundred thousand copies of the Report were printed, and it was in the hands of every anti-Buchanan stumper during the campaign.\textsuperscript{18} However unfair the means, and however untrue some of the allegations, there is no doubt that the findings placed Buchanan in an unfavorable light. We leave a detailed appraisal of the Covode committee, its operations, and its report to the student of politics of the period, or to the biographer of Buchanan. Our chief concern is with the reaction of the various divisions of the press. Breckinridge editors, injured to the quick, widely advertised Buchanan’s personal defense and the committee’s minority report. The Pennsylvanian, edited by J. Brimner, was directly implicated by the committee and became most vigorous in defending the Administration. Failing to find anything startling with which to incriminate the Republicans, the editors used the report as ammunition in bombarding the Douglasites.\textsuperscript{19} The Douglas press had little to say about the whole affair. Although somewhat alarmed at the effects bound to be felt by Democracy in general, Douglas editors were generally pleased with the castigation of the Buchanan supporters. Buchanan’s prestige was at low ebb. None of the prominent newspapers published in his home town of Lancaster supported him.\textsuperscript{20} Ben-

\textsuperscript{17} Stephen A. Douglas, emphatic free trader in earlier years, came out for protection in speeches made at Harrisburg and Reading on September 7 and 8, 1860. After Douglas had toured the state he warned party leaders that “the tariff possesses more interest to the working classes than the Negro question.” See George Fort Milton, \textit{Eve of Conflict}, p. 483.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 484. The report, 385 pages, is in \textit{Reports of Committees}, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., II.

\textsuperscript{19} The \textit{Bedford Gazette} attempted to indict the Republican party, issues of April 20, \textit{et seq.} \textit{Dollar Pennsylvanian} injected accounts of Republican corruption in New York state, June 30 \textit{et seq.} John W. Forney, editor of the Philadelphia \textit{Press}, bore the brunt of the attack on the Douglasites. See “Forney’s Confession,” \textit{Dollar Pennsylvanian}, June 23; “A Hypocrite Unmasked,” \textit{Ibid.}, Sept. 1. The gist of these two editorials was widely copied by Breckinridge editors.

\textsuperscript{20} The \textit{Intelligencer} supported Douglas; the \textit{Herald-Examiner}, the \textit{Beobachter}, and the \textit{Inquirer} supported Lincoln; the \textit{Express} called itself independent but leaned toward Lincoln.
jamin Bannan, editor of the [Republican] Pottsville Miners' Journal, suggested that, "When Buchanan shall march forth on the fourth of next March, he should gather around him the few faithful followers left to him in the North, and returning to the shades of Wheatland, exhale his life amid the seraphic fumes of his favorite brand—old Bourbon—we believe."21

The commitments of the Democratic party on the slavery question and the attitude of the South toward Lincoln furnished the Democrats with what they hoped would be their most effective campaign argument: a Republican victory would precipitate a division of the Union and perhaps civil war. On this point Breckinridge and Douglas editors agreed. Brimmer warned the electorate that the election of Lincoln and Hamlin "would perhaps be the signal for the immediate withdrawal of fifteen States from the confederacy, and the disruption of the Union."22 George Sanderson, editor of the [Douglas] Lancaster Intelligencer, concluded an election day editorial with the solemn affirmation:

We are standing upon the brink of a fearful revolution, for the beginning of which the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency is to be the signal. Unless there be some wonderful interposition of Divine Providence, the success of the Republican party in the Presidential election will lift the curtain for the last terribly tragic denouement of the drama, and then farewell to our once glorious Union and all its unequaled blessings.

Barr wrote that the "dark prospect is precipitating the secessionist and even the conservative political element of the South into revolution and civil war."23 Most of the alarming editorials were documented with quotations from Southern newspapers.24

The Republican party was charged with radicalism of all degrees and types. Not only were they abolitionists, not only were they conspiring to wreck the Union, but they embraced infidelism, advocated women's rights, socialism, spiritualism, and a multitude of other "blasted isms."25 Most effort, however, was ex-

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21 July 14, 1860.
22 Morning Pennsylvanian, November 5, 1860.
23 Pittsburgh Post, October 25, 1860.
24 Particularly the fine editorial, "The Dissolution of the Union." Ibid.
25 See Brimmer's description, Morning Pennsylvanian, October 16, 1860.
pended in identifying them as abolitionists. The careers of prominent personalities in the party were reviewed; Brown, Garrison, Sumner, and all other out and out abolitionists were definitely grouped as present or past leaders of the party. The more violent of the Breckinridge papers accused the party of circulating incendiary matter among the slaves in an effort to stir up an insurrection. Barr of the *Pittsburgh Post* linked the slavery and sectional issues when he declared:

> The very foundation of the Republican party of the North is a mad fanaticism which has brought the country to the verge of destruction. . . . Northern fanaticism has bred Southern Disunionism.²⁶

There was a mixed reaction among Republican editors to the Democratic charges. Conservative editors seemed reluctant to discuss the slavery question *per se*; more aggressive editors answered in kind with virulent attacks on the Slavocracy and blood-curdling tales of horrors in Kansas. As an instance of the first class of papers, the position of the *North American* can be cited. This paper was accused by the Harrisburg *Daily Patriot and Union* of deliberately ignoring the slavery question.²⁷ Editor McMichael defended his course in an editorial, "Hard to Please."²⁸ Therein he complained that when he discussed slavery the opposition cried, "Take up the tariff!"; when he discussed the tariff they requested that he write on slavery. He concluded the editorial, however, with the significant admission that he had been ignoring the slavery issue as much as possible because it was too "volatile," and that his desire was for peace and quiet. But six editorials of consequence relating to slavery appeared in the *North American* between September 1 and November 6. The second class of papers were more numerous in the Republican ranks. Editors of such organs made no direct effort to refute the charge of abolitionism. In the words of Errett, they wished to recall to their readers that the policy of "our revolutionary fathers was to make the national domain all free," and that they had excluded the words "slave"

²⁶ June 30, 1860.
²⁷ September 14, 1860.
²⁸ September 18, 1860.
and "slavery" from the Constitution; free labor was not a sectional or local interest, but national and universal.  

Whenever possible, the Republican press allied the Negro question with the challenge to Pennsylvania industry. Their argument centered on the declaration that slavery was detrimental to free white labor, but that they did not seek to disturb slavery where it existed. George Bergner, editor of the Harrisburg Daily Telegraph, reasoned that:

... Pennsylvania has in reality the largest interest involved in the coming Presidential contest. Her resources depend for success on protection. Her labor cannot rise to that strength and power necessary to compete with a foreign trade, unless fostered and protected by special legislative enactment, which would ... place labor in a position from which they could bid defiance to the pauper labor and compulsory servitude of all nations and communities. ... From either of the other three candidates, Northern labor has no right to expect either care or attention.

The North American quoted Senator Hammond of South Carolina to the effect that "capital should own its labor," and that anyone who put his services out for what he could get was a slave. McMichael underwrote this quotation with a capable editorial asserting that the Democratic party was the enemy of free white labor, and should not be returned to power.

The alarming Democratic editorials picturing a disrupted Union once Lincoln were elected failed to disturb the majority of Republican editors. In general they were dismissed as shams concocted to frighten the electorate into following Democracy and the South. Surprisingly enough, the best description of the typical Republican attitude came from the pen of a Douglas editor, James P. Barr:

Nothing seems to afford our Republican friends so much positive enjoyment—such unalloyed mirth—as the subject of the dissolution of the United States. You have but to mention the possibility of a disturbance of our

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29 *Pittsburgh Gazette*, November 6, 1860.
30 November 5, 1860.
31 "Democracy on White Labor." October 5, 1860.
political condition, to raise a loud guffaw on the street corner, or pert lectures from Republican print. These laughing philosophers inform us that they are not to be deluded with nursery tales, invented for weak nerves and feeble intellects, not they, profound creatures. They learnedly point their noses to the past, and, with a single snuff, demolish all reasoning upon present difficulties and future trials. We have but to listen to the wonderfully brilliant fact that the United States has never yet been dissolved—that they have often heard about it immediately preceding elections, but never after. Now, all this is very funny, and the man who will not laugh must be one who has not pondered deeply upon the science of government, or studied carefully the machinery of our complex system.\textsuperscript{82}

The majority of Republican editors felt that the South held the disunion threat in reserve to be used when they saw power slipping from their grasp. Now it was being brought forth with the “most dismal howlings,” in the trust that what had scared the people of the North before, would scare them again. The only influential Republican editor who sensed that all was not well on the Southern front was McMichael. From October 11 on, the tense situation in the South received his almost complete attention. He pictured the disunionists in the South as forming an inconsequential group; a group that would never be permitted to become dominant and ruin the South by hasty action.\textsuperscript{83} It must be noted, however, that most of McMichael’s sources were conservative; editors such as Rhett of the Charleston Mercury were not prominent in his columns. Nevertheless, McMichael knew far better than most of his colleagues the condition of affairs in the South, even though the selected nature of his sources caused him to underestimate the true seriousness of the situation.

Slavery and sectionalism being the issues most profoundly and widely debated, it is natural that in the discussions of these topics we can most clearly distinguish the four groups offering presidential candidates. The tariff battle may have been more bitter and intense, but it was essentially a struggle between two groups,

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Pittsburgh Post}, October 31, 1860.

each desiring to be the sole advocate of an identical principle. There was a real difference of opinion concerning slavery and the best means of restoring harmony within the Union.

Regardless of the degrees of conservatism assigned to editors within the ranks, the Republican party was the radical party of 1860. Followers of Breckinridge were called secessionists and were accused of plotting to break up the Union. Fundamentally, though, they were striving to maintain the status quo with the existing conditions of a half-free, half-slave country, free trade, and Southern control of the federal government. The Republican party had come into existence to fill a need; its demands were definite. There could be no doubt that its success in a national election would set in motion a series of events which would eventually alter the balance of power. Republican editors wrote with that situation in mind, although some, as we have noted, were conservative and conciliatory in their tendencies. As to what Republican leaders actually would do once in power could only be conjectured.

The Democratic party had split into two warring factions, each claiming regularity. Stephen A. Douglas had been nominated by what might be termed the second regular convention; John C. Breckinridge was the nominee of the convention at Richmond made up of seceders from the Charleston gathering. Although agreeing that a Republican victory would be more catastrophic than a victory for the other, both factions battled to the finish in Pennsylvania. The tariff issue caused the most intense struggle for a comparatively brief period, and was the one issue which drew the two divisions closest together. Slavery and sectionalism furnished the materials for the ablest editorials and gave the opposing Democratic editors opportunity to vent their spleen one upon the other. The virile journalistic style of the days of Jefferson and Hamilton lived again in the editorials dealing with the Douglas-Breckinridge rift.

The state election on October 9 saw the end of the period of intense debate over the tariff. A united state Democratic organization, attempting to appear protectionist, had failed to elect their candidate for governor. There seemed to be little point in emphasizing the issue further. From this date until the national election the sectional question remained in the foreground.
Supporters of Douglas fared little better at the hands of Breckinridge editors than did the supporters of Lincoln. John W. Forney, ablest Douglas editor in the state, was given the honor of being their particular target. Collectively, they were certain that the satanic and spineless Douglas abetted by his chief imp, Forney, was the real destroyer of Democracy. Another general opinion held that Douglas was running solely to insure the defeat of Breckinridge. The attack was continuous. In the twenty issues of the *Dollar Pennsylvanian* appearing between June 23 and November 6, over fifty editorials were devoted to the misdeeds of Douglas and Forney. Over twenty lengthy editorials of the same tenor appeared in the *Reading Gazette* for the same dates. Meyers managed to denounce the combination at least once in each issue of the *Bedford Gazette*. The split had its humorous side as well. Parallelizing the case of the *Quid Nunc*, which was edited on the first page by Douglas adherents and on the inside pages by a Breckinridge man, we have the case of the *Fulton Democrat*, published in McConnellsburg. While the senior editor, a Douglas supporter, was attending a meeting of fusionists at Cresson the junior editor took the opportunity to hoist the names of Breckinridge and Lane to the mast-head. He then boldly asserted that they were his favorite candidates, an allegiance which he knew to be backed by the “almost unanimous feeling of the voters of this county.”

The Douglas editors pointed to the Breckinridge group as a party of seceders and declared that its members, and Southerners as well, had no one but themselves to blame for the situation. Had they not disrupted the party to nominate a fiery disunionist such as Yancey, and remained to support a man acceptable to both sections, evil days would not be upon them. Douglas cared not whether “slavery was voted up or voted down”; surely half a loaf was better than none. They were certain that Douglas could have defeated Lincoln as he had in 1858, and the South would not have been faced with the certainty of a completely antagonistic party in power.

The ill feeling thus engendered between the factions, no matter how strong, could not blind leaders on either side to the scant

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232 PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY

3 The *Quid Nunc* case was frequently noted in papers of the day; cited in McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, VIII. It was published in Grand Junction, Tennessee.
chances they had of success. In addition, the results of the state election made it obvious, that unless the Republicans became too over confident, there was practically no chance for a split vote. Fusion of the two Democratic tickets was the only hope. In Pennsylvania, Douglas and Breckinridge editors, with one outstanding exception, aligned themselves with the movement. Forney of the Philadelphia Press did all he could to undermine their efforts, and after a fusion ticket had been agreed upon at Cresson he was instrumental in circulating a straight Douglas ticket. His attitude was undoubtedly strongly influenced by Douglas himself who opposed the movement, believing that fusion with seceders merely added dishonor to defeat.36

The fusion plan in Pennsylvania was to present Democratic voters with a single set of electors only, all of whom were to be pledged to the Democratic candidate receiving the highest popular vote. The efforts resulted in no practical gains in Pennsylvania. The returns indicate that had all Democrats voted for either Douglas or Breckinridge there would have been no chance; Lincoln polled some 62,000 more votes than his entire opposition.

The Bell-Everett ticket failed to arouse much enthusiasm among Pennsylvania editors. The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin began the campaign as a Bell organ but was well within the Lincoln camp by November 6. Most editors regarded the Bell group as a mere distraction, more or less, supported by people without convictions. Bell himself was pictured as a man of little resolution, without a program of action, lacking the necessary qualifications to cope with the unusual situation. Some editors, as Barr, McMichael, Swain and Abell of the Philadelphia Public Ledger, and Hannum of the Wilkes-Barre Lusene Union considered Bell the catspaw of interests trying to incite antagonisms between North and South. They believed that the crisis had not been nearly so serious until the voting public was disturbed by such cries as “Save the Union,” emanating from Bell supporters. Too, they pointed out, the Southern interests back of the movement were hoping that the Constitutional Union party would divide the northern vote which might have gone to Lincoln. Personally, Bell was presented as an honest character; McMichael on October 2 wrote a platitudinous editorial

36 George Fort Milton, Eve of Conflict, p. 494.
about the Presidential candidate, concluding with a wish that he would get back into the Senate.

So the battle of words raged on. The heat of the contest of 1860 left few newspapers aloof and unmoved. That words and votes were impotent before the force of the issues was fully apparent to many, half-apparent to all. Of those who saw, some wished to avoid the inevitable conflict; others welcomed it. In no other campaign in American history has such a cloud of war hung over the very homes of the voters. Pennsylvania interests had to be respected, yet the price of such respect was enough to cause even a radical voter to hesitate. It is, perhaps, in the newspapers of the day, guiding and reflecting public opinion of all shades, that we can most clearly trace the mixed feelings that came with such a realization.