

Transcription

"The Union Party is stronger now"

Martinsville Va

Mar 18th 1861

Mr P. Gravelly

Dear Sir

There was a large turn out of our people at court on Monday last. I made a speech of an hour and a half, explanatory of my course in the Legislature upon the important national questions now before the Country. I think my speech was well received. When I closed a few Secessionists called on Hughes Dillard who readily took the Stand, and delivered one of those harangues for which he is so famous. He labored hard to get up some secession feeling—tried to make all sorts of issues. He finally said that the issue, was—"free negroes and Lincoln on the one side—and white men and the south on the other" upon this issue he called for a show of hands, asking all in favor of white men and the South, and opposed to Lincoln and free negroes, to hold up their hands. Although the Co House was crowded, only about 12 or 15 held up their hands, thus showing their utter disregard for all such pretense. After he had exhausted himself—he sat down, when I replied about 20 minutes, when the crowd dispersed—being unwilling to hear him any more, although he got up and commenced. Some of the secessionists admit that he injured their cause.

I conversed freely with the people from all parts of the county, & am satisfied that the Union Party is stronger now than it was when you were elected. The general feeling seems to be, to give Mr Lincoln a trial—and if he does nothing wrong—well & good—and if he should—to make that the ground of complaint and the point of resistance, but not to overturn the government upon idle speculations of what he intends to do—which will never take place

Mr Wootton is ultra secession now. He thinks that the success of the Union men is the death knell of slavery in Virginia—and that the whole state will soon be abolished.

You may rest assured, that the Union feelings never was stronger in the county than now. and that you will be sustained by an over whelming majority, in opposing all secession measures.



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We are all well. There is no news in the county. The people are gradually calming down and resuming the regular business.

Give my respects to my friends and my love to sister Matilda if she still be with you.

I will be please to hear from at any time

Truly your Bro

C. Y. THOMAS

Citation: Christopher Yancy Thomas to Peyton Gravely, March 18, 1861, Gravely Family Papers, Acc. 34126, Library of Virginia