

*Cherokee Land Bill.*—In our paper of last week we informed our readers that it was reported that this bill had passed the House of Representatives. Subsequent information confirms this report, but we are agreeably disappointed to find a provision authorizing the Governor to order out the surveyors when he thinks proper, *and not before.* We have great confidence in the justice and discretion of the Governor, and shall therefore anticipate no unpleasant results, though we are far from wishing under ordinary circumstances, to see any executive clothed with a power, on the exercise of which depends the vital interests, honor and reputation of the State. We are told in the good book that "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety," but we have no idea that the inspired author of these words alluded to our present Legislature. We have found our number of counsellors much too large, and we have the hope, though it is but a ray, to see their number decreased. But this is foreign to the subject.

We have not yet seen the bill entire, as it stands after passing through its numerous amendments, but we believe its principal provisions are, that the territory is to be divided into square lots of 160 acres each; all under that number to be reserved to the state—that fortunate drawers of improved lots, actually occupied by Indians, are not to take possession until the Indian right of occupancy is extinguished, and that no threats or force shall be resorted to, in order to remove the occupants, under penalty of losing their title—that it shall require a residence of five years to entitle a person to a draw—and that no one shall be allowed a draw, who has been known, either by himself or others in his employ, to have been engaged in digging gold in the Cherokee territory, since the first of June last. The counties are to appoint surveyors. The following twenty five counties, are to be entitled to two, the remainder to one surveyor each: Burke, Clark, DeKalb, Elbert, Franklin, Greene, Gwinnett, Henry, Hancock, Habersham, Hall, Jasper, Jackson, Jones, Morgan, Monroe, Newton, Oglethorpe, Putnam, Twiggs, Wilkes, Wilkinson, Watson, Warren, and Washington. The sectional surveyors, and commissioners to superintend the lottery, are to be appointed by the State.

Whatever may be the conflicting opinions as to the right of Georgia to survey and occupy the Cherokee territory, we think there can be but one sentiment as to the expediency of this measure under existing circumstances. All that can be done is now doing for us by the Federal Government, and it is indecorous, if not manifestly unjust, to thwart their good intentions by so unceremoniously taking into our own hands the exclusive control of the Indians and Indian lands.

This bill involves on the Governor an important responsibility, and we imagine that the popular opinion would sustain him, were he to refuse to act on the power thus delegated to him. The legislature were called together two weeks earlier than usual to deliberate on this subject, and after a session of seven weeks, what have they done? Why, they have in substance told the Governor, "Do as you please!" Is it possible that the collected wisdom of the State will thus tamely consent to waive their own opinions, and leave all to the discretion of a single individual? Strange as it may seem, such has been the fact. We are confident that the power is in good hands, but that does not change the principle—the relinquishment of the right of legislating on so important a subject, argues a want of energy on the part of our representatives, that we regret for the honor of the state, to see go abroad.

It seems to be the leading principle with a majority of our legislators, to do what, in their opinion, will best promote their popularity with their constituents—The justice of the case is a secondary consideration. But in this instance we are deceived in our belief of the existing state of feeling, if they are not egregiously wide of their mark. There is too much good sense in the honest yeomanry of the state, to sanction a proceeding so adverse to every principle of justice and humanity—and we will hazard the opinion, that were the Governor to attempt to carry this measure into effect while the present state of things exist, the main body of the people would be adverse to its operation. This, however, is assuming a hypothesis that will not be verified, and we shall wait with anxious expectation to see the effect of the propositions of the General Government to the Indians, without looking for any compulsory steps on the part of Georgia.

We subjoin the following very appropriate remarks of a correspondent in the *Augusta Chronicle*, in allusion to the land bill.

"This contemplates, as you are aware, the taking immediate possession of the Indian lands, and forcibly driving the Indians therefrom. How such a bill can be the subject of a moment's consideration in a Christian land, is to me a subject of the deepest astonishment—and yet many intelligent men believe and fear that it may be successful! For my own part, I will not believe it possible—and, indeed, should scarcely credit the

evidence of my own senses if such were the fact. God forbid such a fatal consequence, and I will confidently rely on his overruling goodness and protection, to avert it—to save the Indians—nay, tenfold more, to save our own State from the serious evils which must inevitably follow it. I must not trust my feelings farther on this point—they are perhaps too deeply and unnecessarily wounded.”