

Randall in their favor. Governor Bradford gave his decision on the numerous questions raised as to their legality, in a lengthy opinion, dated October 28, 1864, and published simultaneously with his proclamation declaring the final result of the total vote on the Constitution. The objections raised by Mr. Schley were mainly on the ground of technicalities, as to requiring the oath of the soldiers who voted, as to the paper on which the ballots were printed, as to counting the votes of certain companies not attached to any regiment, etc.

Out of the total of 3186 votes cast by the soldiers, 285 votes "for," and 5 "against" the Constitution were rejected, and 2633 votes "for" and 263 "against" it were accepted. Adding these latter numbers to the vote of the state, it made a total of 30,174 for the Constitution, and 29,799 against it, leaving the small majority of 375 in its favor, an exceedingly close result in a total vote of nearly 60,000. On October 29, 1864, Governor Bradford issued his proclamation declaring the new Constitution adopted, and causing it to go into effect on November 1, 1864.

It should be observed that the overwhelming preponderance of the favorable vote on the part of the soldiers does not necessarily presuppose fraud or unfairness on the part of either the civil or military authorities. Men thrown together in the camp, or standing side by side on the field of battle would naturally be largely of one mind on political matters. This was seen in the case of the votes of the soldiers of various other states at this period. Also, men who were offering their lives in defense of their principles would not be apt, from motives of legal expediency, to hesitate in regard to measures considered as calculated to advance their cause.¹²

We thus come to the end of the movement which

¹² The War Department issued at Washington on Oct. 1, 1864, "General Order, No. 263," intended to insure, as far as possible, freedom and fairness in the vote of the soldiers of the various states.