

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Michigan's New Constitution. From the N. Y. Tribune. The State Convention of Michigan has finished its labors and adjourned. The new Constitution affirms that all power of government is inherent in the people. Freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press is secured, and in cases of libel, if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives, and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted. Jury trials may be waived in civil cases unless demanded by one party; the Legislature may authorize trials by juries of less than twelve; any auditor may prosecute or defend in person in any Court. Imprisonment for debt is forbidden, except in case of fraud or breach of trust, or of promise to marry, or of moneys collected by public officers, or in any professional employment. Slavery is outlawed.

The elective franchise is restricted to persons of twenty-one years of age, having three months' residence in the State, and ten days in the district. Duelling disqualifies from holding office or voting. The Senate has thirty-two members, but after 1870 may have thirty-three—one extra for the Thirty-second District (Detroit). They hold for four years, half being chosen each second year. Counties cannot be divided unless entitled to more than one Senator. The House shall have not more than 110 members, chosen by single districts for two years. After the first fifty days of a session no new bill shall be heard save by a two-thirds vote of all the members elected. The veto is in the usual way, save that all bills not signed within five days after adjournment shall be void. A clear majority of each House is required to enact a law, and two-thirds where money is appropriated. A State paper shall be established: Circuit Courts appoint County Judges; Supreme and Probate Judges are elected—the Governor fills vacancies. Two-thirds of each House may demand the opinion of the Supreme Court upon points of constitutional law.

The elective officers are a Secretary of State, a State Treasurer, a Commissioner of the State Land Office, a Superintendent of Public Instruction, an Auditor-General, and an Attorney-General, for the term of two years, each of whom shall keep his office at the seat of government. The term of office begins January 1, 1869, and every second year thereafter. The Governor's salary is \$3000 per year; Supreme Judges the same, without fees or perquisites. The article on "Finance and Taxation" presents no novelties, save that the State is forbidden to take shares in public improvements, except in disposing of grants made to the State of land or other public property. The Sault Ste Marie Canal is an exception. All assessments are heretofore to be on the cash value of the property taxed. A board of equalization of tax is provided. The State shall not assume county, town, or other debts.

The militia is regulated after the usual plan. Private corporations for railroads, banks, manufacturing, etc., shall be raised under general laws, and no special charter shall issue except by assent of two-thirds of each House. Individual liability is provided for where currency is issued, and stockholders are individually liable for labor on behalf of their corporation. Personal property, to the amount of \$500, is exempt from levy; a homestead of forty acres, dwellings, etc., not valued over \$2500, is exempt from sale for debt, and such property is secured to a widow or deserted wife as long as she has no other home of her own. "The real and personal estate of every woman acquired before marriage, and the property to which she may afterwards become entitled, by gift, grant, inheritance, or devise, shall be and remain the estate and property of such woman, and shall not be liable for the debts, obligations, or engagements of her husband, and may be devised, bequeathed, and alienated by her, as if she were unmarried."

No money shall be appropriated or drawn from the treasury for the benefit of any religious sect or society, theological or religious seminary, or schools under denominational control, nor shall property belonging to the State be appropriated for any such purposes. Each House of the Legislature shall provide for religious exercises at the opening of its daily sessions.

These are the chief provisions in the draft of the Constitution before us. The matter of prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors is to be submitted separately to the people, and endorsed at the polls will become thenceforward a part of the organic law. The form of this section is as follows:—"At the election, at the same time when the votes of the electors shall be taken for the adoption or rejection of this Constitution, an additional section, numbered —, in the words following:—The Legislature shall have the power to authorize the grant of license for the sale of ardent spirits or intoxicating liquors, but shall by law prohibit the sale of the same as a beverage; shall be separately submitted to the electors of this State, for their adoption or rejection, in form following, to wit:—

"A separate ballot may be given by every person having the right to vote, and the ballot shall be deposited in a separate box. Upon the ballot given for said separate section shall be written or printed, or partly written and partly printed, the words, 'Prohibition—Yes,' and upon the ballots given against the adoption of the said section, in like manner, the words, 'Prohibition—No.' Then there shall be inserted in said article the said additional section, to be numbered —, in said article."

Some attempts were made to amend it, but it passed as above. The changes in the new Constitution are few, but are all in the way of progress. The rum prohibition is the most important; that prohibiting the giving of public money for sectarian purposes is noteworthy, as is the voting of taxes upon the cash value of property, instead of upon the whims of ignorant or prejudiced assessors. A bold struggle was made to secure female suffrage, and it was carried in committee, but voted down. Aliens are placed on a favorable footing, with a view to encouraging immigration. The system of choosing officers is not materially changed. The new Constitution will be voted upon in November, we believe.

The Maritime Rights of Neutrals in Time of War. From the N. Y. Times. It will, perhaps, be scarcely less surprising to some to find a liberal thinker like Mr. Mill defending privateering as a proper and legitimate belligerent right, than to find a great philosopher like Carlyle defending human slavery as a Divine institution. In a speech delivered the other day in the House of Commons, the author of the essay on "Liberty" took for his text the "Declaration of Paris," by which all the independent European States entered into an agreement, eleven years ago, to renounce the right of seizing an enemy's property in neutral vessels—excepting only such property as is contraband of war.

The question had slumbered for forty years. man could be counted with us in the great work; but whatever his convictions in this matter, we repeat the warning to keep clear of workmen's political organizations. The Cabinet Resignations. From the N. Y. Herald. We have long pictured naught but clashing elements in the President's Cabinet. Its condition is clearly set forth in the correspondence which was published on Monday, relative to the removal of Sheridan. If it be true that the Cabinet have signified to the President their willingness to resign, their resignations should at once be accepted. If Mr. Johnson hesitates he is lost. Now is his moment, when fortune, at the "flood-tide," awaits his grasp. The great mass of the Northern people are waiting anxiously to hear that the President has risen to the height of the occasion, and shown himself fit to handle the executive power. Half-way work at this moment will be political suicide for him. An acceptance of the resignation of every member of his Cabinet, and its complete reconstruction, will be applauded by the North as the first step towards the reconstruction of the South and the harmonizing of our political elements. Mr. McCulloch must not be retained. Upon the finances of the country hangs the nation's greatness or its bankruptcy, with all the attendant ruin. The national debt of three thousand millions, with the corruption that hangs to its management, demands the ablest financial brain in the country to set it into such trained channels that the nation will be willing to shape her destiny upon its wise administration. The present incumbent of the Treasury Department is not the man to battle with the problem. Ader hands and clearer brains must now be entrusted with the position which has become the most important in the Cabinet. The President fails in his duty if he retains Mr. McCulloch. Let him clear the wreck and repair our ship of state for a new and more prosperous voyage. The Secretary ad interim of the War Department must turn over his portfolio to civil hands. His ideas are too much enshrouded in a military mist to suit the position. He has been completely unhorsed in his title with the President. Like a true soldier, he obeyed orders in assuming his present duties. Let him as quickly as possible give place to other and abler brains, retaining solely the generalship of our armies. As for Mr. Seward, there is no doubt but that the country has suffered sufficiently under his maladministration of its foreign affairs. He has done more to injure republican institutions on this continent than can be repaired in any reasonable time. The President cannot refuse his resignation. The navy, too, wants an infusion of new energy. We do not see the ocean, and our wrecked commercial hopes come home to us to contribute to the national mourning for a lost greatness. Change! Give it to us. We must have it. The President and Congress are all Republicans together. Heretofore they have, through the Cabinet, been divided on personal issues. The country has, in the meantime, looked on aghast at the real issue presented, and seen, in the exclusion of the white man from the ballot and the forcing of the negro into power, the restoration of political chaos. We have seen, under plea of reconstruction, the shadows of the old Roman proconsulships hanging over us. We have tasted sufficiently the pleasures of military rule. District commanders have pressed military despotism to our lips until the dose has caused a reaction. They apparently have no just conception of the law of Congress, which made them a simple police force, to be called upon when civil power failed in action. Military government! Negro supremacy! These are the ruling ideas that flash across the Atlantic and ring the death-knell of the republic upon monarchical ears. Will the loyal States, east and west, consent to the overthrow of our institutions in this way? The President must topple over these barriers which retard our march. He must resuscitate the great principles of government which lie beneath them. He must lift these up into the new light that reaction is pouring upon the situation. The first necessity is a new Cabinet. The country cries to him to clear the wreck.

During the long and bloody struggle which marked the opening of the century, the first Napoleon found in the expedient of privateering an agency invaluable in view of the unequal naval strength of the two great belligerents. And that agency was employed with a destructive energy to which there was probably no parallel in the history of war. The long peace which succeeded, down to the outbreak of the Russian war, had accustomed people to the notion that no such international conflict as that which closed in 1815 was again probable, or, peradventure, even possible. Delusive hopes were founded on the industrial Exhibitions; and when the first of these turned out so unbounded a success, there were many—even of those endowed with a fair share of political sagacity—who would have been bold enough to forecast an outbreak such as followed three years later. That struggle came; and at the end of many months of desperate warfare, with little political result, with no settlement of a permanent character established, the belligerents sat down to consider in what way—when the war should break out anew—they could carry it on with the least damage to private property. The object may have been laudable; and it may have been that we should have profited, five years later, when the Rebellion broke out, if we had accepted the invitation to become parties to the declaration. And yet, in view of the "neutral" enterprise which sent the privateer "Scorpion" forth to the high seas before the Declaration of Paris, it is doubtful whether the Declaration of Paris, or any similar agreement of an international character, would have been respected in our case. If what might be assumed to be the spirit of that Declaration had been fairly interpreted, the mere comity of nations would have prevented the leading States of Western Europe from extending the patronage and protection to privateering which they did extend for nearly four years. Mr. Mill's examination of the Declaration of Paris, in the abstract, is close and pointed. He asks how war is to be made more humane by shooting at people's bodies instead of taking their property? If cargoes are safe in neutral vessels and not in those of the belligerents, the whole import and export trade of the latter, in a protracted struggle, would pass into the hands of the neutral carrier. The sailors would go where the ships went, and their recovery on the return of peace would be slow and doubtful. He asks, then, where there would be a naval reserve such as England deems it essential to maintain? The necessities of the case would, he contends, lead to a demand for an enlargement of the scope of the Declaration, as it now stands, so as to obtain the total exemption of the belligerent's property at sea from the contingency of seizure during war. Then the spectacle would be witnessed of nations at war with nations, while their merchants and shipowners were at peace. The result would be that merchants, manufacturers, and even agriculturists, would have nothing to lose by a state of war, and would have no motive to abstain from it except an increase of taxation—a burden which people are often too ready to inflict upon themselves from the smallest motive of national self-assertion.

The reasoning is plausible enough, and while Lord Stanley replies specifically and with great force on points bearing upon the history of the Declaration of Paris; upon the question of England's withdrawing from that agreement; and upon the practical question of international concern, he is brought by Mr. Mill's keen analysis to the admission that it will not do to continue ostensibly a party to the Declaration, unless it is intended to act upon it in the letter and spirit under all circumstances. Still, says the Foreign Secretary, "We must not forget that the rules applicable to ordinary wars will all be disregarded in the extreme struggle for life and death." This, it seems to us, is giving up the principle upon which the Paris agreement was based. A war for the maintenance of the national honor must be essentially a struggle for life and death. How is the distinction to be drawn between the two kinds of conflict? There is in some sense a difference between them. But if in any extremely the rules of belligerency contained in the Declaration may be violated, the violation would surely be justified in a struggle for the maintenance of the national honor. Mr. Mill's argument was doubtless assailable in several of its separate parts, but taken as a whole, it will be regarded as a masterly elaboration of General Sherman's sentiments remark that "war is cruelty, and you cannot make it anything else. Its horrors may be mitigated in later times where the belligerents were highly civilized, but it is cruelty after all. The only real mitigation is in seeing that it has become a necessity before it is undertaken. The Declaration of Paris, as Lord Stanley admits, would be worthless in an extreme struggle for existence. And the same is true of every international agreement which is not based on a keen perception of international obligations and a constant regard for international friendship.

The Chicago Labor Congress. From the N. Y. Tribune. This body has adjourned, after doing as nearly nothing as possible, that is, if the daily reports have fairly set forth its work. A contemporary sums up the fruits of the Congress thus:—"The principle of cooperation was recommended; a representative was chosen to make the tour of Europe, with an inexplicit commission to gather facts pertaining to the labor system there, and to the practical working of cooperation; a step was taken to form a workmen's political party; and a report was adopted which aims to secure better State laws in respect to apprentices." Surely, this is not a wonderful deal of work for so important a body; and little as it is, there is some of it that should have been left undone. The sending of a member on a pleasure trip to Europe may be a harmless as well as useless employment of money; but the step towards the organization of laboring men into a political party is fraught with the direst mischief. Workingmen will find out to their cost, if they venture upon the experiment, that partisan leaders and demagogues will fasten upon them like leeches, and use them for their own selfish purposes. It should be the very first article in the by-laws of every workmen's association that they will not, as a body, have anything to say or do concerning politics, or political parties, beyond striving to procure the best possible legislation from the powers that be. As a rule, the workmen now have the good-will and confidence of all parties, and of all business men and capitalists. They cannot afford to lose this confidence, either partially by spasmodic strikes, or wholly by undertaking to establish a new party. And if it were proper, there is no room just now for a third party, and any organization attempting to take such a position will be speedily absorbed on the one hand or the other. We must reconstruct the Union through the machinery now in running order before we have time to waste in new parties. It would be gratifying to know that every working

G. Thurman is the Democratic nominee for the Governorship, and the ablest speakers are in the field. Rufus B. Hayes, late Representative from the Second District, has resigned his seat in Congress to run as the radical candidate for Governor. The Tribune, August 15, says that this election is "very likely to prove a close one." It says that the radicals carried the State handsomely last October, "but that was when the Rebel massacre in New Orleans and President Johnson's harangues, while 'twinging round the circle,' enabled us to carry any State whose people can generally read." Indeed! Then that radical riot, which the Tribune calls a "Rebel massacre in New Orleans," was, as we have so often charged, only powder to secure radical victories in the North; and the absence of foreign aid and facilities, and the whole platform of the radical party in Ohio "a very close one," and the radical chances doubtful. The platform of the radical party in that State is full of fossils and ancient aphorisms about the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery and similar topics, and it contains a resolution pledging the support of the Ohio radicals to Sheridan and the other military commanders in the South, which, considering recent events, and what may happen to-morrow, is a fragrantly fresh thing to carry into an election next October. But there is a live issue; at last, radicalism plants itself on "the broad platform of manhood suffrage," and the Tribune of August 15, in the article from which we have already quoted, says, "we presume this righteous step forward will cost the Republicans of Ohio several thousands of votes." In Pennsylvania the struggle is between George Sharwood, Democrat, and Henry W. Williams, radical, for the highest seat on the Supreme Court bench. The Democrats make a political issue on the extravagance and corruption of the Legislature and the radical State authorities and Thaddeus Stevens, admitting the corruptions of his party, tries to break the anticipated fall by declaring that the State is in danger through the "apathy" of the radicals. The radical candidate is standing on a platform which unblushingly proposes "to place the Supreme Court in harmony with the political opinions of the majority of the people," thus preparing the State, in the event of his success, for a judicial officer like Hunnicutt in Virginia. Under the circumstances, a reasonable degree of what Stevens calls "apathy" might be expected. In addition to the positive political and moral strength which the Democracy can bring to bear in these three States this fall, radicalism has to contend with the reaction which is everywhere manifest in the North; and besides the dissensions in their party, the stock in trade of the radicals is too stale for the present market. The Chicago Times well says:—"The 'nigger' is no longer an exciting topic. The radicals themselves fear that they have given him an undue elevation. The subject of the fearful wickedness of hebeism is becoming stale. The cant so prevalent for several ten years, comparing 'the interests of God and humanity,' is no longer interesting. The people are beginning to turn their attention to high taxes, and to the excursions to official corruption, to the revival of trade with the South, and generally to the material interests of the country."

Exactly; and it remains to be seen how far this reaction indicates a return to reason and common sense in the States which hold elections this fall. The Salzburg Conference. From the N. Y. Herald. State secrets are proverbially well kept. State secrets, however, are less well kept than formerly. They do, at times, ooze out—witness the Grant and Johnson correspondence. What has actually been done at Salzburg we do not fully know. The secret, however, has not been perfectly kept, and the little which is known will doubtless have the effect of bringing speedily to light what is unknown. Our latest telegrams make this, at least, abundantly plain—that Prussia, if she does not know all, is fully convinced that the two material heads, which they were together, were busy as they well could be plotting against everything which at the present moment she holds specially dear. Our telegram of Monday states that the semi-official journals of Berlin have no doubt that certain definite arrangements have been come to by the two monarchs in regard to the formation of a South German Bund. Whatever may have been the doings of the monarchs at Salzburg, and whatever may be the ultimate results of the conference, it may be said with the utmost safety that, while they have mended matters in no particular, they have been successful in aggravating the situation, and hastening on a conflict which many already saw was inevitable. It had been a difficult thing to discover a sufficient *casus belli*. The warlike feeling between Prussia and France was well known; but few could see on what pretext war could be commenced. We cannot say that a pretext has yet been discovered; but we can and do say that the points of actual contact have been brought dangerously near. Feeling has been embittered and intensified to a degree that threatens to defy all power of restraint. War between the two peoples has already commenced in the journals. Only a little more provocation is necessary, and the pen will give place to the sword.

Were it not for the terrible consequences inseparable from modern warfare, we should feel tempted to say the conflict takes place the better. Everywhere the suspense is felt to be painful. In financial and commercial centres it is not only painful but disastrous. The threatening attitude on the one hand and the defiant attitude on the other, have been so long maintained that the report of the first cannon would be felt to be a relief. If the contest can be confined to Prussia and France alone, it will certainly be one of the shortest, sharpest, and most decisive which the world has yet seen. That it will be so confined we have only small hope. Austria, we fear, has for some reason yet unknown, allied herself to France. Prussia, as a necessary consequence, will lean upon Russia, and Russia will not refuse her help. Fear alone prevents Italy from joining the enemies of her former benefactor, but now rather exacting patron. The war, therefore, will be European in its dimensions. It will be carried on until it is determined which of all the existing powers is entitled to the pre-eminence and the lead. This is really the question now at issue; nothing but war can settle it; and directly it is settled, the first step will have been taken towards that grand confederation of the nations which is to be the characteristic of the Europe of the future. For a time the rival claimants of this supremacy will be more or less numerous; but each successive struggle will reduce their number; and in one central government, whether monarchical or republican circumstances will determine, Europe will be driven by a stern necessity at once to look for protection and to concentrate her strength.

From the N. Y. Times. It is rumored in Bristol, England, that the House of Berkeley has signified an intention of declining honor forward to give the accustomed subsidy towards the expenses of the Liberal candidates at the Bristol elections. This subsidy has of late years been £1000.

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