SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURBRET TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

The Dangers of the Republican Party.

From the N. Y. Aution. The result of the elections in Maine and California conveys one or two lessons which, we feel satisfied from what occurred at the

Massachusetts Convention, the Republican party will take to heart. The one is the danger of relying too much upon party discipline, or even the goodness of the principle on which the party is based; and the other is the danger of importing too much of the Puritan spirit into politics.

When Connecticut was lost, last spring, the local papers tried to persuade themselves that their defeat was due to their not having been ardent enough in their advocacy of negro suffrage, and proclaimed that they were going to secure victory next year by working harder for it than ever, and in this pleasing theory they received strong support from the New York Tribune. But nobody whom the hornblowing which precedes and follows elections does not bewilder, ever took this in anything but a Pickwickian sense.

We took the liberty ourselves, at the risk

of being misunderstood, of suggesting that it was not too little negro suffrage but too much which caused the disaster, and that it was the over-reliance of the party on its efficacy which gave the State to the Democrats, by causing the Republicans to pay too little attention to other things. For instance, they flattered themselves that mere shouting for equal rights would make such performances as the nomi-nation of a professed mountebank in the third district of no consequence; and the Tribune and Independent here thought that, merely by hurrahing and flinging of caps in the air, the rank and file could be made to swallow him. In like manner, in other parts of the State, the approach of the election was, with singular want of tact, selected as a fitting occasion for the enforcement of a prohibitory liquor law which had for a long time previous been allowed to lie dormant.

Now, the reason why it is not safe in most States to rely too much on the strength of the fundamental idea on which the party organisation is based, is that the whole of the party is scarcely ever completely under its influence. In Connecticut, in New York, in Pennsylvania, and in New Jersey, as well as in other States, the ardent Republicans are never sufficiently numerous to win an election. They have to secure their majority by the help of a few thousand who are only lukewarm Republicans, whose political feelings are not strong, who are affected in voting by divers collateral considerations, and who, unless they are well looked after, are as likely as not to go over to the enemy on the day of battle. It is these men who decide political contests in nearly all the closely divided States. We dwelt strongly on this circumstance last spring in comment-ing on the Connecticut election, although it is something for which, amidst the roaring about "armies" and "banners" and "bivouacs" which the party papers keep up about election time, it is almost impossible to secure attention. The writer of the excellent papers on "Constitution-Making" which have been appearing in our columns, also pointed it out in his article last week, showing that this State has changed sides in politics live times in the last ten elections "by a few votes in each precinct going over from one party to the other." In 1862 these few thousand votes gave the government of it to the Copperheads, in the very midst of the war, when the zeal of the mass of the Republican party was at white heat, simply because they were somewhat disgusted with the military mismanagement and the excessive touching of Mr. Seward's "little

Now, as long as the success of the party is dependent on the fidelity of these auxiliary corps, their feelings—prejudices, if you will—have to be borne in mind in the management of it. They will support you in the pursuit of your fundamental idea if you do not ask them to sacrifice too much to it. But you cannot work them up to such a pitch of enthusiasm about it as to get them to vote for a "showman" or pugilist simply because he supports it, or to wink at the total disregard of character in nominations or of purity in legislation. The Republican party, unmindful of this, has, in various directions, of late been making rather heavy drafts on their devotion. In Pennsylvania, for instance. they have been arraying themselves against a judge simply because, in the exercise of his judicial functions, he held the issue of legal-tenders by Congress to be, as a matter of law, unconstitutional—a performance which the leading party organ, the Tribune, to its great honor, had the courage to denounce. Now, there are enough Republicans in Pennsylvania who care more for judicial independence than they do for negro suffrage or the Congressional plan of reconstruction to be disgusted by an incident of this sort, and either stay at home on election day or go into the Democratic camp. We know what was done in Connecticut, and what the result was.

In California the Republican party has suffered itself for five years to be led by notorious knaves, who, while waving their hats for Congress and the black man with one hand, had the other thrust up to the elbow in the State treasury. The main body of the party are so much impressed with the gravity of the contest now going on at Washington that they continue to vote for these rascals while knowing and deploring their rascality; but the main body are not able to carry the day. There is a sufficient number who would rather see the State lost to the Republicans than see the State Government in the hands of rogues, and so these go over. The new Governor of California is a War Democrat, opposed to the Congressional plan of reconstruction, but he is a man of stainless honor, of antique purity and simplicity of character, and one of the most devoted Republicans and anti-slavery men in the country-a man to whom the Republican party owes much, and who knows Mr. Haight well, and knows the condition of California politics—has assured us that had he been in California at the last election he would have voted the Democratic

We would warn the Republican party that the number of such men—of men who, while ardent friends of equal rights, and thoroughly convinced of the wisdom of the Congressional plan of reconstruction, are yet so alacmed and disgusted by the prevailing political corrupnating system, so convinced that unless we can bring more purity of character to bear on the work of politics, neither universal suffrage nor any other arrangement of the political machinery will save our system of government—is increasing, and that nothing but greater deference for their "prejudices" or "simplicity" will enable it to keep the field and finish successfully the great work which

the organization—though it is a fault not very far removed from virtue—and that is its ten-dency to introduce a somewhat Puritanic spirit into legislation. Those who abuse Puri-tanism are accustomed only to look at its bad side. We, on the other hand, it ought not to be forgotten, are accustomed only to look at its good side. We read, Macaulay's splendid eulogy of it, and see its wonderful career, forretting that it belonged to an exceptional era, and that as a permanent spirit in politics it

works mischief as well as good. By the Puritan idea we mean a feeling of impatience at sin in others, and a disposition to repress it by the strong arm. It is something more than abhorrence of sin or impatience of evil and suffering or indignation at the wrongs of others. All these feelings are universal in their nature. Paritanism is purely an outgrowth of Christianity. The ancients had no such sentiment. was put to death not because he was a heretic, but "because he corrupted the youth," and thus undermined the State. The Roman sumptuary laws did not aim to control individual character, but to check that corruption which was eating out the life of the republic. But when Christ founded a religion resting on personal character-when personal purity became the great aim of life, and personal sin the one thing to be shunned—the feeling of impatience at sin in one's self was not long in passing over into impatience at sin in others, and an eager desire to rescue them from the snares of the evil one. Hence the great missionary movements of Christianity, beginning with St. Paul and worthily represented by the Augustines, Xaviers, and Brainerds who have succeeded him.

Like all other human qualities, this crowning virtue of Christianity was capable of being transformed into an evil. It is an easy step from a genuine Christian sympathy with others, and a desire to aid them, to a feeling that we have a right-nay, are under an obligation-to force our aid upon them, and reform them even against their will. If our neighbor does not see that he is committing a sin, is not that all the more a reason for preventing his involuntary wickedness? This impatience at the sin of others, and haste to deal with it as if it were one's own, is the essence of Puritanism. But it is not confined to the Puritans; nor is it peculiar to Protestantism. It inspired the directors of the Inquisition as well as the Covenanters of Scotland and the "Saints" of Cromwell's army. Wherever people are intelligent, thoughtful, and earnest, this spirit will spring up spontaneously among them, to give scope to the in-tensity of their convictions and the warmth of their zeal. Strength of conviction is in great danger of passing into intolerance. For all people act from mixed motives, and it is not always possible to distinguish this spurious sentiment from the genuine Christian principle from which it springs. The sense of pain at the misconduct of others, and of indignation at the wrongs suffered by others, are wholly legitimate and praiseworthy feelings. We have a right to prevent others from suffering from violence or fraud; these are matters which concern us all. But when our aim ceases to be the redress of wrongs, and we begin to legislate for the prevention of personal sin, we pass from the sphere of politics into that of morals; that is, bring human laws to bear upon actions which, in their personal nature, concern nobody but the individual man and his Maker-setting up our human judgment as the arbiter of right and wrong.
At the present moment the Republican

party is in great danger of suffering itself to be controlled by the Puritan idea. It is made up in great measure of those intelligent but not broadly educated classes who have very positive convictions and very earnest purposes, but who have not learned to appreciate and respect the rights of human thought. More than this, in the stormy times through which we have just passed, the uncompromising zeal of the Puritan element has been of the most signal service. Now, the situation is changed. We have passed from the revolutionary stage to that of constructing, and we need above all things calmness, moderation, and a regard for the rights of all. The English race seems especially disposed to Puritanism; the Germans recognize individual rights more readily than we. The German population in this country was with difficulty won over from the party which promised least interference with their individual liberty. They consented to postpone this to the more weighty issue of universal freedom. Now that this question is settled, they will surely drift back to their old associations if the Republican party is con-

trolled by the Puritan idea. Puritanism has had a noble history and has accomplished marvellous results. It is through and through heroic and self-sacrificing, even when it has wandered furthest from the perfect law of liberty. Its career in the future may be as glorious as in the past if it will free itself from its bad tendencies, will learn that liberty of thought is as sacred as emancipation of the body, and that legal re-straints should have nothing to do with moral acts. It is hardly necessary that we should make the application of all this to the attempts which are being made in Massachusetts and Maine to enforce by law a standard of private morals for which, no matter how high it may be, the community is evidently not prepared.

Mexico. From the N. Y. Tribune.

For the first time in fifty years Mexico is at peace. Since iturbide, in 1821, declared the country independent, and made good the claim, its history is one of uninterrupted civil war. President succeeded President, Dictator followed Dictator; the success of any chieftain created a dozen rivals, and the Government was no sconer set up by one faction than it was pulled down by another. The victor banished or executed the conquered, only to find himself in a short time the victim of his own revengeful policy. No administration was safe from revolt; no leader dared trust his comrades; the army was now the instrument of Guerrero, now of Santa Anna, now of Bustamente. Quiet there was none for the country; it was either at war, or preparing for war, and the only periods during which internal strife was suspended were those of the Spanish invasion, and the aggression of the United States. The condition of the nation was, indeed, desperate when it could only be saved from ruining itself by the necessity of repelling its foes, and when the advance of a loreign army was the only hope of union and peace at iome. The causes of this perpetual strife are evident. Mexico had never succeeded in reconciline her different races; the people were unlitted for self-government, and assumed all the dangers of a Republic without the ability to secure its blessing. The country was bur-dened with an ambitious clergy, or ring, it has been calculated, one-half of its real—state; and if the soldier did not begin a revolution, his neg-lect was remedied by the priest. Nature, too,had done her share in fitting the country for the theatre of continual war; in that superb climate armies were easily sustained, and if money was needed the inexhaustible silver mines supplied it. Thus wars which would have ruined greater pations have ruined greater nations were borne by the and finish successfully the great work which it has in hand.

The election in Maine calls attention to evil was not so much the exhaustion of the abother somewhat unfortunate tendency in country as the paralysis of its enterprise and

the absolute suspension of its progress. The condition of Mexico could hardly have been worse in 1861, when, while the Administration of Juarez was struggling to maintain itself, the European alliance was consummated, and that long war begun with France which has ended in the triumph of the republic.

Mexico had rough training in this perpetual war, and probably the French invasion will mark the beginning of a new and brighter era. The Mexicans owed the usurpation of Maximilian to their own quarrels, and may profit by the bloody lesson. A people who fought as the Liberals fought, who prized so dearly their independence, and sacrificed so much to maintain it, cannot be incapable of self-government. Radical as their faults may their virtues are no longer to be questioned. The execution of Maximilian was a proof of weakness, yet it must be admitted that there was cause for retaliation. It was a cruel ending to a cruel war. But with the late Emperor died all the hopes the powers Europe may have had of establishing their rule upon American soil; the Austrian fleet which will carry back to his own land the body of Maximilian will bear with it another corpse, and in the vaults of St. Stephen the vast ambition of Napoleon, side by side with its victim, will share the darkness of his sleep. Mexico, by the proof she has given of her strength, has secured long peace with her alien foes; her leadhave but to unite in repressing domestic faction to make their republic only second to our own: it is in their power to renew the ruinous struggles of the past, or to build enduring peace in the future. The task is hard; the character of a nation is not changed by a war; but it must not be forgotten that this war has swept away many evils, and that, as we have rid ourselves of slavery, Mexico has annihilated the political power of the Church.

Difficult as it is to understand the Mexican situation, and impossible to discern the intentions of the leading generals, it is clear, we think, that the war has united certain factions, and inspired the nation with a higher patriotism. With the death of Maximilian the passion for revenge seems appeased. The trials at Queretaro have not ended in the execution the prisoners; Escobar, Casanova, Salm-Salm, and the rest have been sentenced to imprisonment. General Castillo, who had been condemned to death, has been pardoned. It is probable that the execution of the Imperialists are ended. In this moderation we rejoice, and it is equally encouraging to find that many of the reports of Mexican enmity to the United States had no better foundation than the invention of the foes of the republic. Escobedo has formally denied the calumny that he was in favor of the exclusion of foreigners from the country, and we take his letter as proof that no influential party in Mexico aims to prevent peaceful immigration and friendly relations with other States. General Diaz, it is said, has united with Juarez in the effort to unite the country. It is true that there still are divisions of the Liberals, and the elements that threaten new troubles, but if Diaz honestly sustains Juarez, the party of Union must succeed in the end. Since that letter was written the telegraph has brought the tistings of the flight of Marquez. Thus one danger is averted. It is conceded that while the popularity of the other Liberal chieftains is limited to their own districts, that of Juarez is universal. It is to him that Mexico must look for deliverance, and he has shown the qualities of a deliverer. But whatever may be the fate of his efforts. they must command our sympathy. The people of the United States are not concerned in the civil affairs of Mexico, or in the downfall or elevation of any of her leaders; but in the pacification of the country and the perma-nence of the Republic they have an interest which will deepen with time, which no event can destroy.

From the N. Y. Times.

The letter of Senator Morton contrasts most favorably with recent outgivings, Republican and Democratic, on the subject of finance. Mr. Pendleton and General Butler have touched it only to disturb and alarm. Both have suggested methods of dealing with the national debt which directly affect the faith of the Government towards the public creditor. Mr. Pendleton's proposition is to substitute for debt as represented by bonds debt represented by currency; literally to flood the country with greenbacks, and ruin all interests by unlimited inflation. General Butler does not go quite so far as that. Without raising the question of currency, he insists upon a rigid adherence to the letter of the bond, which, with certain exceptions, he reads as payable in legal-tender paper, not gold. Radical and Democrat, Messrs. Butler and Pendleton are thus working in the direction of practical repudiation; and we already see the mischievous result of their teaching in more than one Western journal. That, separately or together, they will produce any strong impression, we do not believe. Wendell Phillips says truly that any party which shall commit itself to repudiation in any form will be crushed out of existence by the American people. But evil is nevertheless wrought by bias which the discussion of the debt apart from taxation, imparts to the popular conception of finance, and especially by the misapprehension to which these ideas give rise

It is satisfactory, then, to turn from the em pirical plans of financial relief which Messrs. Pendleton and Butler have respectively promulgated, to the clear statement and whole some reasoning of Senator Morton. The former limit their nostrums to the debt, leaving untouched the matter of taxation, except as it is involved in the payment of interest on bonds. Mr. Morton, on the contrary, addresses him-self to the question of taxation as the question of the day, placing that of debt in a secondary position. This is the proper relation of the two questions. The debt, large as it is, is not in excess of our resources, and ere it reach maturity will have dwindled almost into insignificance, compared with the rapid growth o the country in population, productive industry, and available wealth. But the present taxation is oppressive, expansive, almost unendurable. It represes production, cripples industry, embarrasses trade, and fosters discontent in a degree which no statesman can

overlook. The mere politic an exhausts his financial capacity when he invents a plan for the re-duction of the national debt. The debt is his bugbear, and he is not scrupulous in the choice of means for reducing its amount. Mr. Pendleton's mode is that of infinite dilution, after the manner of homocopathy—the bonded debt being lost sight of in an ocean of worthless paper. And there are others, differing with Mr. Pendleton in all things, who would keep the taxation screw in constant operation simply with a view to the paying off the debt. One would beggar the patient by dlling his pockets with rags; the other would tax the patient to death for the satisfaction of his creditors. Both methods belong to the quackery of finance. Both anticipate danger where none exists, and overlook the danger that lies before us.

All the issues of repudiation or anti-repudia-tion are averted by the opinions to which Mr. Morton gives expression. Mr. Wells presented a view substantially the same in his tast report to the Treasury, and it is one that must commend itself to the judgment of those who study the exigencies of the time rather than theory and speculation. So far as the debt is concerned, no necessity exists for immediate action, save in regard to inconsiderable amounts. A long time will elapse before the absolute maturity of the great body of out-standing obligations, and it is the part neither of economy nor patriotism to anticipate their payment. In the interval between to-day and the dates when the various forms of bonded indebtedness will become due, we may hope that the question of paying in paper or gold will be settled by the gradual return to a specie basis. To make that topic an element in political warfare, as General Butler proposes, is, then, gratuitous folly. The difficulty he combats need never come, if we but suffer the whole subject to rest until the adjustment of it becomes an actual duty. Just now, there is no excuse for any discussion whatever concerning it. Only give up the notion of dis-charging the debt before the creditors dream of presenting the bonds for payment: growth and prosperity will make the matter easy when that time arrives.

Mr. Morton appears to consider the pending measure for funding the debt unnecessary and impracticable. Its convenience to the holders of the bonds, and its tendency to strengthen their value abroad, are points which deserve careful consideration. Nor is it improbable that the holders would consent to a long-date bond, payable abroad, if necessary, with all the advantages in the market which would accrue from fixedness and increased facilities of negotiation. This, however, is a point which does not affect the general scope of Mr. Morton's argument.

The immediate benefit resulting from this aspect of the national debt is the enlarged power acquired for revising, readjusting, and reducing the system of Federal taxation. One of the pleas upon which the present burdens are maintained is, that the Treasury should be enabled to acquire the means of steadily diminishing the debt. Discard this costly fallacy-recognize the fact that a country emerging from a colossal struggle for its existence requires recuperation-and from that moment Congress will be able to lighten the load of taxation to an extent that would infuse new life into every branch of industry and enterprise. Mr. Morton's conclusion is on the right side. "I would reduce the rate of taxation to the lowest point that would defray the expenses of the Government, economically administered, and pay the interest and maturing obligations, and leave the principal of the bonded debt to be discharged in other and better times."

The present system of taxation will not be tolerated much longer. The necessities which gave it birth excused its rudeness and even palliated its injustice. But the time is over when these can be urged in justification of a system which violates all sound principles of fiscal economy, and imposes burdens to which the strength of the country is unequal. Simplification and reduction cannot be safely postponed. The former will no doubt be facilitated by the results of Mr. Wells' European investigations; and the latter may be carried to a most satisfactory extent if the view pressed by Mr. Morton with so much force be adopted.

Negro Suffrage in Ohio-The Main Ques-tion with Mr. Chase, and the Probable Result. From the N. Y. Herald.

The political campaign in Ohio, in view of the coming October election, is becoming very lively and intensely interesting. From our observing correspondents in that field, and from the discussions of the party press on both sides throughout the State, it is abundantly manifest that, while the Republicans are considerably frightened, the Democrats are

highly elated with the prospect before them. Chief Justice Chase, we conclude, shares in the apprehensions of his followers; for it appears that he is en route to Ohio, and will remain there till after the election. And why not, when his interest in the result is greater than that of any other of our aspiring and scheming politicians? He holds now the whip hand of his party for the Presidential succession; but if his own State, with its Republican majority of some forty-three thousand last year, is turned against him, he must be with-drawn, as a horse too badly crippled to be entered for the Presidential sweepstakes. Naturally enough, therefore, Mr. Chase goes to Ohio to do his best to save himself in laboring to save his party in this impending October election. Doubtless he has not only been thoughtfully calculating the bearings of the late California and Maine elections, but has had a call from his friends to come up to the rescue against the threatening hosts of the Philistines, the Moabites, the Amalekites, and the Egyptians-a truly alarming coalition of

The issue of the great Constitutional amendment, upon which the Republicans last year swept the North as by a whirlwind, has been cast aside by Congress and the party, and the new national issue has been substituted of universal negro suffrage, with all the dangerous consequences which must surely follow the experiment of negro supremacy in the Rebel States. Various side issues have also sprung up, including some financial propositions looking to the overthrow of Mr. Chase's slipshod, unjust, oppressive, and corrupting paper-money system, and embracing, some hostile movements within the Republican lines against those Puritanical liquor laws which interdict the dispension of lager beer on Sunday. The Democrats of Ohio. upon this Sunday lager question alone, expect German reinforcements in this fight to the number of thirty thousand, and from the vote of New York city in the last November election, involving the lager-beer interpola-tion, we should not be surprised at a similar manifestation in Ohio.

But the main question upon which the political fortunes of Mr. Chase are now depending is the question of negro suffrage, which is distinctly before the people of Ohio in the shape of an amendment to the State Constitution. This may be set down, together with his pape money system, as his whole political capitala capital stock of formidable strength. But powerful as is the political machinery he may control through the agencies of his financial system, especially his national banks, Mr. Chase must succeed in Ohio upon this main issue of negro suffrage, or his Presidential programme will fall to the ground. There are, we believe, only some eight or ten thousand negroes in the State who will be affected by this proposed extension of the suffrage to their race on a footing of equality; but the general principle involved, and the consequences to which it may lead in our political affairs, have awakened such a widespread and active opposition that the result in Ohio may at least be

considered extremely doubtful. It is generally conceded that if the Republi cans carry the State on their candidate for Governor, General Hayes, it will be by a greatly reduced majority; but the election of Hayes will not save the Chief Justice. On the

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eparate proposition of negro equality in the matter of suffrage his fate as a Presidential candidate depends. The impression seems to prevail, however, that this proposition will be rejected by the people of Ohio, and by a decided majority against it, like that in Connecticut two years ago. If it shall so turn out in the model radical State of Ohio, and in spite of that heavy drawback to the Democracy Vallandigham, then we may say that not only may Mr. Chase be considered as thrown out of the Presidential fight, but Congress will be fairly warned to choose between a return to the Constitutional amendment, which it has abandoned, and the alternative of an overwhelming defeat in 1868 upon Mr. Chase's financial system, and upon the equally untenable ground of universal negro suffrage and negro supremacy.

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H. G. BRGOKS, Sapt. M. P. & M.

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