Evening Telegraph

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AT THE EVENING TELEGRAPH BUILDING, NO. 108 S. THIRD STREET.

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TURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1867.

"Peopage Has Been Abolished." HAVANA, Dec. 6 .- Mexican dates to the 27th ult, have been received. Peonage has been abolished." So runs a despatch by the Cuban 'cable received yesterday, and brief as it is, it contains an augury of the stability of the Mexican Government far more favorable than would the news of the greatest victory which the republic could have achieved. It is indeed true that the world moves. One land after another strikes the fetters from the slave, and one by one they acknowledge the rights of men as men. Russia, so long afflicted with serfdom, declares all her serfs free. The United States, amid the din of war, abolishes human slavery, and excludes the mention of a slave from her laws. And now Mexico places the peon on a level with his fellow-man, and declares this variety of slavery at an end. It is curious to mark the distinctions between the "sum of all villainies" as it exists in various portions of the globe-to see how in one country its features are derived from the ancient villeinage, in another from the old Roman system, while in the third the purest and most unmitigated atrocity is allowed which has no precedent in history.

The system of seridom, as it existed in Rus-

sia, can be traced, in its striking resemblance to all its features, to the old Saxon institution of villeinage. Or it may be more proper for us to say that the serf and villein were contemporaries, and that the one has continued until now, while the other has long since given place to the more enlightened freeman of Anglo-Saxon liberty. In both of these cases, we notice that the serf or villein was attached, in the bonds of slavery, to rather the estate of his master than to his person; or, to put it differently, he was a kind of family relic, and not an article of merchandise. Neitherserfdom nor villeinage contemplated the involuntary sale of the inferior. The master had his estate entailed, and the villein went with the estate. We do not find on record any account of the public sale or transfer of these unfortunate people-that disgrace was reserved for our enlightened age and free country. The difference, however, between the two systems in England and Russia must have existed, or else the constitution of the temperament of the two superfor nations must have been very great. In the former the villien gradually rises from his degradation and inferiority, so that, when finally the statute transferring all tenures into free socage was passed, Lord Bacon mentions the fact that there were not twenty villeins in the kingdom, and these few were held by religious houses. So that, under the milder sway of that system, the inferior managed, by his own aid, to elevate himself, and virtually abolish the institution without any legal enactment. This may be due to the Anglo-Saxon love of liberty, or to some superiority of the system over that of Russia. In the last-named country, for over two centuries after the abolition in England of villeinage, the serf continued in his ancient bondage; and when the decree of the Czar made him a free man, he seems to have advanced no further in his progress towards improvement than he was when he and his contemporary villeins did service to their respective masters five hundred years ago. The difference between the liberty-loving Saxon spirit and the sluggish Slavonic inertness could not be more clearly marked than is done by the conditions of these twin institu-

The variety of slavery with which Mexico has been afflicted is peonage, and bears a curious resemblance to the ancient Roman system. There can be few things more curious than to note the resemblance existing between oppression in different ages and different lands. In the ancient days of Rome, the wealthy secured the bondage of the poor by the surrender of the person of the debtor into slavery until the obligation was discharged, and this surrender reached to his children. During the continuance of the debtor in this state of subjection, he was incapable of acquiring property, was attendant on the person of his master, and was capable of resale by his virtual owner. In all essential particulars he was as great a slave as though he were a Russian serf. As time went on his children were born into the same condition as himself, and thus a system of slavery gradually sprung up in the Roman empire which partook of the barbarity of the Russian and Saxon. To be sure, the rights of the client were greater than those of the villein, but the system remained a crying wrong against the rights of man. The overthrow of the empire and the rude equality of the German conquerors overturned the system, and relieved those who were thus oppressed on no other ground than the poverty of their ancestors. Mexican peonage is, in fact, nothing but the Roman system-a peon is a poor client. It was founded originally in debt. 'As the debt could not be paid, as the peon could acquire no property, the evil spread. Children, however, did not inherit the servitude of their parents, yet gradually the whole land was overrun with the curse. The treatment which the peon met with was much more barbarous than that of the Roman client; they had few rights which were respected, and as they were, most of them, attached to corpora- the powers are unable to agree is, in truth,

tions, all hope of freedom from the kindness of their masters was removed. By a sweeping edict, we are now told that peonage is universally abolished; that this variety of slavery is made a thing of the past, and we can but repeat our remark, that the republic, by that act, has laid for itself a stronger foundation than it could have secured by a score of martial victories. We are heartly glad that our sister republic has thus proved herself worthy of her freedom.

While each of these systems has a parallel among the ancients, there seems to be none within reach which acts as a precedent for the unadulterated tyranny of our American slavery. It was absolute, it made men merchandise, it was hereditary. It combined in one gigantic evil all the wrongs of all its predecessors, and that, too, without any of their ameliorations. But while it was reserved for us to make this essence of wrong, it was also reserved for us to be the first to abolish it. There can be no doubt but that the actions of Russia and Mexico were the results of the decision of the United States. It was we who set the reform in motion, and while our crime may have been great, our expiation was as severe. Serfdow, slavery, peonage are now no more, and the age when man shall be universally recognized as man seems almost to be reached. With the action of Brazil will come freedom to all where Christianity reaches, and all can claim to share our medern civilization.

The Union League and General Grant, LAST evening the Union League of this city held their annual meeting for the election of officers and the general review of the situa. tion, political and otherwise. The annual report of the Board of Directors closes with a eulogy of General Grant, "the champion of our faith in the embattled field-the administrator of our policy, whether at the head of our army or in an unfriendly and suspicious Cabinet-the sagacious citizen who is too discreet to waste time in superfluous words, or to woo popularity with idle protestations-the conquerer in a hundred battle-fields, the proportions of which stagger the belief of foreign military crities-the illustrious chief whose whole grand history has been one undoubted record of his fidelity to our cause, and of his willingness to suffer or to die for it." These are words of lotty praise, and few there are who will doubt their truthfulness and justice, although there may be many who will, neverless, prefer another standard-bearer for our

At the conclusion of the report, Charles Gibbons, Esq., made a formal motion that General U. S. Grant be declared the choice of the League for next President of the United States. There was some demurring to this, and, when the vote was taken, dissenting voices were heard. Yet it was plainly evident that the preferences of a vast majority of the members favored the movement, and the nomination of the hero of Vicksburg and Appointtox may be said to have been almost by acclamation. This is undoubtedly the strongest endorsement that General Grant has received as yet in any part of the country. The Union League of Philadelphia, for sterling patriotism and widespread influence, stands without a rival among the similar organizations throughout the land, and when its almost undivided voice is proclaimed to be in favor of General Grant for President, the friends of that great soldier have good cause for rejoicing. Yet the time for placing the Republican candidate before the people is several months distant, and the future, both of the country and the party, is so fraught with momentous events and so uncertain withal, that at this day it is utterly impossible to divine the position of the one or the necessities of the other when the time for a final decision shall arrive.

A Diplomatic Muddle.

THE ways of European diplomatists are very mysterious, and at times past finding out. This is preëminently the case with reference to the Reman question, and the proposition for disposing of it by a general conference of the powers, great and small, Catholic and Protestant. The cable has informed us that on Saturday evening, in the House of Commons, Lord Stanley expressed his inability to see that any good would result from this Conference, "without a previous agreement as to the basis upon which their deliberations should be conducted." And, of course, the absence of such an agreement prevents England from accepting the invitation of France to participate. From the outset, this has been the universal objection to the favorite method of Napoleon for distributing the responsibility of a settlement of the question among all the powers; and although it is authoritatively annonnoed by La Presse of Paris that the Conference will in due time assemble in that city, it is extremely doubtful if such will be the

According to the established policy of this country, no Conference is needed to determine such points as are at issue. The Roman question is an Italian question, and the only parties to it are King Victor Emanuel and Pope Pius IX. England, France, and Germany have no better right to interfere than they have to propose a general consultation of the civilized world on the reconstruction of South Carolina. If the Pope and Italy are permitted to settle their own disputes, the end will soon be reached. But this state of affairs is utterly impossible, and for that reason a general Conference is the most feasible method of terminating a question which will threaten the peace of Europe so long as it remains an open one. The fact that no definite basis for the deliberations of the Conference can be agreed upon should not stand in the way. If all the powers were agreed upon the conditions of the settlement, the Conference would be a highly ornamental affair, of no practical effect whatever. The mere fact that

the very reason why they should come together for the sake of effecting an agreement. This is the common-sense view of the matter; but, unfortunately, common sense and European diplomacy are as unlike each other as sunshine and darkness.

OUR PURIS DOMAIN .- It has been but a short time since Congress inaugurated the present system of aiding the construction of railroads. by grants of land to the parties interested in them, and yet it has already devoted to that purpose 124,000,000 of acres of our public domain. In addition to this, 57,588,000 acres have been donated to the several States for various purposes. Altogether, including that given in aid of the construction of common highways or wagon roads, the land grants have amounted to the enormous sum of 184,813,900 acres, which equals in extent the territory of Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and the six' New England States, with a surplus of 5,000,000 of acres. Notwithstanding these vast donations, the United States is still the owner in fee-simple of 1,465,468,800 acres, exclusive of Alaska, the 369,539,000 acres of which make a grand total of 1,834,998,400! Yet Mr. Seward appears to be impressed with the idea that our territorial limits are too restricted, and is engaged in a laudable effort at buying up all the sunken and demolished slands of the sea. This would be quite a harmless amusement on the part of the facetious Secretary, if it were not for the fact that he pledges the faith of the nation to pay for these islands at the rate of \$7,500,000 per pair. If Mr. Seward will have the patience to wait, we do not doubt but that we will in time obtain the entire continent, with all its outposts, and that for the mere asking.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Politics in the West-The Unanimity for Grant-The Financial Question-The West Opposed to Contraction-National Banks and Bonds. LAWRENCE, Kansas, Dec. 7, 1867.

I have taken some pains, since leaving Philadelphia, to get at the public sentiment of the West upon political topics, especially the prevailing feeling among Republicans. There is nt one opinion, so far as I have found, in regard to the nemination of General Grant as the Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1868, and that is in his favor. Nobody else is talked about. His nomination is considered as much a foregone conclusion as though the nominating convention had already assembled and formally presented his name to the people. Unless some at present unforeseen and improbable contingency shall arise, the West will present an unbroken delegation for Grant in the Republican convention. And this upanimity for Grant, so far as I can perceive, arises from no lowering of the Republican standard no reaction in the sentiment of the party, no going backward by the Rejublican masses, but rather from deen-seated confidence in the man himself and in his devotion to the essential principles and policy of the party. He is believed to stand with Congress upon the subject of reconstruction, and that is considered the vital point at the present conjuncture. I have not conversed with a single Republican who proposes to back down from the principle of impartial suffrage in the reconstruction of the late Rebel States Grant is believed to be all right on this point, Then, in addition, there is a general feeling that Grant's election would serve to quiet and harmonize the whole country, and to hasten the day of the full and final restoration of the Union. There is no particular enthusiasm for Grant; no attempt to get up a furore, or to rush things, but what I have given above seems to be the general sentiment of the party. Ontside of military names, Colfax is undoubtedly the favorite of the West, and would command more personal enthusiasm than any other man who

could be named The chief topic of public interest throughout the West is the financial question. I have heard thirty men talk about it to one who has mentioned reconstruction or negro suffrage. The latter are considered as questions virtually settled, while the financial question is an everpresent one, and of vital personal interest to each citizen. It is safe to say that the West is unanimously opposed to any further contraction of the currency. The protestations of newspaper financiers in the great money centres of the East that the currency is redundant, and that the nation must speedily return to specie payments through the process of contraction, awaken not the slightest ripple upon the surface of public sentiment at the West. One great reason of this is that at the West there is no redundancy, but rather a lack of currency for the actual needs of the people. Old communities, like our Eastern States, that have the accumulated capital of from one to two hundred years, do not require the same amount of corrency accordingly as newer States. At the West everything is new; roads are to be constructed, bridges built, fences erected, dwellings and barns constructed, fruit trees planted, mills, school-houses, and churches buitt-in short, all the appliances of civilization are to be created. This demands capital, and a great deal of it, and it demands a large supply of currency. The demand for capital is shown by the high rates of interest that prevail in the West. Ten per cent, is the almost universal rule, and I am told that the banks here in Kansas demand and get twelve. It is idle to tell such a people that the currency is too plenty. Moreover, the West has been deprived of its fair and just share of the circulation under the National Banking system. Indeed, I find aldeep-seated feeling of hostility to the national banks. The dea of substituting greenbacks for the national bank circulation is a popular one with nearly the entire community, and the views of Mesars. Butler, Pendleton, and Stevens are by no means as unpopular as they are at the East. I indorse none of these sentiments as my own-I simply give the state of public opinion as I find it. Tue financial question is bound to exercise a most important influence upon the Presidential campaign. It overrides party lines all through the West. My own association has been almost exclusively with Republicans. The Democratic journals correctly represent the sentiments of their party atthe West. The burden of taxation is heavily felt at the West as well as at the East. The people do not mean to be dishonorable, nor to do anything but what is just and right, but they are exceedingly restive under all those peculiarities of our financia system which afford special privileges or build up monopolies. The exemption of the national bonds from taxation is very unpopular. In the West they are mainly in the hands of the wealthiest men in the community, who

thus escape taxation, while the farmer, the

merchant, and the mechanic must support the buildens of society. These things form a fruitful theme for the appeal of partisan orsiors, and keep the people generally in a condition of disquirel, and discontent. The only remedy is in putting our whole fluancial systems including laxes, currency, bonds, etc., upon a perfectly equal and equitable basis. It does no pood to rail at the West, The Westistoo much of a power in this country to be railed at. The wiser plan is to country to be railed at. The people justly complain, and to slience their clamors by removing the causes which produce them. T. D. T.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

AN INVISIBLE ADVERTISEMENT ore convincing than printed words, is now ading Phalon's "Right-Blooming Cereus" in an inshiousble homes in the city of New Incurand habioushie homes in the city of tork. That advertisement is simply the streat eligibility fragrance poured from every flacon of mous extract,—Circeland Herald.

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SECOND STREET M. E. CHURCH FESTIVAL, at HORTICULTURAL HALL, WEDNESDAY EVENING, Dec. 11. Addresses by Rev. A. J. Hynett, Rev. J. W. Jackson, and Joseph Parrish, M. D. Music by Professor Fischer, Tickets, 51-at B J. Kollock's, No. 700 S. Second street; J. W. Hicks', No. 712 S. Second street; and at the door. Supper, 7:30 P. M.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION BASE BALL PLAYERS.-The Convention will meet in the CHESNUT STREET THEATRE TO-MORROW (Wednesday) at H o'clock. The Parquette reserved exclusively for Delegates; the Dress Circle for Ladies and Gents accompanying them; and the Galleries for all who feel interested in the game of

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