

SPiRiT OF THE PRESS.

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

A Thing of Incalculable Value.

From the N. Y. Times. If any person would realize the immense value and the enormous force that may be attached to a ballot, let him look back at the two last Presidential elections. The value of a vote in 1860 was commensurate with the value of the country. It resided national freedom and national unity. It had the power of saving us from the despotism of the slaveholding oligarchy; of preventing slavery extension; of abolishing slave laws. It meant the assertion of free speech, free travel, and a free press. It meant the downfall of the most gigantic system of cruelty and wrong that has existed in this century. It meant the expression of Americanism, the development and permanence of the Republic, and the enduring freedom of all its people.

The value of a vote in 1864 was commensurate with the value of the American flag. It had the power of giving victory to our armies, or it had the power of scattering our armies. It had the power of reestablishing the Union, or it had the power of passing the Republic over to anarchy and disunion. It had the power of plunging the country into bankruptcy, deranging industry, and destroying the public prosperity, or it had the power of elevating the national welfare to a height worthy of our glorious country.

But few of those who voted in 1860 had any idea of the tremendous importance of their ballots. But few of those who voted in 1864 had any adequate conception of the immense value of their ballots. Looking back from our present point of view, we can form some estimate of the significance of a vote in the one case and in the other; but a full realization of it is beyond the power of the human mind.

Frank Blair and His Platform.

From the N. Y. Herald.

The Republican party organs and stump orators have been heaping a vast amount of unreasoning denunciation upon Frank Blair on account of some pretended rebellious sentiments contained in his famous Broadhead letter, and one ingenious ally of republicanism in this city goes into an elaborate argument to compare the Missouri soldier with Benedict Arnold, the Pennsylvania insurrectionist, Aaron Burr, Charles Hayne, and other persons who have figured in revolutionary movements against the United States Government. There is no sort of analogy between the cases cited and the position taken by Blair, nor is there any just ground for the charges made against that gallant leader of the Union armies. He has never proposed to betray his country as Arnold did, but has risked his life in its defense when other men who might have enacted Arnold's part have kept themselves safely at home. The policy he avows is neither one of insurrection nor of nullification. The Pennsylvania insurrectionists committed individual acts of open treason against the Government. The South Carolina nullifiers claimed that the States had the right to disregard such of the United States laws as were objectionable to them, and so undertook to nullify the tariffs of 1828 and 1832, and to resist the collection of United States dues. Although Andrew Jackson, with his iron will, declared his determination to uphold the laws, and although the "Force Bill," as it was called, was passed to strengthen his hands, Congress thought it best even in that case to recede from its position on the tariff question, and South Carolina only repealed her ordinance of nullification after the compromise tariff law had been enacted. But Frank Blair's proposition is altogether a different thing. He declares that if he were elected President of the United States, holding the power of the Government in his hands, he would protect the people of the reconstructed States in their right to reconstitute their State Constitutions if the majority desired to do so, and to that end would subject the Reconstruction laws to the test of the Supreme Court of the United States. In other words, he would cease to hold the South under military subjugation, and would afford the people the opportunity to form their own organic law without the coercion or interference of the general Government, putting them upon an exact equality under the Federal Constitution with all the other States of the Union.

The attempt to classify this position with the treason of Arnold, the whisky insurrectionists, nullification or secession, is all baldheaded, and makes a muddle of fact and law which shows an entire ignorance of the subject, or a wilful design to pervert Blair's meaning. If the voice of the people should elect him President and give him the popular branch of Congress at his back, it would be an endorsement of the policy he proposes. He would then be justified in carrying it out. And this is in fact the aim and substance of his much-talked-of letter. The treason of an individual, nullification by a single State, or the secession of a combination of States, would be a very different piece of business. In the one case it would be the General Government acting in accordance with the expressed will of a majority of the people; in the other it would be a minority acting in rebellion against the general Government. Outside the prejudices and bigotry of party, indeed, we believe that the generous sentiments of the Western soldier will meet universal approbation. It is probable that after the election of Grant the Democratic party will plant itself upon this very platform of the abolishment or repeal of all such parts of the Reconstruction laws as make distinctions against the South, the remodeling of the Southern negro State governments, and the future perfect equality of all the States in the Union. We should not be surprised to find Frank Blair the successful candidate of the Democratic party on just such principles in 1872, if, indeed, General Grant, backed by the conservative Republicans, does not himself adopt them as the policy of his administration, and thus give true peace and stability to the country.

Racial Dog-Fighting.

From the N. Y. World.

Now we see why it was that the Tribune, which usually treats religion as a matter of lighted candles in slashed pumpkins to scare rustics with on dark nights, was so deeply moved in behalf of "wicked John Allen." It was in the hope that, so soon as wicked John Allen should gild his wickedness with hypocrisy, he would naturally drift into political fellowship with the party of Butler and Sickles and Kilpatrick. For it is whispered now in "sport circles" that the radical candidate for Governor, Mr. Monitor Griswold, is hard at work entreating the virtuous Bergh to enlarge two particularly ferocious dogs, which, being now in durance vile, are sorely needed

Everything Lovely.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

We have never been among those who (following the lead of the venerable Miller) professed to believe in the speedy dawn of the Millennium; but if Mr. Seymour should appoint himself into the Presidency, as according to a number of "Democratic" papers he certainly will, it is pretty evident that the good time which has been so long coming will finally come, to the infinite rapture of mankind. Immediately after his inauguration a bifurcated ploughshare and pruning-hook will make our millions of inhabitants measurelessly contented; crops will be doubled; the operations of commerce quadrupled; Peace will keep waving her golden wings from week's end to week's end; the ship of state will glide over still waters and under cloudless skies; the World newspaper will register at least one hundred and fifty new subscribers, all paying in advance, and will print six leading articles on its tremendous prosperity; the Ku-Klux Klan will experience religion to a man; the sword and spear, changed into ploughshare and pruning-hook, will be a marvel of metallurgical transmogrification; and while Horatio sits smiling in the White House and Francis stands smiling in other places, confidence and perfect satisfaction will swell the American heart well nigh to bursting. A great chorus of happy voices will hail Mr. Seymour as the Father-in-law of his country, and our esteem for the excellent Blair will rise almost to a blind and tearful veneration. If, in view of these rosy prospects, we still oppose the election of this beautiful brace of candidates, we wish the community to understand that it is only because we fear that our support might mislead a great many of the gentlemen's friends into voting against them. We shall continue to contend for Grant and Colfax to the end; and if through some mysterious miracle they should be chosen, magnificent the bravery, numbers, chivalry, and desperation of the Seymour forces, we shall endeavor to receive the announcement of their victory with resignation, in spite of the peace, prosperity, felicity, serenity, and universal joy which a Democratic defeat will render impossible.

We have just finished the perusal of a catalogue of all the noble advantages which will follow Mr. Seymour's accession. We are to have "Seymour and Union;" "Seymour and Security;" "Seymour and Economy;" if the World newspaper is to be believed. But we are not to stop with these by any manner of means. Likewise we are to have "Seymour and Equality;" "Seymour and Prosperity;" "Seymour and Concord;" "Seymour and Law;" "Seymour and the Equality of States;" "Seymour and Patriotism;" "Seymour and Harmony;" "Seymour and Honesty;" "Seymour and Republicanism." All of which forcibly reminds us of the nursery couplet:—"Open your mouth and shut your eyes, And I'll make you healthy, and wealthy, and wise."

To render the matter still more plain and positive, this same newspaper gives the name of Grant coupled with all manner of unpleasances. We have "Grant and Disunion;" "Grant and Battle of Rappahannock;" "Grant and War;" "Grant and Revere'sillery;" "Grant and Congressional Despotism;" "Grant and Judicial Subserviency;" "Grant and Perpetual Division;" "Grant and Sectionalism;" "Grant and Intermecine Violence;" "Grant and Radical Roguery;" "Grant and Despotism;" "Grant and Absolutism." In short, Grant and everything unpleasant.

If it had been our fortune to see these ill-omened couplets upon the "Democratic" banners and transparencies, we might have passed the matter over with a patient shrug; but when such predictions are made by one of the most dignified, veracious, learned, able, sagacious, high-principled, and heavily written newspapers in the country, we are compelled to pause, and to a-k, in faltering tones, what is to be done about it?

Fortunately, the prophet is good enough to point out the means of suitor and of safety. Hear and take courage, O trembling reader! Says the Daniel of the Democracy:—"We can succeed, and we are bound to succeed if we take in the full measure of the time. Then let the Democracy advance! The order is *nil desperandum*. Every man to the front! Victory is before us! No war is probable, to be heartful effort. The occasion is piled high with opportunity."

—Can anything be easier? Every man must "advance." At the same moment he must "rise high." The whole matter can be compressed into a nutshell:—"Make an effort!" This is precisely what was said by surrounding friends to the man who was trying to lift himself by the waistband of his pantaloons. He made the effort, but it was fatal to the pantaloons.

Under all the circumstances, considering how certain is Mr. Seymour's election, how certain General Grant's defeat (unless he can obtain the requisite number of votes to elect him), we are rather surprised to find this prophet sticking his bayonet into the backs of his gallant soldiers. "A glorious triumph," he says, "is possible, even as things now stand. As things should stand, a glorious triumph is more than probable." Ah! what is necessary is to "advance" and "rise high" at once, a feat we have never seen performed by the most accomplished athletes of the circus, but which, if it can be done, must be tremendous in its consequences. "We may even," says Daniel, "carry New Hampshire, if we only 'advance' and 'rise high' as aforesaid." To do this will require super-human powers, but is not this an age of miraculous manifestations? "If you ride a fairy horse, and wield a fairy sword, and wear fairy armor," said one Knight in the story to another, "what's the use of hitting your head?" We fear that we must give up the battle. If "the Democracy" would be good enough simply to "advance," or merely to "rise high," we might have hope; but any one would flee from an antagonist who came to him after this curious and complex fashion.

The Pivot of the Canvass.

From the Boston Post.

We better comprehend the meaning of a general political canvass when we strike the central idea, or issue, on which it all turns. This country is not now engaged in an idle formality, but in an effort to gather up its scattered forces, to repair its recent waste, and to shape its coming future; and the question is, whether this is to be done consistently with the genius and spirit of our free republicanism, or after a mixed method in which dogma, despotism, and undefined experimenting are the component parts. If, as the radical platform declares, reconstruction is a completed success, then those who stand on that platform are estopped from any further argument or declamation on that subject. Governor Seymour in his speeches emphasizes the financial question as the one on which the canvass really turns; and all men who profess to be before the theories and abstracts, unite in saying he is right. Especially must those who hold that reconstruction, by its completion, is put out of the case, admit the sound-

ness of his view and hasten to deal with the issue he presents.

We certainly cannot carry on the Government, whether it continues republican or is merged into a despotism, without money; and to obtain it the people are to continue to be taxed. It is pretty generally agreed that taxation is already as heavy as can be borne. The resources of the country, including its labor, which stamps value upon everything, can endure but very few additional straws to their present load. Hence the financial question is the one that presses the hardest. Reconstruction amounts to nothing without the ready means to sustain it; and all questions of suffrage, bureau, and military government must give way before the supreme urgency of the money issue. Years ago, Mr. Sumner and his school affected a lofty contempt for these questions of trade and commerce, of finance and the development of the national resources. They professed to believe that the Government was established as a sort of engine for the propulsion of their ideas on reform and progress among the people, and that the ways and means question was entirely aside from its proper administration. To-day they are confronted with the inquiry—How are we going to get along? This reform business has proved immensely expensive. This experiment in progress has drained us of our means. We gladly spent for the Union, and hold the debt incurred in its behalf to be sacred; but we have since raised and spent nearly as much more, and it has all gone for this idle experimenting, which is about to terminate, if persisted in, in the complete overturn of our republican system.

The real question, therefore, is that of paying our way. But it is equally plain that our way must be parallel with the old constitutional paths, or our resources are exhausted already. Revolutionize the Government, and you throw all the fixed relations of industry and enterprise into chaos. Break up this equal plan which the Fathers wisely established for the States, and general confidence is simultaneously overthrown; and the subsequent work of building upon its ruins is very slow and tedious. In short, without a firm and enduring financial system, all these theories and experiments fall to the ground at once. If the two are thus inextricably joined, it is not hard to tell which is practically underneath, and which supports the other.

The speeches of Governor Seymour set forth this view of the matter with singular perspicuity and impressiveness. He teaches what all reflecting men must well know, that with such heavy taxes, such inordinate expenditure, such gross extravagance, and such criminal corruption, no Government can long go on, especially a Government instituted and upheld as ours is; hence this becomes the single issue of the campaign; upon this the radical party is to be tried. It has had supreme control of the finances for the past four years, and the country has only become more deeply involved. If matters continue thus, we shall all go down in a common ruin. If a party is not to be arraigned on its past conduct, but expects the people to let that go and listen yet again to its fair promises for the future, then politics have become of no practical account, and there is no further use in disputing with guilty men for the control of the Government.

The Power Behind the Throne.

From the N. Y. World.

Wendell Phillips is the radical barometer. In his late speech at Boston he foretells the storm that is brewing for Grant, should that man, in event of an election to the Presidency, refuse to mould his policy with an eye single to the negro. If my strike the scales as indicated to associate the idea of a policy with General Grant, but still it is necessary to use that collocation in order to foreshadow the radical design towards him. Should he be so ordered that the Chief Magistrate of the country is to be handed over to the head of the army, and that he be placed in his sphere in strict accordance with the constructive programme, well and good. Mr. Phillips and his coadjutors will, in that case, be in harmony with Grant and rather extol him, à la Lincoln, than otherwise. But once let him evince a tendency to moderation, and it is easy to see in Mr. Phillips' late speech the course that is to be pursued against him. He will be broken down. Such popular confidence in him as may now be felt will be done away with, and in the place thereof the seeds of hate, hatred, and insult sown.

It is to be thought that, in an extreme contingency, a simple reference to the campaign against Mr. Johnson will sufficiently show the contrary. When Mr. Johnson stood up alone of the Southern Senators, and refused to withdraw; when, by the exercise of his influence, he withheld Tennessee from formal secession; when, by such withholding, he held up the hands of those who restrained Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri, no praise was too great for him who alone remained faithful among the faithless. Palpably rang with his laudation; presses that now never mention the name of Johnson, and that heated themselves in his glorification; and, as the highest possible evidence of loyal gratitude, he was put upon the ticket with Mr. Lincoln and elected. Even after the death of that personage, and Mr. Johnson's consequent accession, he was still praised, still lauded, still glorified, still believed in. But he contravened radical ideas, and he fell. Those who had been educated up to believing him an Aristides were educated up to look on him as worse than Judas. It was even sought to impeach him, and the effort by only a hair's-breadth failed.

Mr. Johnson, the same agencies that broke down Mr. Johnson will, if he mutiny, break down General Grant. His drunkenness; his stoppage of exchange of prisoners; his amazing disregard of his brave men's lives; his "whitewashing report" to Mr. Johnson; his interference in behalf of Lee; his boggling at the platform—for he did boggle, be it known, and would have refused the candidacy had it not been fixed as it was; his double-dealing in the Stanton imbroglio; his slur on that representative Republican, General Butler; his complicity in swinging around the circle; his proved unfaithfulness in the Cabinet; the cloud under which he left the army in 1854, with the "tween story" at length; the pleasing manner in which he peacefully puffed his cigar when, on a certain day in Virginia, two thousand United States soldiers were shot dead and three thousand wounded in two hours' time, to the extraction of no further comment from their general than a nonchalant, "Well, we must try it again," as, lighting a fresh *parotta*, he left his comfortable camp chair to mount his horse—these things and more will be brought up against him, and tipped with the sand which the shafts now levelled at the once adored Johnson. Back of them, as back of them with Mr. Johnson, will be a furious Senate, largely reinforced with loyal vagrants, and a bitter House. Great as he is, Grant will go down, if ever President, unless he be heart and soul with the Wades, Forneys, Butlers, Summers, and Sickles. The bull, be it soon or late, succumbs before the *tauradors*. And meantime where's our peace?

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