SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

MOITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

General Grant and the Republican Party. From the N. Y. World.

It has been for some time known, in the inner circles of politics that General Grant's relations with prominent members of the Republican party are tick itsh and uncomfortable, portending an open rup ure as soon as he an-nounces his Cabinet. Whether the close saorecy in which he veils his intentions proceeds from a wish to postpone the quarrel as long as possible, we do not know; but his absolute silence on a matter of so much public interest seems as strange as it is unusual. It cannot easily be accounted for on any avowable public grounds. Obvious considerations and a reasonable respect for public opinion require a different course. Cabinet officers ought to have some time to prepare for their duties. If the President-elect, like his predecessors, would allow his intended selections to leak ont, he would have the advantage of public criticism on their fitness and their adjustment to each other. He would walk with securer steps when his path was thus illuminated by all the torches of public intelligence. Why he chooses to burrow, to move by dark subterranean passages instead of walking above the ground, is a mystery known to himself. He is perhaps a profounder statesman than any of the Presidents who bave preceded him; we should be sarry to think his secreey is like that of a quack doctor. It is more reasonable to suppose that he eses himself bemmed in with peculiar difficul-ties; that he finds so many of the Republican leaders restive and suspicious, that it is his chief study to avoid a schism, or, if it cannot be wholly prevented, to postpone and miti-

That his sensitiveness on this subject is extreme, and (as he is a man not to be deeply moved by trifles) that the danger of a rupture is too real, is proved by his breaking his extraordinary reticence towards the public on what would seem to be so trivial an occasion as a report of his private conversations by an anonymous newspaper correspondent. If, as General Grant avers those alleged conversations never took place, it is impossible to understand why they have put him into such a fintter. The correspondent did not profess to give the precise language of General Grant, but only its substance. There are cases in which the most positive denials prove nothing but that the maker of them has strong motives for concealment. Sidney Smith, for example, clergyman though he was, always denied that he wrote the "Peter Psymley" letters: but in the preface to his works he naively said, "I have always devied it, but finding that I deny it in vain, I have thought it might be as well to include the letter in this collec-Walter Scott did not justify his denial of the authorship of the Waverley novels with such arch simplicity, but resorted to oasuistry. "Either I must have surrendered my secret," he said, "or bave returned an equivocating answer, or, finally, must have stoutly and boldly denied the fact. The first was a sacrifice which I conceive no one had a right to force from me, since I alone was concerned in the matter. The alternative of returning a doubtful answer must have left me open to the degrading suspicion that I was not unwilling to assume the merit (if there was any) which I dared not absolutely lay claim to; or those who might think more justly of me must have received such an equivocal answer as an indirect avowal. I therefore considered myself entitled, like an accused person put upon trial, to re'use giving my own evidence to my own conviction, and flatly to deny all that could not be proved against me." If the man of arms has imitated those dis-

tinguished men of letters, and thinks bimself entitled flatly to deny "all that cannot be proved against him," his plea of not guilty must stand good by the non-appearance of witnesses. He may justify himself by casuistry as plausible as Sir Walter Scott's. A private conversation, he may say, is, by the laws of social intercourse, held sacred. If those who listen to it repeat it to a third person, and he publishes it, he can prove his story only by his informants, whose violation of confidence would be brought home to them if they consented to testify. The actual hearers of the conversations would be appealed to in vain to substantiate the report. A plump denial is therefore perfectly safe, since there is no possibility of disproving it. Being safe, it may be held justifiable on the ground that a man may pro ect the secrecy of his confidential intercourse. This is the best argument we can make for General Grant, and it seems to us as valid as that

used by Foott. But what is the great stress upon General Grant's feelings which impelled him to this glaring deviation from his habitual course? Here is a person who passes for the most imperturbable man on the continent, a person who has never broken silence under provocations which touched his honor and his military pride, rushing into print to contradict the statements of an anonymous newspaper correspondent on a subject of no more importance than his opinions of various public men. Horace, in an oft-quoted passage of his "Art of Poetry," cautions his tunefal brethren against the impropriety of introducing the gods except on occasions of sufficient dignity to warrant their awful intervention. It would violate all poetic probability to make those sublime beings descend from their serene elevation unless the occasion were one of first-rate dignity. For General Grant, who has kept silent on so many occasions when other men would have spoken, to come before the public about a matter which every other statesman would have slighted, is an enigma which admits of no rational solution, except on the hypothesis that his relations with the public men of his party are so slippery and insecure that slight causes of disturbance are of ominous import. If he were not tottering on the edge of a precipice, why has he made this great ado over matter which seems on its face so trivial? It is only the violence of the tempest that anatobes up chips and straws and lifts them to a great height. General Grant has been touched in a very sore spot; and the more this self-possessed, stoleal man cries out at the brush of a feather, the more clearly he notifies the public of the location of his wound. It is too evident that he has got to sucoumb to the Republican leaders or break with them; and this prospect goes farther to shake and upman him than anything he has ever encountered. When General Butler, in a public speech at Lowell, charged that General Grant had inhumanly left our captured soldiers to starve in Rebel prisons, he made no contradiction; deigned no reply: treated the accusation with lofty contempt. When the President of the United States and four or five Cabinet officers publicly impeached his veracity, he bore even that in stiff, proud silence. But now, when an anonymous newspaper

correspondent gathers what he can learn of

General Grant's unstudied conversations, this imperturbable aphynx can no longer restrain

himself! So weighty an affair makes him

abandon all of a audden the rate of impreg-

outly played, and hasten into print to save the country becomes compact in its communihis reputation! The danger that he will be embroiled with his party must be painfully imminent when he feels driven to a course so cut of character for him, and so unexampled in the conduct of any President-elect.

Improving Condition of the South. From the N. Y. Times.

Persons recently returned from the Southern States report the gradual growth of a healthy prosperity, and a degree of practical hopefulness to which they have long been strangers. These representations are not universal in their application. There are two or three States, and portions of others, which have not yet turned the corner. In these cases the absence of an assured peace represses the confidence which is essential to systematic industry, and prevents the efforts which are elsewhere productive of manifest advantages. Generally, however, a marked charge for the better has occurred. The bulk of the people in the reconstructed States are realizing the reward of labor; they are fast emerging from poverty and depression, and are prepared to profit by the lessons of a painful experience. This is more especially true of the cotton-growing districts, the gains of which promise far to exce d anticipations; but it is measurably true, also, in regard to the main body of the South. Even in Virginia, where nucertainty prevails, things wear a greatly improved aspect.

The increasing value of land is one of the noticeable evidences of improvement. Ever since the close of the war Southern lands have been absolutely valueless. The more a man possessed the poorer he seemed to be. They were available neither for sale nor as a basis of credit. A few cents an acre were all that could be obtained for choice tracts in Aisbaina, Georgia, and adjoining States, and even at these prices buyers were far between. This condition of the land market exists no longer. A general advance in value has taken place. The owners are better able to keep what they have got, and, besides, buyers are increasing rapidly. Lands which six months ago might have been had in large quantities for a dollar an acre are now held at five, and the prospect is a steady advance towards the real value, which is as much beyond the presant figures as they are beyond those of a recent period. South Carolina fully shares the benefit of the charge. The rapidity and extent of it-our Charleston correspondent writes-"can only be fully appreciated by those who have had opportunities for observing and contrasting the present condition of all classes of the Southern people with their condition twelve months ago."

The real estate operations of Senator Sprague in the neighborhood of Columbia, coupled as they are with an alleged intention to establish manufactories there, may be expected to strengthen the upward tendency. There can be no doubt that the facilities for the prosecution of manufacturing industry presented by the South are vastly superior to those of any other portion of the Union, and it seems probable that they will soon be turned to account. Mr. Sprague is not the only Northern capitalist who comprehends the worth of the hitherto neglected resources of States which seem designed by nature to verify the combination of "the plough, the loom, and the anvil," in the sense understood by Mr. Henry C. Carev, without the unhealthy stimulus of legislation on which he

and his school rely. The land owners, moreover, are preparing to help themselves. They have learned the importance of attracting population. Georgia and Virginia have both witnessed a beginning in a direction in which associated individual more effective than aught that State machinery can do, and we look forward to large plans for the introduction of immigrants. A mistake will be made if reliance be placed wholly upon foreign labor. The North waits but for an assurance of honest welcome to send Southward no inconsiderable proportion of that stream of energy and wealth by which, until now, the West has almost exclusively profited. To attract this, it will not be necessary for the South to organize as for exertion in a ditsant field. Only let it be seen that the Southern people really intend to subordinate politics to material development, and that their large land owners are prepared to divide their estates on terms that would be mutually advantageous, and there will be no further lack of Northern industry or money. That they are doing this to a very large extent may no longer be doubted, and already they begin to count the profits.

Old and New Methods of Centralizing Trade-Railroad vs. Cart Road. From the N. Y. Herald.

There are certain laws working in our trade development which, despite any opposition to them, gain the mastery and shape our future. It is well that these governing trade principles should be well understood, as by a proper knowledge of their workings legislation may give them greater value and direct them in such a manner that they may make still

greater progress under them. When the discovery was made that a railroad could transport a ton of goods for one and a half cents per mile, while the cost by a common cart road was and is about fifteen cents per ton per mile, it was a fact that turned old ideas upside down and set the world in motion. It started looms into new action; it enhanced the value of land throughout the country; it set the farmer to producing; it created supplies which demanded exchanges; it made people acquainted with each other and broke down old notions and jealousies. Distance ceased to have effect upon commercial honesty, and exchanges became rapid and certain. Just in proportion to the cost of railway transportation to that upon a common road was our continent compressed, so far as immediate cost is concerned; but in breaking down distances the saving has been far greater. A ton of freight goes rapidly upon a cart road if it averages twenty miles per day. Upon a railroad it may easily average four hundred | coffee, teas, West Iudia molasses, and sugars, miles per day-that is to say, twenty times the speed of the olden time.

If, now, we apply these facts we find that in time and for freighting purposes our continent | try, and is felt in a rise in wages, cost of living, is about eight days wide. Eight days of good eart road in old times was one hundred and sixty miles. Under the best circumstances the distance could not be greater. Here, therefore, we demonstrate that our territory is much smaller in all the great and governing features of political stability and centralization than that of any first-class power which existed in Europe thirty years since. If to this we add the centraliz ng force of the telegreph we shall stil more compact the mass, and place our greatest territorial extreme within very easy reach. Taking the average width of our territory now at eight days' travel, and the average length at three days, and comparing this with the year 1830, with twenty miles per day on a common road, we find that, so far as distance affects internal commerce, we have in the United States today but nine thousand six hunared square miles of territory-about one half the territorial area of Denmark and but two-thirds that of the Swies Confederation. In the transpor-

give war unit-we are still smaller. But how does all this affect internal trade as | imported goods, and therefore the payment of

tation of a man-that is, an offensive or defen-

cations there will be a resultant centralization towards certain points which must control commerce. These points in the days of cart roads were necessarily very numerous and in size proportioned to trade facilities. Now the great centres are few in number, but stride onward to immense proportions, making themselves the great foci of exchanges and the clearing-houses for a vast territory around them. As the small towns and cities require central points of exchange, where they meet to regulate commerce, so do great cities require some immense commercial emporium, which they elect as a great central point for general interchange of commercial ideas and the more perfect governing of trade. This point thus elected is New York; but of the commercial centres which are rising to be only second to our great city in exterior and interior trade, we have Portland, Philadelphia, Charles-ton, and New Orleans on the Atlantic Gulf ceasts, and San Francisco out the Pacific. Portland is the natural outlet of nearly all Canada, and competes favorably with any seaport foronrown Northwest trade, while it is much nearer Europe than any principal port we possess. As regards Charleston, when she learns that she is as near, if not nearer, the great West than New York, she will commence a rapid march to commercial greatness. Of the interior small and great cities we need not speak. The same laws govern them. They pay tribute to the secondary centres, and these to New York, which appears to be elected now, not only by the United States, but by Europe, as the world's commercial focus. Herein is a great lesson for consideration. The recognition of all this is an acknowledgment that legislation should be fitted to it and should be governed by it. Let not legislation suppose that laws should be shaped to govern these principles, but rather seek for the laws that exist in them, and then adapt our own government to This will show true statesmanship, and this is what we now most need, else the laws will clash with material facts, and the latter, always the victor, will upset the Government that interferes with them.

Seward's Euthanasy. From the N. Y. World.

We fear that Denmark will begin to suspect there is "something rotten" in other States besides herself. It is tolerably plain that the Senate will refuse to ratify Mr. Seward's small treaty for the purchase of the island of St. Thomas, and it is quite certain that the American people will ratify the Senate's retusal. Of course, this is very awkward for the sovereign of Denmark, who, believing in the wily Seward as Swiveller believed in Sophy Wackles, actually was at the pains to get a certificate from his West Indian lieges that they would be g'ad to dissolve their political relations with him. And since the St. Thomasites have ceased to be Danes and are not to be permitted to become Americans, we really feel a slight curiosity as to their political future. What with the earthquakes of a couple of years ago and the plamp mitten just given them by ourselves, the value of their island in the general real estate market must have suffered, and, no royal or imperial bidders offering, we fear they will be obliged to set up as a small republic on their own

Mr. Seward, of course, will promptly resign his position, now that he has at last received the snubbing which he has so long and so earnestly invited. Suppose he should emigrate to St. Thomas and set up a little principality there, a kind of small Elba, sui ed to his name and fame? The climate is genial, the neighboring distilleries of Sauta Cruz are and empty of fusel-oil. the island enjoys frequent mail communication with all parts of the world. St. Thomas will not have been vomited up in vain to the surface of the blue Caribbean if it but provide an enthanasy of sangaree and despatch-bags for the sage of Auburn.

Have We a Protective Tariff!

From the N. Y. Tribune. In all attempts to improve the existing tariff, we trust Congress will carefully test ail assumptions that can be made to produce more revenue or that it ought to be any less protective. As a revenue tariff none that preceded it compares with it. In the year ending June 30, 1861 (in the last two months of which the tariff enacted March 2, 1861, was in force, but in the first ten months of which we had the peace tariff of 1857), we collected \$39,582,125 of revenue from \$335,650,153 of imports, or \$1 of revenue on every \$8 22 of merchandise imported. Our present tariff collected, during the past year, a revenue of \$164,464,599.56 on a net importation (i. e., exclusive of goods reëxported) of \$351 214,010, or \$1 of revenue to \$1.83 of merchandise imported. As a revenue tariff, therefore, the present one collects 4 49-100 times the revenne on the same amount of importations, or is 4½ times more efficient than that of 1857. That it has not in the aggregate been excessive, is doubly proved by the fact that our importations have increased on those of 1860 about as largely as our population, and are how \$70,000,000 a year in excess of our exports, including bullion; and also by the fact that our gold revenue is only \$30,000,000 per annum in excess of the amount required to pay the interest on the national debt. much for its features as a revenue tariff. Had it been less efficient, our bonds would at all times have sold far lower than they have, and onr effort to preserve the Union might have broken down for want of the gold revenue necessary to maintain our credit. To impair its efficiency now is to lessen our resources for redeeming our greenbacks, paying our debt, and returning to a currency redeemable in specie.

Now let us see how far it is protective. We have heretofore shown that more than \$112,000,000 of the entire tariff revenue are collected from imports which we cannot produce, and therefore cannot protect, viz., from spices, foreign fruits and wines, etc. All this is paid by the consumer only, and passes as a tax upon the labor and industry of the counrents, etc. For a tariff levied on an article we do not produce and must have, differs from a tariff levied on an article we can produce, in this:-While the latter may stimulate the domestic production, and cause the foreign manufacturer to pay the tariff out of his former profits, or even to sell at times below the cost of production, in order to hold his American customers, and so our tax-payers escape the tax, and our consumers get the article cheaper than ever before—no such beneficial effects can follow a tariff laid on an article like tea, silks, cashmere or coffee, which we cannot produce. The latter is simply and only a tex on our industry, and, though collected at our custom houses, is ultimately paid by the American consumer in proportion to the quantity he consumes. Consumption, moreover, is very accurately in proportion to population. Rich men are the guardians of vast wealth, but their actual consumption of food, clothing, etc., is very little more than that of their servants and of persons having no surplus of wealth. Assuming that the consumption of

nable taciturnity which he has so conspicu- | regards great centres? It is evident that as | the tariff upon them, rests on our entire | BRANDY, WHISKY, WINE, ETC. population in proportion to their numbers, we may arrive at the amount of taxation of all kinds which has to be borne by our manufacturing population. For all economists concede that a tariff on foreign products of a kind which we produce is only protective to the extent of its excess over the tax on the

domestic production. The number of hands, male and female, actually employed in our manufactures in 1860 is stated in the census at 1,311,246. As the number has happily pereased beyond the increase in our population since that date, it is safe to state it now at 1,500,000 of working hands. If these support at the average four persons each, including themselves, we have a total manufacturing population of 6 000,000, or one-sixth of our entire people. Reducing the \$112,000,000 of gold revenue levied on articles of exclusively foreign production to currency, we have a non-protective tariff of \$156,800,000, to which add the internal reve nue taxes, amounting to \$191,087,589; total non-protective tax on our industry, \$347, 887,589, of which our manufacturing population bear one-sixth, or \$57,981,254 in currency. In other words, the \$52,000,000 in gold of tariff levied on the imperiation of articles which enter into competition with our own manufactures are offeet as to their protective quality by \$58,000,-000 in currency, the shars of national taxaas consumers merely, to say nothing of the special taxes they pay as producers. Reducing the protective portion of the import tariff to currency (premium at 40), it amounts to \$72,800 000. From which deduct taxation resting on manufacturers as consumers only, \$58,000,000, and we have a balance \$14.800,000 of spparently protective tariff out of a total tariff of \$164,000,000. That is, a tariff of only \$14 000,000, if levied solely on articles which we do produce and can protect, if there were no tariff on our remaining to ports, and no internal revenue taxes, would be more protective than our present tariff. which levies ten times as much tax; and even this residuum of tariff calculated to protect American industry is subject to still further offsets arising from State and local taxation, and from the special internal revenue taxes levied on our manufacturing classes as producers, viz : the income tax, the taxes on the manufacture of spirits, cigars, and tobacco, and the tax ou all manufacturers' sales. It is clear that, after allowing for these additional deductions, almost the entire protective element is eliminated from our tariff, and it becomes one for revenue mainly, if not wholly. To reduce it on those articles of foreign production with which we compete is to give a bounty to the foreign preducer.

Mr. Wells has succeeded in showing that

some salt manufacturers have made good dividends. If he had gone into the magnificent importing palaces of A. T. Stewart, H. B. Claffin, and other merchant princes whose imperial fortunes are the greatest ever accumulated in a single I fetime in any department of human activity, he would have seen, in their more than regai architecture and lavish profusion of expenditure, the evidence of the far greater profits of importing the foreign merchandise which competes in our own markets with our rising and struggling manufactures. They are not styled "dividends," because the risk of importing is so small and the profit so enormous, compared with that of manufacturing, that it does not need associated effort in order to divide the risk, and, on the contrary, di-dains to seek cooperation by any agreements to divide the profits. Mr. Stewart has reaped a fortune, in a single lifetime, such as no ten manufacturers in America combined have obtained. No Commissioner of the Revenue scants out his profits as an argument against free trade; on the contrary, all rejoice in his prosperity, and regard it as part of the prosperity of the nation. Secretary McCulloch states in his report for 1865 that the average earnings of capital invested in productive industries are 27 per cent. Our railroads, during the past year, have earned 21 per cent. on their cost. Very little of the active mercantile capital of New York, especially that invested in retailing, has earned in gross less than from 40 to 60 per cent. If our salt springs are reaping larger dividends than the capital invested in them would be worth in other industries, why do not our capitalists open and work the sait springs of Virginia, Kentucky, and Arkansas? It the smelting of iron ore into pig iron is a source of excessive profit, why do not capitalists rush to develop the vast iron deposits of Missouri, Kentucky, Virginia, and of the Adirondacks? For a hundred years it has been known that as fine and rich deposits of magnetic iron ore as the mines of Sweden and Rossis contain, suitable for the highest outlery manufecture and for railway use, are lying undeveloped within a hundred miles of Albany. If the profits of manufacturing pig iron are excessive, why is it that our capitalists so auxious for these profits would never until during the present year advance the capital reunired to run a railroad into these mines, while any required amount of capital could be obtained for the importation of iron, notwith-standing the tariff? Why does not capital seek with more avidity those avenues to profit which in the judgment of our Hamiltons, Washing-Jeffersons, Jacksons, Clays, Websters, and Lincolns, are of a national utility as vast as their growth is delicate and difficult, and which have therefore been fostered with special care by the statesmen of England, France, Belgium, Prussia, and Russia?" It is because the burden of non-protective taxation has so offset the protective tariffs as to render our entire tariff system one for revenue only. Hence Mr. Wells can assert with truth, in his report, that an increase of the tariffs has not materially checked importations. It is because the non-protective items in our tariff. together with our internal revenue, State, and ocal taxes, have so iscreased the cost of our domestic manufactures, and other industries which he had endeavored to protect, as to offset the portion of the tariffs designed to be protective, and so preserve for the foreign manufacturer a hold on the American market stronger than that of the American producer. But we rejoice that, in some respects, it has worked to protect our industry. are visible in our success in subduing the Rebbellion, and in the continued forward strides our industry is now making.

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