

SPiRiT OF THE PRESS.

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

Two Kinds of Friends.

From the Washington Intelligence.

There are two kinds of friends to General Grant among the Republican politicians in Congress, and the distinction between them is rapidly cropping to the surface. First we have the class who rather liked General Grant; he was a good man to run with; they either preferred him to other rivals or possible nominees, or they found themselves compelled to accept him. But they never meant that he should really be the President. They rate his capacity at a very moderate figure, and their own very highly. They think he ought to be content to accept the Congressional policy, let Congress have all the substantial power, and Congress have all the honor, and they will be abundantly happy to live in the Executive Mansion, give dinners and levees, and execute their decrees. They do not have a feeling of contempt for General Grant—quite the contrary with many, if not all of them. They esteem him, perhaps, as a very worthy man indeed, and a skillful leader of armies. But, say they, this does not involve statesmanship. Good sense and good inclinations may exist, and yet not the arts of government. Suggest to these politicians that General Grant may have a policy of his own, and they reply with a smile. They do not consider good temper, an honest purpose, singleness of heart, as better qualifications for correct conclusions than the habits of the bar and the stump, the training of the Senate, and the studies of the politician, however warped all these faculties and acquisitions may be by prejudice, passion, ambition, or cupidity.

It is quite natural that this class should be unwilling to repeal the Civil-Tenure bill. The power is one they wrested from Mr. Johnson. Why should General Grant want it? They gave him the nomination at Chicago on the basis of the *ut possidetis*. Have they not for two years wisely dispensed office and patronage? Thus do they put it. It is nothing to them that the Constitution makes General Grant responsible after the 4th of March next for the faithful execution of the laws, and that public opinion will condemn his administration if there shall be no purification of the public service. The appointments ought, they think, to be governed by high party considerations, upon which they esteem themselves wiser than the man of war; as for military and naval appointments and assignments, they, they, might be conceded; but that ought to be enough.

There is another class of statesmen in Congress who look at the matter quite differently. These affirm that the country did not at the last election decide for or against a political party, but rather voted its confidence in a man whom it desired to rule. These believe General Grant to be a person of excellent sense and judgment, wishing to harmonize the country and secure a fair administration of law. Such a one, though not skilled in all the arts of a politician, nor versed in book lore, they would much rather trust than many of the passionate zealots and abstractionists with whom they have been associated in Congress. They prefer a sensible soldier to a sensation politician. They want peace. They want General Grant to be really the President of the country, and to have the legitimate, rightful power of the Executive office. They want him to succeed to the measure of authority that Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson wielded; to be the President, and not a mere figure-head. If he is to be responsible, let him have a free choice of agents, and not be hampered or shackled by having to report his action to the Senate for confirmation. The pretended right of review over removals by the Senate implies some superiority either of motive or discretion, and can only be accorded where the Constitution places it, viz., in case of removals.

Which of these two views or sections of opinion will prevail, it might be premature to say. Upon the issue will depend, we think, the harmony of the President with Congress, and most certainly the success of the new administration. If Gen. Grant is to enter on his duties crippled by this Civil-Tenure act, it requires no gift of prophecy to predict a breakdown. Now we are willing to see him have a fair opportunity, and all the means necessary to that opportunity. But this opportunity Mr. Wilson's bill does not give, nor, if we understand it rightly, Senator Edmunds'. Both assign the new President a very small place in the picture of the next four years. The Senate looms up large enough, grandly dispensing patronage; and there is a competing object on all canvases, it is not the President, but the whisky ring and their confederates, with the money of the people as the dissolving view.

Specie Payments.

From the Toledo (Ohio) Blade.

Mr. Henry C. Bowen, of the New York Independent, has given to the public, in the form of a letter to Mr. Horace Greely, his views in regard to the policy to be pursued in returning to specie payments. He regards Mr. Greely's proposition of an immediate resumption as full of danger to the commercial interests of the country and the credit of the nation. He contends that such a course would benefit only the speculators in gold. If an attempt were made to resume specie payments, these speculators would have one of the grandest opportunities which ever occurred in human history to make enormous sums of money, and doubtless they would improve it most diligently. After resumption these speculators would agree together to buy up at par as quietly all the gold they could, and when properly loaded would offer a premium of one or two per cent. or more. This movement would make a scare in the business circles, which would set thousands to investing in gold as a speculation, the risk being only the trifling percentage of premium. Mr. Bowen thinks that by this means the condition of gold speculators could break the Government and all the banks of specie in a month from the date of resumption. Then the interest on our gold interest-bearing bonds could not be punctually paid, our foreign bondholders would then be in a panic, the market price of bonds be greatly reduced, and a panic be produced such as never before was known in history.

Mr. Bowen very sensibly checks the habit of many better versed in history than in sound political economy, of quoting precedents in the financial experience of England and France. In many things the condition of the country is so unprecedented that no such parallels can hold good. There are men in the city of New York who engage in operations which involve more money than was controlled by the Bank of England or France at the time those institutions suspended specie payments, who can, at pleasure, make money four per cent. per annum or half per cent. per day. This fact our financiers and legislators must take into account.

Mr. Bowen's recommendation is that the Government devote every dollar in discounting the coupons attached to all our bonded indebtedness, beginning with those which earliest mature, and continue so to do until

gold speculators were gorged with it, without any prospect of the gold getting back to the Treasury except by the slow operation of the tariff system. The effect of this would be to send up the price of all our securities, and keep down the price of gold, which would be a very healthy condition of things. By these means Mr. Bowen contends gold would go down so near to par that the Government could safely and, with a prospect of permanency, resume specie payments. Mr. Bowen proposes for Congress to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to borrow abroad one hundred millions of gold (not more than fifty of which would probably be required), to continue the cancellation of coupons or early maturing bonds. This would stop the hoarding of gold in the sub-treasury, and keep the market in gold steady.

Objection is forcibly made to the proposition of some to curtail the currency prior to resumption. We need all our circulation to give freedom in business and maintain stability in the transition to specie payments. Our business being done mostly for cash, or on short credits, we need more currency now than when long credits were the rule. Curtail the currency and our facilities for business are gone, and business men will break by thousands.

The gold speculators must be properly ledged about by skillful tactics on the part of the Government, and their resumption may safely be attempted. Selling gold by the Government should be prohibited by law. What gold we have should be promptly used in paying our indebtedness, and more borrowed if necessary to continue so doing.

The proposition of Mr. Bowen to throw all the public lands into the market at once, and devote the proceeds to paying the public debt, is a proposition we hope will not meet with public favor. The lands should not be thrust into the hands of speculators, but kept for those who labor to make them productive to the general wealth. Better in our judgment, to allow speculation and monopoly in gold than in the lands out of which the poor must dig their daily bread. With this exception, we think the views of Mr. Bowen are practical and sensible, and calculated to contribute to the solution of our troubles.

Plumping in Pennsylvania.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

It is an interesting peculiarity of original voting in Pennsylvania, that the scarcely-repeated, when brought to the witness stand, usually acknowledge their multiplied misdemeanors with a cheerful frankness which is eminently edifying. A contested election case (Bunn vs. Witham) was lately before a Legislative Committee at Harrisburg—the seat in dispute being that of the Eleventh Legislative district. One witness, Michael Slaven by name, swears that he cast the Democratic ticket twenty times between 8 o'clock A. M. and 5:30 P. M.—being about twice every hour—a remarkably energetic day's work, and speaking highly for Michael's peripatetic ability. Then comes a confessor rejoicing in the gentle name of Lamb, who acknowledges that he voted the Democratic ticket twenty times on election day. He follows Henry Elliott, who, on his own statement, was also a double X voter. The modest and moderate John Rowan contented himself with voting the Democratic ticket only ten times. According to the testimony of Slaven, there was a small party of ten men, the witness himself being one of them, who went meandering about all day, voting the Democratic ticket whenever they pleased and as often as they pleased, being furnished with ballots by "men with the Democratic badge on." Some of his companions, according to Lamb, belonged in Baltimore and some of them in New York. Elliott, it seems to us, was absurdly cautious; for he deposes that he "changed his hat and coat sometimes in going from poll to poll." Why he did this we are sure we do not know; for it is not at all probable that any Democratic challenger would have molested him or made him afraid while he was doing a work so noble and patriotic. For the enthusiastic Elliott to disguise himself was, as it were, to hide his light under a bushel, and the change of hat and coat might have rendered it difficult for him to establish his identity when the rovers called at the Democratic headquarters to receive their reward.

Mr. Slaven testifies to an interesting circumstance in regard to "the man who gave us the tickets." This charitable purveyor of ballots presented to the devoted little band a \$5 bill, whereupon the free voters went to the Girard Avenue Market and "got their dinners"—and an uncommonly good appetite we should think they must have had after their long walks and exhausting exercise of the franchise. These were, indeed, true Democratic politicians. They were after a free dinner, and they got it; and whoever says they didn't earn it can know nothing by personal experience of the fatigue of young early and voting officers.

Mr. Michael Slaven and the other delinquent perpetrators exhibited a touching confidence in Democratic integrity. "We voted," says Michael, "the Democratic ticket; did not examine any of them; the man we took them from had the Democratic badge on." Each enterprising voter received from "the man with the badge on" a slip of paper. Upon this were written facts with which the recipient was supposed to be unacquainted, viz., his own name, residence, and occupation. These memoranda were necessary, it seems, to manufacture a citizenship for the gallant balloters. It isn't everybody who can be rechristened, get a new house, and learn a new trade, a dozen times over in one day.

Although the Philadelphia system appears to us to be nearly perfect, yet there is one improvement which we may venture to suggest. Common humanity would seem to require that every repeater, passing "from poll to poll," should be furnished with the "coupons." If Mr. Michael Slaven, without this incentive, could vote twenty times in one day, it is evident that by its aid he might double or triple his usefulness. We give Mr. Chairman Wallace the hint, and charge him nothing for it, beyond the common gratitude which our past favors have already so amply earned.

The Beverly Junction Treaty.

From the Cincinnati Gazette.

It appears that we have got a treaty with England for throwing into a mixed commission, with the chances all against us, the claims for the actual value of vessels destroyed by Anglo-Rebel pirates, these to be lumped up with all the claims that British subjects can trump up since the last treaty, to go into the same chances of being found valid. And this with the knowledge of the whole world that our losses in ships actually destroyed was not a tithe of the damage inflicted by the perils which drove our whole merchant navy from the seas and ruined a commerce which before was greater than that of Great Britain; and that the payment of the full value of these ships and cargoes would be but a tithe of what she made by driving our ships from the ocean.

We have from the beginning protested against a settlement upon any such basis. If Great Britain should offer us the full value of the ships and cargoes actually destroyed, we ought not to accept it. Such a settlement would be simply an encouragement to a breach of neutrality and to such piracy; for in case of

another such war, Great Britain could make an enormous profit by repeating the same game and the same payment. We are glad to see by our special despatches that General Grant has expressed similar views. We hope that it was not necessary to have any extraneous influence to induce the Senate to reject this treaty.

The Speaker's Ship.

From the Cincinnati Gazette.

The contest for this high office of the next Congress promises to be narrowed down to two excellent members of that body, although there are doubtless scores who think themselves fit and proper persons to fill it. The choice of the loyal party will lie between Garfield, of Ohio, and Blaine, of Maine.

It is argued that the President and Vice-President elect are Western men, and as the Speakership of the House has been held for several years past by a Western member, the fact has just claim to the office. We are not disposed, in the abstract, to recognize lines of latitude or longitude as presenting any claims in the persons of candidates, and are convinced that harm has been done by the general recognition of geographical divisions; but as the division of public offices has been foolishly allowed to become the habitual custom, we recognize the full force of the argument presented by our Eastern friends, and we recognize it the more cheerfully when they present their claim to the office in the person of James G. Blaine, of Maine.

The contest owes him much. Probably nothing would have prevented the election of Grant and Colfax in November, as they were emphatically the candidates of the loyal people; but the preliminary battles in the States for supremacy, resulting in Union victories, made the result in November an easy and assured triumph. Maine led off in the skirmishes and rolled up an unexpectedly large Union majority. Loyal men breathed easier after "the news from Maine" flashed over the wires. To James G. Blaine the splendid victory in Maine, in October last, is largely attributable. His sagacity, ability, and industrious zeal were felt in that momentous contest.

As a member of Congress he has achieved honorable distinction, year by year gaining prominence and influence. Young, vigorous and true, with rare personal popularity, and a familiar and ready knowledge of Parliamentary law, he seems to be peculiarly fitted to succeed Mr. Colfax, and, although Ohio presents in General Garfield an unexceptionable candidate, we recognize the fair claim of the East, in this case, to the Speakership of the House of Representatives, and we are glad that the choice has fallen upon James G. Blaine, of Maine. We understand that his election is not doubted, although General Garfield has many friends who would prefer his election to the office, did not other considerations besides those of equal merit enter into the question.

Grant Returns to Dance.

From the Chicago Tribune.

The professional people at Washington are very much disgusted because Grant has expressed a wish that the customary ball given on the occasion of the Presidential inauguration be omitted. He has put that wish in the form of a letter of request; and as a consequence the ball will not take place. It is quite time that these inauguration balls should be omitted. However significant and elegant they may have been in the earlier days of the republic, they have degenerated sadly of late. They have long been literally catchpenny affairs, disgusting to everybody save those concerned in them peculiarly; but so long as the President elect permitted himself to be used for the occasion, "society" has had to recognize them. Mr. Lincoln, though personally holding such affairs in contempt, was too good-natured to say "no" to the managers, and a ball was one of the events attending his inauguration.

One of that class of persons who are tolerated in good society because they are dancing men, and who for that reason are as essential at balls as waiters are in the dining-room, once asked Mr. Webster why he never walked, to which the statesman responded:—"I never had brains enough to learn how." It is needless to say that the "god-like" fell immensely in the estimation of the dancing fraternity. General Grant has unquestionably been voted as wanting in his knowledge of social requirements by the same class of persons.

The fact is, these inauguration balls have for many years been nothing more than local speculations, got up by a few individuals. The real parties generally are a livery-stable keeper, the proprietors of two or three wine and liquor establishments, one or two fashionable tailors, and one or two restaurant keepers. These parties have been accustomed to meet together, and, selecting an officer of the army, an officer of the navy, an officer of the Senate, and one of the President, and some persons of friends of the President, have admitted the latter to the inner circle, as partners of the real proprietors of the ball. These then select the long list of ornamental managers, embracing the most eminent names of the country, and, having got the President elect to promise to attend that ball, they are enabled to kill off all competition. The ball itself is never anything but a full dress exhibition, at which everybody who can raise money enough to buy new clothes and hire a hack, attends for two or three hours in a vast crowd, and has the satisfaction of catching a glimpse of the new President passing through the hall. Instead of a grand ball, distinguished for the elegance and refinement of the guests, these affairs have for many years been nothing but miscellaneous gatherings, at which all the adventures of both sexes, all the gamblers, thieves and pickpockets assemble in their full strength. Such a ball yields the limited number of real proprietors a large profit. Grant's refusal to be a party to such a proceeding, though it is against all precedent, does him infinite credit, and will make it an easy task to his successors to do likewise.

We have no doubt that there is not a respectable person at Washington, who has ever witnessed one of these inaugural balls, but is heartily glad of Grant's refusal, and who does not cordially approve it. The sharpers about Washington, who have been accustomed to use the new President for this quadrantal speculation, will feel very much disgusted at Grant's conduct, but they will find that the new President will be equally fearless and independent in all things, and that speculators and jobbers, whether in a small or large scale, will find him at all times promptly refusing to dance at their request or at their bidding.

Shall We Fight a Wrong?

From the St. Louis Republic.

If in this driving age nations are quick to commit crimes, that enlightened public sentiment which we are glad to believe is growing with a rapidity commensurate with our physical and social surroundings, brings about a speedy repentance, and where it is possible, at least some reparation for the wrong committed. It is hardly four years since the President of the United States fell by the hand of an assassin. The time and the circumstances of the deed, no less than the character and position of the dead, roused the North into a

dellirium of passion and spirit of blind vengeance such as never before disgraced our annals, and we trust, for the honor of human nature, never will again. Three men and one woman were tried by a military court, which hardly possessed enough of the forms of justice to make it respectable, and, after proceedings little better than a miserable burlesque upon law and common sense, were sent to the scaffold. Three other so-called accomplices, against whom there was scarcely a shadow of proof, were banished to a barren sand-bank in the Gulf of Mexico. One of them, if we remember, has died, but the two survivors are still dragging out a wretched existence to which death itself is a preferable fate. It is not creditable to the American people that these poor exiles should have so long appealed for mercy, and appealed in vain; but it is a matter of no small congratulation that even at this late day movements are initiated which are likely to result in their pardon and release. Leading radical journals, like the Boston Daily Advertiser, express decided convictions of Spangler's innocence, and a petition in favor of Dr. Mudd, signed by prominent Radical and Democratic members of Congress, has already been presented to President Johnson. There is no reasonable doubt—or should be none—that this petition will be granted, and the pardon of Spangler will either accompany it, or, at the worst, be not long delayed. John Sarrait, who had been caught at the time would inevitably have shared the fate of his mother, was fortunate enough to escape arrest until the third slaughter was quenched and reason assumed its rightful sway. Chased from one end of the world to the other, at an expense of over one hundred thousand dollars to the Government, brought home in irons, imprisoned for months, and then presented by the ablest talent the administration could secure, backed by the evidence of such miserable scoundrels as Wichmann and St. Marie, his bitterest enemies could not rob him of a fair and impartial trial, and to-day he is the abroad a free man.

The vast majority of citizens of all parties and both sections accept this result willingly. They will do the same when Spangler and Mudd are released from Dry Tortugas. This sympathy, repentance—call it either or what we may—does not proceed from any indifference to or forgetfulness of the terrible murder which robbed the republic of its chosen head and materially changed the political complexion of subsequent legislation. The slayer of Mr. Lincoln is pilloried in history for all coming ages, and his poor confederates will share the same unflinching infamy; but beyond that point the moral sentiment of the country will not go. The people were crazy in those dark weeks of 1865; they are getting sane now, and ready to recognize the lesson taught by the ancient proverb—"Let justice be done though the heavens fall."

But while we rejoice that this is so, and while we have a right to be proud that our fellow-countrymen can atone for former errors by a wise magnanimity towards those for whom that magnanimity is not forever too late, we should not fail to remember that there is one victim of judicial butchery whose blood still cries from the ground; one pale ghost which will not down at our bidding until its manes are appeased, its fame redeemed. We presume that there are comparatively few persons at home or abroad who are not convinced of the innocence of Mary Sarrait, and who are not willing to acknowledge the fact to themselves, if to no one else, that the hangman's rope strangled the life out of a guiltless woman. Public opinion barely sanctioned her execution, even during that period of intense excitement, and since that excitement has died away, it has almost universally reprobated the action as an awful blunder or something worse. Hardly an officer of high or low degree in any way connected with the transaction, who has not endeavored to rid himself of the fearful responsibility and shoulder it upon somebody else. But no efforts of theirs or ours can rid the nation of the foul stain. It clings to the garments of the republic; it crimson her hands; it blots her conscience, and it will track her like an avenging Nemesis until the wrong is acknowledged as openly as it was perpetrated. In England and Europe, when a human life has been unjustly taken by a legal tribunal, on a proper and satisfactory presentation of the facts, the sentence is formally reversed and the reputation of the dead cleared of crime. Nothing more can be done and nothing less should be. Mrs. Sarrait sleeps in a felon's grave beneath the pavement of her prison yard. A daughter has begged again and again for her mother's dust, and the piteous request has been denied. Is not the Federal Government strong enough now to dare to do right? Can it not afford to give back that corpse, and tell that child that her parent was no murderer? Or shall we endorse the infamous verdict of Hunter's drum-head court, and accept the consequences in the eyes of the world and the judgment of heaven?

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