

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

CRYPTOLOGY OF THE CAPITOL.

From the N. Y. Tribune.
The Congressional office, it is well known, has been the grave of many brilliant reputations, and must be highly haunted by the ghosts of thousands of politicians, and of tens of thousands of office-seekers who yet weary glide through hall and chamber and vestibule, presenting sightless petitions, and inaudibly appealing to invisible committees. It has not, however, been generally known that far below the busy and bustling scene was a tenantless tomb, with a lonesome guardian, who for forty years, by the light of a solitary gas-burner, has vigilantly kept ward over nothing at all, and saved from desecration the awful emptiness of that expectant vault. This receptacle was intended for the bones of the illustrious Washington, but as they were never brought to it from the family sepulchre at Mount Vernon, we can easily understand how immeasurable must have been the national respect for that mighty memory, since we have paid such honors to a place in which the Father of his Country, to speak with potential accuracy, might, could, or should have been buried. Unfortunately, this method of keeping up a posthumous dignity never came to the ears of our own City Fathers, for if it had but done so, we should have had in this metropolis at least six Tombs of Washington, with the most ponderous and expensive marble jaws, and with six faithful Democrats maintaining a slumberless vigil over six imaginary sets of bones. Every year the salaries of these loyal scatristans might have been raised. Every year there might have been fresh appropriations for keeping in good repair these mysterious shrines. Alas! it becomes more and more evident to us, great as we think ourselves in that branch of human knowledge, that we have not yet mastered the elements of office-holding, and have but a feeble conception of the incomputable resources of robbery!

If we assume that the keeper of the Washington crypt has but done his duty, how remarkable his life! His business could only have been to keep some evil-disposed body from getting itself surreptitiously buried in this privileged resting-place. He may, at stated hours, have emerged, *de profundis*, for the purpose of getting his dinner or drawing his salary; but after any prolonged abandonment of his post, he might have come back to find an intrusive cadaver ensconced there in this privileged resting-place. He may, at the time of his death, have been brought in for the immediate exhumation of the intruder. Upon this there would, of course, have been a latitudinous and a longitudinal debate. Honorable gentlemen would have taken different views of the matter, some of them thinking all resurrectionizing to be unconstitutional, some of them calling for the opinion of the Supreme Court, some of them proposing a board of commissioners to superintend the removal, and some of them embracing the opportunity to make speeches upon the tariff and the currency. We are satisfied, if any body had thus got into the crypt, that it would have taken not less than five years of legislation to get it out, to say nothing of the fact that after such a desecration it would have been impossible, by the liveliest stretch of fancy, to suppose the genuine and original Washington to be slumbering in the place prepared for him. The charming fiction would have faded into prosaic commonplace. The irreverent would have had their jokes; the Grindings would have howled their economic protests in either house; the crypt would have been made a coal-hole, or a store-room for public documents; and the venerable keeper of the crypt, his occupation gone, might have crawled into his old quarters for the last time, and there have expired, with his head pillow'd upon a bundle of General Butler's speeches.

Whether with or without a foresight of this lamentable consummation, the General, we observe, has moved to abolish the solitary in the cellar. After his forty years of watching after his waiting all that time for the arrival of the remains, until his heart has grown sick with hope deferred, we are to discard this exemplary officer, in whom

General Grant and the Office-Seekers.
From the N. Y. Times.

This will never do. We must not thus confirm the adage which declares that republics are ungrateful. We propose the immediate erection in Washington of tombs for every President we have ever had, with a particularly large and handsome one for Mr. Johnson—a tomb in which he can stand erect (under ordinary circumstances) and make a speech whenever, as Mrs. Gamp says, he is "so disposed." And when all these places are ready, let them be confided to the keeping of the old gentleman in the basement, with the promise of a beautiful mausoleum for himself, if he should ever need it!

The Cohesive Power of Public Plunder.
From the N. Y. Herald.

"The principles of the party, sir," said Randolph of Roanoke, in days long by, "the principles of the party are seven—the five leaves and the two fishes." "The party of the administration," said Calhoun, on a later occasion, "I am assured, is a cohesive party. So it is, Mr. President; for it is held together by the cohesive power of the public plunder." This is the bond of all political parties, and never has the truth of Randolph's pungent remark or Calhoun's been so forcibly illustrated as in the cohesive character of the party now in power; for never has the public plunder been so enormous, so lavishly used or so strong in binding diverse factions, cliques and rings as in the common cause of the spoils. It is only the old story from *Holy Writ* that "where the carcass is there will the vultures be gathered together."

Randolph's remark of the seven principles, if we are not mistaken, was applied to the administration of John Quincy Adams, the total expenditures of which—civil, judicial, diplomatic, army, and navy—were about thirteen millions a year. Calhoun's aphorism was applied to the Democratic party, under Van Buren, when all the regular disbursements of the Government and pickings and stealings put together did not much exceed thirty-five millions a year; and yet the financial disasters, with the official corruptions and dissipations of Van Buren's administration, resulted in the overwhelming Democratic defeat of 1840; for the "cohesive power of the public plunder" among the Democratic politicians produced a general revolt among the people. But what a bagatelle was the sum of the Government expenses of thirty-five or forty millions a year, with no national debt, and no direct national taxes, under Van

Buren, compared with our present magnificent figures of national expenses and stealings of four or five hundred millions a year, with our national debt of twenty-five hundred millions and our direct national taxes of two or three hundred millions! A suggestive contrast this to the tax-payers of the United States.

What a mine! What abounding platters of greenbacks, gold and diamonds, silks, satins, and laces, fine houses, fast women, and fast horses are here for the Treasury rings of manipulators and gamblers in gold, bonds, and stocks; for the whisky rings, railroad rings, custom house plundering rings, Indian Bureau rings, and for all the holy alliance of fast men and fast women, of law-makers, law-breakers, contractors, and lobby-jobbers! Hundreds of millions of money are still in these rich platters for the spoliomene, though hundreds of millions have been taken out and divided among the confederate Treasury robbers. Here we meet the beast with seven heads and ten horns face to face. Here are the labors of Hercules awaiting the President elect. Here is Bunyan's picture of Christian and Apollyon. Here lies the difficulty at the threshold between General Grant and the Senate on the Tenure-of-Office law in any shape you please. But there is no fear that he will fly off at a tangent from the Republican (Chicago) platform; no fear that he will try the game of Captain Tyler against the financial bills of Congress, or the "policy" of Andy Johnson against the reconstruction laws or negro suffrage. There is no fear that he will be removed from the restrictions of the Tenure-of-Office law he will turn honest men out of office in order to put rogues in their places. Nor do we suppose that General Blair himself, though he sticks to it, really entertains the absurd tomfoolery that our greatest danger is that General Grant will establish a protec-torate or an empire on the ruins of the Republic by following the example of Cromwell, or that of Napoleon the First or Napoleon the Third.

No such fears or doubts as these are entertained among the radical managers of the Senate. But still they are afraid of General Grant. They are afraid that he really means retrenchment and reform; that he will not understand that all such notions are claptrap and humbug, and are thrown out only as the tub to amuse the whale. And so they intend to hold his remarks from office subject to the consent of the Senate. Otherwise, if he were restored to the Executive status of Lincoln, he might reduce in a few months scores of these radical office-holders, with the hundreds of their outside friends and confederates, to bankruptcy, in breaking up their speculations. We dare say, for instance, that an intelligent and honest Secretary of the Treasury of Grant's own way of thinking, and free to act, could in six months bring gold down as low, perhaps, as fifteen per cent. premium, and thus save millions upon millions, hundreds of millions, to the Treasury of the people, by simply breaking up the Treasury manipulators and pet brokers and gold gamblers of Wall street. But how many Senators, with their cousins, aunts, nephews, and favorites, and sharers of the spoils, would be among the losers? Who can tell?

Here, then, the continuance of the Tenure-of-Office law has a practical meaning; for it may serve to restrain even an honest Secretary of the Treasury in the use of the guillotine, for fear of a rumrum with the Senate. But, again, look at the whisky rings—the dealers in contraband whisky. They have a lobby fund far exceeding the capital of the old United States Bank, which turned the country upside down in its death struggle with General Jackson. A bold, faithful, and fearless Internal Revenue Commissioner, in General Grant's way of doing business, within a few weeks in overhauling his revenue subordinates might astonish the country with his unearthing of lawless whisky officials, whisky stills, and whisky dealers. But under the Tenure-of-Office law the President must submit his removals to the Senate, and if Senator John Doe or Richard Roe has a friend thus in danger he may say to other Senators, "Save my man and I will assist in saving yours;" for has not this plan of operations become a common practice under Andy Johnson in confirmations and rejections? Is the Senate the party?

The weakness of the whole thing is apparent, and it ought not to be difficult to uproot a practice that has so little to recommend it. Yet it is very difficult. A great deal is said to excuse it. It is said to be the only way in which the merits of the application and the wishes of the party can be made known to the appointing power, who naturally must feel grateful for information which he needs so much.

What this mode of making appointments has done for our civil service, we know to our cost. Whether it can be reformed and improved we are yet to learn. It is quite certain that the attempt to change it, in any essential respect, will be fiercely and strenuously resisted by the combined interests which thrive and profit by it. And this is but one of the many ways in which the country will be brought to a decisive test of the question, whether it is governed by the will and for the welfare of the great body of the people, or for the profit and at the pleasure of special cliques and combinations.

The Tennessee Conservatives.
From the N. Y. Tribune.

We recently printed a letter to the editor of this journal from several representative men of the Tennessee conservatives, including ex-Governor Neil S. Brown and ex-Senator Henry S. Foote. The other signers, though not so widely known, are equally respected and influential at home. We ask for it the thoughtful regard of all who heartily unite in General Grant's aspiration—"Let us have Peace."

The novel feature in this letter is its full concurrence in the position we proclaimed long ago, that universal amnesty and impartial suffrage are each desirable and necessary of itself, and not merely as a counterpoise to the other. When we declared, in November, 1866, that we favored universal amnesty at all events, we did not mean, and did not imagine that we could be supposed to mean, that we would in any case abandon our advocacy of impartial suffrage. We meant only that, if there had never been a slave nor a negro in those nests, by the way—the little borough of Frome—elected Mr. Thomas Hughes, the only man who, by any stretch of imagination, may be called a workingman's member, and the transfer of the expenses of elections from the candidates to the rates. But, after all this is done, there will be little hope of a reform, since "no legislation can alter the character of the people;" and how miserable and venal that character is, Mr. Goldwin Smith has already explained.

Having thus delivered himself on general subjects, Mr. Goldwin Smith descends to personal themes. He explains why he was not himself a candidate at the late election.

"Either a Tory or a professing Liberal"—no genuine Liberal, of course, would have opposed him—would have run against him;

"and I could not have afforded to fight him with my own money, and I could not have brought myself to accept pecuniary aid even from the most generous hands."

* * *

A man is not bound to ruin himself, much less to degrade himself, in seeking it (a seat in Parliament), and I could not have represented the workingmen except on terms consistent with their honor and my own."

And, moreover, had he been elected to Parliament, he could have done his constituents no good,

"for being untrained to debate, I could not have given even a forcible expression to our views."

There is no little meat to be found in these few kernels. In the first place,

even with Mr. Goldwin Smith, it seems to be all a mere matter of money. A seat in Parliament is only to be bought. Could he have "afforded" the expenditure requisite to buy the necessary number of voters, he does not make it appear that any scruples of principle would have stood in his way; as he could not "afford" that expenditure out of his own pocket, and could not bring himself to accept "donations" as Mr. Odger and Mr. Hartwell did, he let the seat go to the dunces, and bought his ticket for New York. To buy a seat at one's own expense, to a man of limited wealth, is "ruin;" to buy one at the expense of others is "degradation;" but for a very wealthy man to buy one out his own pocket is to represent a constituency on terms "consistent with the honor" of the represented and the representative. If this all be truly true, what in the name of common sense has Mr. Goldwin Smith to complain of? From his premises the conclusion is inevitable that no one but a rich man or a "degraded man" can be elected to Parliament—and certainly a very moral philosopher like Mr. Goldwin Smith would prefer that the legislators of Great Britain should be millionaires rather than miscreants. Undue modesty, perhaps, constrained Mr. Goldwin Smith to assuage the agony that must convulse the breast of England at the thought of losing him, by asserting that, as he is "untrained to debate," he would have been useless, because silent, in Parliament. He is a gentleman of whom a journal which does not adore him has spoken as "one who has received all the culture that Oxford could bestow, who has studied and written and even spoken upon politics for many years, and who would have addressed Parliament with the weight of a justly earned reputation, which would have far outweighed his necessary ignorance of Parliamentary routine and his inexperience in debate." Moreover, parliamentary orators are made and not born—made, too, by trials, repeated in spite of failures, in Parliament itself; and if men waited until they ceased "to fall below Demosthenes and Cicero" ere they offered themselves for election, there would be the same dearth of legislators as of swimmers did all boys and girls

follow the advice of that careful parent of whom thus the doggerel runs:

"Oh, mother, may I go to swim?"

"Oh, yes, you may, my daughter;

Hang your clothes on a hickory limb;

But don't go near the water."

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