SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON GURRENT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

THE GRAIN TRADE.

From the N. Y. Tribune. Chicago is an enterprising, go-ahead city, which has had a rapid growth, and naturally indulges in high-reaching anticipations. We forget how soon she is, according to those anticipations, to surpass New York in business and population, nor is it essential to remember. Suffice it that she is a city of generous promise and very considerable fulfilment, whose shadow, we trust, will never be less.

Of late, the fact that a good deal of Western grain is passing down the Mississippi on its way, via St. Louis and New Orleans, to the East and to Europe, has arrested the attention of her publicists. They do not seem to know exactly what to make of it. Chicago, they insist, is the emporium of the Western grain trade; and comething must be wrong when Western grain seeks the seaboard otherwise than through Chicago. So editorials are written, and conventions held, and reports promulgated, with intent to stop the transit of grain down the Mississippi and turn it to coming East via Chicago-as yet, we believe, with little effect.

One of the schemes under consideration proposes a magnificent canal-or rather riverwhereby the water of the lakes shall be made to flow southward through the Straits of Mackinac and the heart of Chicago into the Illinois, and so into the lower Ohio and Mississippi, at a cost of only \$84,000,000, or some such trifle. The objection that Cairo would be swamped-perhaps we should say reswamped -and much of the valley of the Lower Mississippi drowned out by this "new cut," does not seem to make much impression, being dwarfed by the prospect of seeing Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, and Buffalo high and dry, and Nisgara Falls assimilated to a rural milldam in a dry summer; but the problem, "How is Chicago to be benefited by such a river?" is grave enough. To our mind it is plain that, if the new river should float much of the soil of Illinois, including the foundations of Chicago itself, into the Gulf of Mexico, it would impel the "Queen of the Lakes" to ship her own grain via New Orleans, and thus aggra-vate the calamity she is seeking to avert. By annexing berself to the great valley, Chicago would be far more likely to accelerate than impede the momentum whereby produce now seeks the East by way of the South.

A far more hopeful project is that of enlarging and deepening still further our Eric Canal, and thus diminishing the cost of reaching the seaboard via Buffalo and Albany. This looks practical; but who is to bell the cat? It must cost heavily; and though Chicago may care nothing for such a flea-bite as \$84,000,000, New York has been sobered by experience and does not take kindly to the suggestion of new ontlays and new debts, especially when it is intimated that she is expected to disdain any pecupiary return. The general drift of Chicage and even of Northwestern opinion seems to require that our State should, first, double the capacity of her great canal secondly, reduce the tolls so that they could not possibly reimburse her oatlay; thirdly, cut (or have the Federal Government cut) a magnificent shunpike around Niagara Falls, so as to deprive that canal of half its natural traffic. We should have to send to Chicago for financiers competent to demonstrate the advantage to our tax-payers of these dashing operations. Finally, the recent Convention of Boards of Trade at Chicago adopted the report of its

committee, concluding as follows:-"Thirdly, Your committee asks your consideration of the project of organizing, during the ensuing sear the purpose of pressing upon Congress th son, for the purpose of pressing upon Congress the necessity of aiding the State of New York to open the Erie and Oswego canals to the people of the United States for the transportation of produce free of toll; and to hasten the building of the Niagara Ship Canal by the General Government. All of which is respectfully submitted,"

This goes to the root of the matter. If Congress shall see fit to devote one or two hunired millions or so of our surplus revenue (?) to the purchase of the Erie and Oswego Canals, and to doubling their capacity, and to making a ship canal around the Falls of Niagara, Chicago can doubtless hold her present grain trade, and probably increase it. But St. Louis, and New Orleans, and Cincinnati, and Memphis, will hardly be "enthused" by the prospect; nor will Norfolk and Baltimore, Pittsburg and Wheeling, be likely to see their account in it. On the whole, we cannot realize that this new-old scheme of "paying the taxes out of the Treasury" has a living chance of success. Our Pacific Railroad experience is yet fresh and by no means assuring; and we apprehend that Uncle Sam feels too poor to buy or dig grand canals just at present. So we submit that the proposed purchase of the Erie and Oswego Canals by the Union-much more, the construction of a Niagara ship canal with Federal funds-must stand over for further and very deliberate consideration.

OUR RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND.

From the N. Y. Herald. The Alabama claims question appears to be assuming an importance which it should have assumed long since. It is only the sad politi-cal condition in which the "reconstruction" radicals have kept us that has prevented our settling this English affair. In the conversation between Mr. Sumper and our correspondent, published on Monday, Mr. Sumper justiy says: - "We have defined our position now, and there will be no yielding. We ask nothing but what is fair, and our people mean to have justice at least."

We do not apprehend that war will result from the attitude we have assumed; but the result, on the contrary, will be a closer and better understanding between the two nations. Such men as Reverdy Johnson only help to bury the real issue under mountains of roast beef, plum pudding, "at and 'at" and champagne. The action of the United States Senate was necessary to sweep away the débris and get at the question. We made clear work of it, and with a smooth floor before us we are ready to open a lively commercial can can with John Bull, or, as he has the largest family of she ships on the ocean, we will launch a few Alabamas and commence coquetting, if that be required. But Euglish good sense and love of fair play will no doubt settle all this war flarry to our entire satisfac ion. We are now exactly where we thoroughly understand each other, and that is the first broad step towards a settlement.

THE ADMINISTRATION AND COUNTRY.

From the Chicago Republica Is is useless to conceal a fact which has become patent to all, and that is that the administration has disappointed, not only the country generally, but its immediate party friends. Even the jackals and very buzzards and scavengers of the party camp not only scent a rising gale of popular dissatisfaction, but are preparing to veer round and take advantage of the unexpected change of senti-The very men who, a short time since, claimed to be friends of the President par excellence, are now wagging their tongues against bim in the streets and public bar-rooms, and pronouncing him a political failure and his pronouncing him a political failure and his nomination a party blunder. Take as evidence new constitutions in parts, so that the people the great advantage of this arrangement is

and supporters, now luffs up into the very and the adoption of his recommentation was wind's eye of its former teachings, until every a confession by Congress that the congratularag of canvas in that unstable craft flutters tions tendered to the conutry in the Chrosgo platform were a stroke of demagogue impa-dence. With more than half of the white and flaps in the breeze, and threatens to fly in shreds from the bolt-ropes. Now this sudden change of the course of the sheet in question population of the Southern States still unrepresented, the pretense, put forth nearly a year ago, that the work of reconstruction had has been attributed to disappointment because one of this proprietors was not awarded a foreign mission, which he was to obtain with the assistance of the Vice-President. But this been perfected, was a brazen and chameless vaunt. is not the real reason for the change in the course of that journal. The real reason is that the management, like the other scavengers of the party camp, thinks it detects a change in

public sentiment on the subject of the Cabinet

appointments, and wishes to profit by seeming

to lead that which it merely follows. The

truth is no party organ in the country has

done more to produce the evils and embarrass-

ments which now threaten the integrity

Chicago Tribune. From the commencement,

that journal and its immediate supporters as-

sumed to take personal charge of General

Grant. By from the commencement, we mean

from the day its managing editor supposed

Tribune not only proposed to elect Grant, but

to "run him" after he was elected. It told

him he must cut loose from professional poli-

ticians, always saving and excepting the

Washburne family and the Tribune editors.

It denounced Congress in advance as utterly

corrupt, worthless, and unreliable. It pro-

claimed General Grant to be the only man (in

fact the modern Hercules, raised up by Provi-

dence and the aforesaid Tribune) who could

cleanse the Augean stable of politics. It egged

on Washburne, and pointed to him as the

mouthpiece of General Grant, to make that

famous, or rather infamous, speech of his

in Congress, which was literally the gauntlet

of the President dashed in the very faces of

the men who had elected him. It next de-

manded the immediate repeal of the Tenure-

of-Office law, in order that the President might

be enabled to act independently of the states-

men and politicians-of all those in the party

which had elected him, who were capable of

giving him advice and assistance. Then, when it supposed the President had ob-

Herculean broom, the Tribune and its satel-

lites took care that for every office-

holder swept out one of its own buzzards

should be put in. Let the reader imagine the

public table freshly laid by the new adminis-

tration, with all the art of medern gastro-

nomy, from the pièce de résistance to the deli-

cate Charlotte Russe. Outside the public en-

trance crewd the horde of office-seekers who

have not assumed the personal supervision of

General Grant. At a private door enter Washburne, J. Russell Jones, the Dents, the

Caseys, and other hangers-on, who proceed,

before the public door is opened, to attack

the various dishes indiscriminately or accord-

ing to individual taste. Washburne staggers

off under the weight of the pièce de résistance.

The Dents and the Caseys squabble over the

patés and the pasties. Jones and a few Gale-

naites plunge thereupon into the Charlotte

Russe, and leave but a mere crust for the next

comers. Then the main entrance is thrown

the rain which the wreckers have made, or

what will the public think of these cormorants,

after they had been gorged with the good

things which they secured to themselves by excluding from the circle of the President's

doing what they forced him to do? The pub-

most unmitigated scalawags ever spawned

a fact that the very men who have plunged

paying a compliment to a friend. Not only

so, but while procuring the President to

to the Senate and country for Mr. Washburne's

appointees, many of whom the Senate posi-

tively refuses to confirm. Now, in all con-

science, who is to blame for this fiasco? Is it

Seneral Grant, a Cincinnatus, honest and con-

fiding or Mr. Washburne, a crafty political

wire-puller, who, under the cloak of redress-

ing political evils and cleansing the State of

political corruption, crams every possible

place with his immediate personal friends

and relatives, most of whom are so totally

unfitted for the positions given them, as to

cause a storm of indignant protest to come

up from the party and country, through every newspaper in the land down to Mr.

Washburne's reputed organ itself? General

Grant deserves sympathy, not blame; while

the men who have used him and are now

abusing him should be the objects of the

scorn and contempt of all good men. The New York Post is compelled to demand the

removal, not only of Mr. W. shburne, but of all

his friends from office. The New York Times

Trumbull says: "We shall be broken up," if

and politicians in every part of the country

bemoans the mistakes of the President. Mr.

this sort of thing continues. Leading papers

declaim against the curse fixed upon the Presi-

dent by the Chic go Tribin: and Mr. Wash-

burne, which in two short months has borne

such bitter fruits. No administration was

ever before so imperilled by a set of unprin-

cipled political harpies as that of General

upon the political situation with the most

painful and anxious solicitude, and predict

that four years of its present management

will most assuredly make shipwreck of it, if

RECONSTRUCTION TO BE RECON-

"Reconstruction" has reversed its engine,

and is "taking the back track" in Virginia,

with the sanction of the Federal authority.

We are too well pleased with the new move-

ment to taunt the R-publican party with its

vainglorious boast in the Chicago platform

that this work of reconstruction had been tri-

umphantly completed. There are still four

nnrepresented States, including Georgia-two-

fifths of the whole number of states, contain-

ing more than half of the rebel population.

The business which is about to engage the

quief attention of President Grant-now that

he has got clear of the throng and

reconstruct reconstruction,

of the place-hunters-is

the unrepresented States to

STRUCTED.

The wisest men of the party look

Grant.

not of the country itself.

From the N. Y. World.

pressure

bring

General Grant to be the "coming man."

and security of the administration than the

The passage by Congress of the bill authorizing the President to submit the new constitutions to the popular vote in parts, is a sneaking retreat by that body from its policy of disfranchising the leading citizens of the South. It is a compulsory retreat; for the Republican party could not stand under the edium of keeping half the population of the South unrepresented for an indefinite period, and the same majority in the nurepresented States that voted down reconstruction last year would suffice to block it perpetually. Congress has, therefore, virtually decided that it will no longer insist on disfranchisement as an essential part of the reconstruction policy. It was perfectly well understood that the purpose of General Grant's message was to get authority to enable the people of the States to set their brand on disfrauchisement; it would be a preposterous mockery to give them permission to do this, if Cougress still adhered to its policy of disfranchisement as an indispensable condition of restoration. Disfranchisement has, therefore, been virtually (though sneakingly) abandoned; for as, in logic and in law, all the revolted States stand on the same footing, as they all committed the same crime and deserve the same retribution, when Congress gives up this main feature of its policy in relation to some of them, it is precluded from any longer insisting on it in relation to the others. When Virginia is admitted with a constitution imposing no disabilities for participation in the Rebellion. notice will have been given to all the other States that they are at liberty to rescind the disfrauchising clauses of their constitutions without any danger that Congress will interpose for their enforcement.

The virtual abandonment of this policy at so early a day recalls the well-known epitaph on the tombstone of an infant of premature tained sufficient control to be able to use the birth that died as soon as it was born: -

"Since I'm so quickly done for, What was I begun for?" The distranchising policy thus early abandoned has been the cause of more exasperation and bad feeling, it has done more to sour and alienate the South and to retard the restoration of kindly feelinge, than any other exhibition of radical bigotry and malignity. And this insane policy, which is now sneakingly confessed to be a binuder, was, from the beginning, the central thread of the Republican rcheme of reconstruction. When Presiden. Johnson came into office, and had not, as yet any thought of breaking with the Republican party, he echoed its predominant sentiment in his frequent and foolish speeches declaring that "Rebels must take back seats," that "treason must be made odious," and a great deal of vituperation in the same veio, implying that all who had taken a prominent part in the Rebellion ought to be stripped of their open and the public are invited to gaze upon political rights. We refer to those speeches merely to show what was at that time the prevalent feeling of the Republican party. feed, if they can, upon the fragments. But The President grew more liberal when he had time for cool reflection; but the Republican party steadily and strennously insisted on political distranchisement, and some of its prominent members, like Tasddens Stevens, personal friends and supporters every man who they supposed would interfere with this would have added a wholesale confiscation of Rebel property. Distranchisement was the ring arrangement, when they are now found key-note of the radical policy; it was a leading among the first to denounce General Grant for feature of every proposal made to the South. lie must necessarily look upon them as the The constitutional amendment which was first ested as a condition of restorati rejected by all the Southern States w th prompt upon the surface of party politics. Yet it is indignation chiefly and avowedly because of its disfranchising clauses. If it is wise to General Grant into this quagmire, out of abandon that cardinal part of the reconwhich he can only be rescued by the most struction policy now, it was a great piece of dexterous management and by the forbearance of his party and the country generally, are now denouncing him. Washburne forced General Grant to degrade the great office of folly ever to have insisted upon it at all. The danger from the political activity of the disfranchised classes was no greater then than it is now. Had their political rights been promptly conceded to them in the outset, the Secretary of State by making it the means of concession might have been regarded as an act cheat the country by a pretended appoint-ment, Washburne cheated the President and of grace which deserved some return of gratitude; at any rate, the South would not have been provoked into an attitude of contumathe real appointee by using what was intended as a mere personal compliment as a cions resistance. But the extorted concessubstantial means of advancing his own and sion, at this late day, sneakingly granted only his friends' political prospects. Mr. Wash-burne named forty-eight foreign appointees on account of the demonstrated impossibility of reconstructing the most important States on the strength of a mere personal compli-ment. Mr. Fish finds himself responsible without it, has no tendency either to secure the respect or to awaken the gratitude of

Southern citizens. If disfranchisement was necessary at all, it was not as a precaution against an immediate danger, but as a guarantee against a possible With the great majorities future danger. which the Republicans had in both houses of Congress, there was no danger that the Southern representatives would carry any measure which the Republican party did not approve. It was only at some future day, waen the Republican majorities should be reduced, that the South would have any eff-ctive power in Congress. To commence a policy of distranchisement and not persevere in it, is like planting a fruit tree and cutting it down before it puts forth any blossoms. Why exas-perate and polson the minds of the Southern people by so illiberal and odious a measure, if it was to be relinquished before it could bear any other fruit than mere -xasperation and hatred? The policy of disfranchisement has been the most formidable obstacle to the early restoration of the States to their Federal relations. Conferring universal suffrage upon the brutal and semi-barbarous negross was bad enough; but one negro voters could be managed if the political talent of the South were left free to act. Experience long ago demonstrated that even the intelligent white voters of the country exercise but little real power. A few active politicians and wirepul'ers control all the elections by packing and controlling the preliminary caucuses and conventions; and if setive political talent so easily monopolizes all effective power in the free and intelligent North, it cannot be a very difficult task to outwit and olcoumvent the ignorant and pauperized negroes of the South. Give the Southern whites an open field and fair play, and they are competent enough to control the politics of their section, in spite of negro suffrage. In sneaking out of dis-franchisement, therefore, the Republican party will give up the main prop of its Southern policy. This practical confession that its policy has been a blunder will rapidly undermine the waning confidence of the country in the fitness of that party to control publie affairs.

STATESMANSHIP MADE EASY.

From the N. Y. Times. The Washington correspondents, to whom the whole world owes so much, are putting the various great statesmen with whom they have "interviews," and whose "conversa-tions" they report, under special obliga-tions of gratitude. If any modern statesand man—say, for example, Senator Sumner or ites to Senator Sprague—wishes to make public his the door of Congress for admission. His ideas, he has only to call in or let in a press

the Chicago Tribune, which, after vainly striving for weeks to justify nominations forced upon disfranchising provisions, is one of the few is a fortunate one, and the states man's the President by its own immediate friends things he has done which meet our approval; "ideas" are received favorably by the public, all is well; on the other hand, if they prove to be unsafe or unpopular, the statesman has only to disown the report, and aunounce that he was "misunderstood" or "misrepresented." This sort of political "table-talk" is one of the great improvements which we have made on the old style of American politics, where a Congressman, for example, was in the habit of putting his public opinions on record officially in Congress, and so became responsible for them. There is one drawback, however, to the useinliness of the "interview" correspondents, namely, that they rarely fail to render the great man to whom they play the Boswell rather more conceited, consequential, arrogant, or absurd, as the case may be, than he is in his more formal public conduct and

PRESIDENT GRANT AND HIS CABINET.

From the N. Y. Herald. It is evident that the men composing the President's Cabinet are ill-suited to their positions. None of them take hold of the great questions appertaining to their departments in a manner that indicates grasp of mind and originality in execution. We speak of these things for the benefit of the President him-He requires men around him who have sufficient brains to administer the laws in all except extraordinary cases, which may require consultation and close executive attention. General Grant has made a mistake in supposing that civil government can be directed by military forms. The civil power is the reverse of the military. The former proceeds from the people to the centre-the mass governs and directs through its mouthpiece, the President; the military power is the centre, ore-ating all action and shaping everything. It is with the military idea predominant and in keeping with his education and habits that General Grant came into office. The Cabinet was selected under this principle, and not having been accustomed or fitted to work in such a direction, they already show signs of imbecility. The Secretary of the Tressury finds the financial problem too ponderous for the keeper of a country store or for solution in accordance with the old European book the oriez. He finds it impossible to run the American treasure-box on European wheels.

A letter from Washington says truly that "Mr. Borie was called from the most complete retirement," much to the astonishment of bimself as well as the country. Admiral Porter is to-day virtually filling the office of Secretary of the Navy. The Secretary of State, worse than all the rest, is as un-American as it is possible for an officer to be. His tame foreign policy is in ill-keeping with the bold attitude of the people and the Senate. The country does not expect him to think for it, but simply to watch its temper and obey its mandates. When he fails in this he ceases to be the representative of the United States in the position where the President has unforturately placed him. We are little disposed to have a Secretary amuse the people with ideas of a bold policy on any foreign question, while he has a private and opposite understanding with the power to which it relates. This is too much in the track of the last eight years. Wa speak of the necessity of remodelling the Cabinet that President Grant may have

around him good working men, who live with the times and understand the animating forces of our political existence. We know that the President enjoys himself in looking upon his fast horses rather than in the analysis of abstruse governmental questions. This and good a-sistants will enable him to last out his term of office. General Grant is a man of very solid sense, and will readily see the necessity for abler Cabinet brains, not only for the reasons we have indicated, but for those which he mself gave in his inaugural address

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