

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

THE LAST PRIZE-FIGHT.

The exceptional and transcendent ruffianism of the fight between McCoolle and Allen on Tuesday is not a matter for regret, but, contrarily, for rejoicing. When, as in this instance, the stronger party prevents the defeat of its favorite by overwhelming his superior antagonist and breaking up the fight, it is evident, even to the unskillful of the average rough, that it is useless to venture money upon the success of the man who has the smaller following, no matter how far superior to his opponent the man may be.

The utter brutality of this fight is useful in another way. Prize-fighting has always been a beastly business, and always properly under the ban of the law. But in its high and palmy days the men who encouraged them held themselves bound by a crude code of honor, by which, in the absence of legal protection, they generally secured fair play and what in their slang is called the winning of the better man on his merits. This was when Cribb, Jackson, and Gully were in the ring, and when prize-fighting, brutal as in its essence it always is, was yet in some respects almost respectable, and when some qualities which undoubtedly are mainly qualities were fostered by it. But now pugilism has lost even the pretense of being in any way a manly art, and is followed, not by the manly gladiators who were once the ornaments of the prize-ring, but by cowards, sneaks, thieves, and murderers, like this thug McCoolle and this thug Allen.

There are numbers of men of this class in New York whose existence is palpably useless and dangerous, but who are yet left at large and permitted, by the connivance, or, at least, by the sloth, of the police, publicly to arrange for prize-fights, publicly to carry out all the preliminaries of them, and to show themselves publicly with impunity. After their fights have been fought, surely there ought to be some increase of stringency, either in the laws or in the administration of them, as would prevent such a thing. Here are hundreds of men in New York of whom every one knows, and who must know of themselves, that they ought to be hanged. Unfortunately, these wretches cannot be hanged, in the present state of the statute-book, for being what they are. But what a real boon it would be to them, as well as to the rest of us if they could be, if not summarily hanged, at least imprisoned and made to work as soon as they take any overt step in the practice of their vocations either as thieves, bullies, or murderers. If they would only fall foul of each other, when they elude the police and assemble for their devilish doings, and wage war to mutual extermination, there would be something consolatory about it. But they are too cowardly to do anything of the kind. Their assaults are all made upon inoffensive people who have either had the faculty to attend the fight as spectators or who have the misfortune to dwell in the vicinity of the scene of it. They themselves are all, unhappily, left alive at the end of the fight, to return to their lairs and ply their vocations of sneak-thief and sneak-murder until another fight lures them into the sunlight of notoriety. The names of the chief of them are well known to the police, and their habits are equally known. From them come such crimes as the murder of Mr. Rogers, and the later murder of Larkin, who, doubtless, on general principles, deserved to be killed, but who did not deserve to be murdered. Is it impossible that these "infected districts" of humanity, whose boundaries are not local but spiritual, should be put under a sanitary regulation at least as strict as the precautions we adopt against the lesser evils of smallpox and cholera? Modern civilization condemns the old "outlawry" whereby the victim of it was made liable to be killed at sight by the first decent citizen who might see him. But, at least, these secondaries might be treated in some such wise as that they might be shunned and excluded from all public assemblies and from the public streets. Exposure is at present the only stigma which can be affixed to them; and that stigma it is easy to affix. But the prize-fighters themselves—although, for their good as well as ours, they unquestionably ought to be hanged—are less culpable, because less accountable, than the newspapers which act as their procurers and whose business it is to live out of their bloody trade. The men who conduct these papers at least know how to read and write, and they must know, therefore, what kind of morality they are helping to inculcate. But, instead of the incarceration of the savages and the suppression of the newspapers which pander to them, the chief of the former are sent to the Legislature to make the government of the community of what they see the scene, and the chief of the conductors of the latter, the stake of the innermost councils of the President of the United States. *Quintus Valerius?*

MONARCHY IN SPAIN.

Nothing more forcibly illustrates the necessity of organic political changes in Europe than the fact that it was, after the late revolution, at once taken for granted that regenerated Spain must necessarily be governed by a hereditary monarchy. The same opinion prevailed in 1808, when the Bourbons were expelled, and the crown was vested in Joseph Bonaparte and his heirs; and yet the Spanish population, at that time, exhibited a fierce determination not to submit to a foreign adventurer. It has now been supposed that the same can be triumphantly played by a seignior of the ruined House of Orleans. It is true, in our opinion, that those who speak of the Duke as merely a Bourbon scarcely do him justice. We think that the ancient feud between his own house and that of the Bourbons should be considered, and so far as it goes, that it is somewhat in his favor. His father and his grandfather had great political views. Hereditary opposition to the Court undoubtedly gave a liberal tinge to their actions—they were intriguers, but they necessarily intrigued upon the side of the people, and sought the masses they intended to use. The Orleans princes have always been better educated and naturally more intelligent than their cousins of Bourbon, who, after the Fortunate Louis, did nothing but blunder. "He had lost," says Mad. de Genlis of Louis Philippe, "all that he had inherited from birth and fortune—nothing remained but what he had received from nature and me." In return, he took great pains in the education of his own children, so that as princes they were quite exceptionally cultivated, and all of them

had a good reputation for amiability and talent, presenting a forcible and favorable contrast to pure Bourbons and to most of the old French noblesse, having hardly anything of the pride, extravagance, and vanity of that body. They were trained—all the sons of Louis Philippe—to be useful to the State, and it must be admitted that they were useful. Everything promised a long and felicitous reign of their house, when the Spanish marriages negotiated by their father came and ruined him, costing him the moral approbation of the best part of Europe, and casting serious doubts upon his veracity and his personal integrity, putting a grave argument into the hands of the French Democracy, and at last sending him into exile. He had shown, at last, mean and mousing ways unworthy of a monarch, and his hold upon the French people was not sufficient to maintain him upon his throne.

It is now stated, upon good authority, that Montpensier has in Spanish affairs exhibited an inherited capacity for intrigue; that his money went far to effect the expulsion of the Queen; and there is in Spain a feeling that, to borrow the words of Rochefoucault, he "will promise according to his hopes and perform according to his fears." That he would make a better monarch than any living Bourbon is saying very little; for most of the relics of that family are foolish by nature, and, having never got the Right Divine of Kings out of their heads, are unfit to reign either as kings or queens. One cannot but wonder that the idea of a republic should have been so distinctly dismissed by the Chamber, but we believe that the dismissal is only for a time. In some respects there is no nation in Europe so well fitted for a republic as the Spanish; for the personal pride of all classes of men which there exists might, under some circumstances, naturally tend to a democracy. Bad government, as bad as possible, has never destroyed, has hardly tamed, the native fierceness of a people poor indeed but proud, and for a long time accustomed to take a decided though somewhat tumultuous part in public affairs, and yet still a people whom the religious element has accustomed to all necessary self-control, except under extraordinary circumstances. We do not believe that this badly-governed race, which was once felt as a power in the world, and which is still mindful of the traditional glories of Spain and still proud of its noble literature, will submit always to the enslavement by Church and State which has been its portion. It has proved already that it will have nothing to do with an adventurer in search of a crown. It refused, in darker days, to submit to foreign aggression even with ameliorated government. It has had quite enough of the sort of liberty which British alliances would bring. In short, it happens to be exactly in the right position and with requisite power to act for itself; and if not to-day, then to-morrow, it will so act. "The reason, Sancho," said his master, "why thou feelest that pain all down thy back, is, that the stick that gave it to thee was of length to that extent." The Spanish people know too well the length of royal sticks, and the final disposition of the Montpensier notion goes far toward securing a republic in fact, if not in name. Meanwhile, let us hope for Spanish independence of Bourbons, and for Cuban independence of Spain!

PERU AND THE SPANISH COMPLICATION.

Our very respectable and very slow Secretary of State, in his anxiety to avoid European complications, had lost sight of an American complication until a few days since, when he found it had grown to such magnitude that he took to his bed sick at heart. It will be remembered that not long since Peru and Chili were in a state of active war with Spain, during which the latter power sent a fleet into the Pacific, bombarded Valparaiso and burnt a portion of the city, and then proceeded to Callao to effect the same purpose there. Driven off in this attack by the superior gunnery of the Peruvians, the fleet finally wended its way back to the Atlantic with small prize money and scanty honors. The war slumbered in a state of inaction, and the recent administration at Washington tendered to the belligerents its good offices as a mediator for the restoration of peace. These were accepted, and commissioners from the parties were to meet in Washington next month to arrange the preliminaries.

The only party to the scheme to whom peace is worth more than the value of a button on the end of the sword, is the one with the aggressive spirit of Quixote, without waiting to examine if the point of honor for an imaginary affront in the case of a merchant ship was well taken and, having struck her blow, is now willing to forget and forgive. To add to her wish in this respect, it was the Cuban treasury which enabled her to strike the blow, the government at Havana being charged with the duty of paying the bills incurred by a position to repeat the act. But time, who does not wait for negotiators or nations, has, meanwhile, brought to the South American belligerents the opportunity to strike back, and that, too, at the vital part which enabled Spain to assert her strength as a power on the American side of this mundane ball. Cuba declares her independence, President Céspedes requests the antagonists of Spain to restore to the belligerents the rights of the Cuban republic, and Peru and Chili do so with expressions of friendliness becoming nations at war.

Here the Spanish Minister comes upon the scene, and claims for Mr. Fish that, as it is the duty of his office to attend to the peace making between Spain and the belligerent members of the American family of nations, he shall also undertake to keep them from hitting back while negotiations are going on. He furthermore assumes that the course of the republics in the Cuban question is discourteous to the United States, and to illustrate his position cites the case of a private quarrel between two gentlemen which is under arrangement by a third party, and which he assumes ends the quarrel from the moment the arrangement to enter upon negotiations had been accepted. According to his view the quarrel is now ours, and not Spain's.

Setting aside the fallacy which is contained in comparing national to individual powers, our friend the Spanish Minister makes another very great mistake in assuming that a consent to open negotiations amounts to a treaty of peace or even a truce. If he will take the trouble to read, he will find the pages of history to abound in the contrary view, and we will cite one fact in American history for his easy reference:—Our last war with Great Britain did not cease while peace negotiations were going on at Ghent, and the greatest battle of the whole war—that of New Orleans—was fought after the treaty of peace had been concluded and the treaty of peace had been signed. The little episode of the recognition of the belligerent rights of Cuba need not, therefore, interrupt the negotiations at Washington, and they can be kept up even amid the greater coming complications which time will no doubt exhibit between the belligerents.

To Mr. Fish we present these availing facts, in the hope that they will help him to a speedy recovery of his health. But we have a few words to say to him in regard to the Spanish complications. The people of the United States have recognized the belligerent rights of the Cuban republic, and are fast taking an attitude which will vindicate our national rights and national duties amid the great events that attend us. They see, too, and comprehend the petty party policy which would make bluster about the Alabama claim cover up and hide your delinquency in the higher duties which attend you in the American questions now pressing for a solution. If you nose yourself to the duty of the honor the statesman's pen can solve these difficulties and further the hopes of civilization and humanity. If you do not waken to it, the difficulties will continue to gather around you until the Spanish complications open the grave of your reputation as a public man and of the hopes of the administration of which you are a part.

THE CAMPAIGN ABANDONED.

The proposed incorporation of Senator Sumner's speech into the platform of the radical party for the coming fall appears to have been given up. Exposure of the design and discussion killed it. The World showed the Republicans that their game was not only unprofitable but a losing one. The most pronounced of the radical papers—such as the Evening Post, the New York Times, the Cincinnati Commercial, the Chicago Tribune, and others—declare against it. Governor Curtin, who was to have led off in favor of the idea at Philadelphia on Saturday night, was scared out of doing it by the storm of opposition which the fatal discovery of his purpose by the World aroused. The pleas in protest against it have been that the administration must be left free to take its own course as circumstances arise, without being bound beforehand or menaced by popular clamor to any prescribed plan; also, that, as likely as not, the Alabama claims will be removed from the domain of discussion into the field of diplomatic investigation before the fall elections set in, in which case any popular debate upon the business by the administration party would be as out of place as editorials on the guilt of a prisoner while he was on trial and before a jury has found any verdict. These are very respectable pleas, and, if they serve to prevent the precipitation of Mr. Sumner's grotesque production into the politics of the country, they will serve well. The real reasons, however, briefly are:—That the Alabama business is a dead affair; that Mr. Sumner's temporary and fictitious prominence in this business has subsided; he is reduced to his normal insignificance now on both sides of the Atlantic in the minds of everybody but himself; that the motion to connect the party to that speech was a motion to galvanize a corpse into a make-believe life, and was meant not as an assistance, but as a menace to General Grant and to Secretary Fish, who have stationarily snubbed the Sumner party ever since the President finished his third reading of the Senator's ill-assorted compilation. The only men who are willing now to endorse Mr. Sumner's position are Senators Nye and Howe, who know as little about international law as they do about the Sanscrit. Indeed, the Senator from Massachusetts may be considered a "lost cause." The Republican leaders know little enough, but they know too much to commit themselves to a policy liable to lead the United States into a war with Great Britain while our debt is undiminished and the Union still dissolved. Their party has never known how "to vindicate the national honor," as the phrase is. That sort of business has always succeeded in Democratic hands; and the organization whose highest successes have been disunion, debt, and reconstruction will be all at sea even with such a word as honor committed to their keeping. No! The campaign on the Sumner line has been abandoned. The Alabama claims will reach a satisfactory and speedy settlement if Mr. Motley will only hold his tongue, and if Mr. Fish succeeds in his wish to bring over their consideration to this side.

ON WITH THE DANCE!

A new device, worse while it lasts than hand-shaking, has been invented to vex the soul of General Grant, torture his toes, and shake him from his equanimity. This device is the device of dancing. Wherever he goes now a quadrille is prepared to ensnare him, and he is asked to lead off in the set of honor. He was so last week at Annapolis, and again this week at West Point. And what is true of the President is also true of the General, both of whom would probably face any other kind of "hop." At Annapolis, we are told, Grant, instead of "leading off" in his set, was very submissively led off, evidently knowing no more of the figures, and doing them no better, than a "frozen-toed turkey." Sherman, of the other hand, was, says Jenkins, "awkward, and quite as bold as awkward, taking steps like his soldiers marching to the sea." As for Grant, says the same authority, "he had a scared look on his face that moved your heart."

"Every figure was to him the Wilderness over again, and he was so nervous that he, with his partner, and turned to the next lady, holding up his hands appealingly, like an innocent kitten with its burnt paws, and lost himself constantly almost beyond recovery." For the same reason, he would prefer another Donelson. The duties of high office had worn him considerably. His pleasure therefore to be his own.

All this we take to be literally true, because the testimony to it is uniform and unvarying. And as again at West Point, a conscientious reporter declares:— "The attempts of the President and General Sherman to go through the dance with credit were by no means successful, the Chief Magistrate seeming to lack energy; the General of the Army, on the other hand, exhibiting an immense amount of motive vim, but wanting sadly in judgment."

Captains in vain punched the President; in vain did Colonels pull back the General, and at length, we are told, the President, "very much abashed, deserted the Terpsichorean field," followed by General Sherman, who was much better satisfied with his performances in that line. We repeat, therefore, that this business ought to be abandoned, in mercy to our high officers. Not every one that shone at Waterloo cut a fine figure at the Brussels ball the night before. At all events, we drop the hint that if Boston will spare General Grant a repetition of this later torture, and all other people will do likewise, they will establish a strong claim upon the President's gratitude.

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