SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Carrent Topics Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

MORE REFORM.

From the N. Y. Tribune. If it be true, as some of the official bulle tins would have us believe, that his Majesty of France has been subject of late to nothing physically worse than a very encouraging kind of rheumatism, then we presume the most serious of the imperial afflictions are moral and political. The Emperor may not be indeed the abject victim of a disease bailling to the science of medicine, but it is probable that he is more or less subject to an infirmity well known in politics, and is sick of reform. A robust Emperor would not have an insuperable task in recovering from the symptoms now displayed in the body politic of France, always supposing that empire itself is not a disease of such a character as to be incurable by reform. It is possible that his Majesty will survive the latest symptoms of progres but who and what, finally, are to cure the malady known as empire? Who shall prescribe at last for the Emperor, seeing that his disease is France's health, and that so many Frenchmen are interested in keeping his

The Emperor is about to take up his bed and walk to Paris, if the gossips say truly; but really his disease is only beginning again. The other day he signed decrees, and received his Senate's exhibit of the passage of the plan of reform which he marked out several months ago. All this looks like business and health, and to the gentlemen of the bedchamber his Majesty may seem good for ten years yet. Nevertheless, the high priest of Napoleonism cannot escape the disease, whereof the Senatus Consultum, the Councils-General, and Prince Napoleon are symptoms. It is a right excellent malady, and though it be poison to imperialism it may be meat to France. The consumption of the empire has begun with reform and concession, and it is to be seen whether it must die a speedy or a lingering death.

Majesty under the weather?

The passage of the Senatus Consultum, almost exactly as the Emperor sketched it in the first instance, was a foregone conclusion, and adds nothing to our news. We have no trouble in agreeing with the commission charged with its report, that the initiative in law-making, the right to amend and interpellate, and to propose orders of the day, the publicity of debate, the consideration of the budget in detail, and the principle of ministerial responsibility so far as it may go, are considerable changes. But France, once taught what it is to be fed with the bread of liberty, is not willing to break its fast upon anything short of a meal. The Emperor's concessions were no doubt generous alms in the eyes of those who conceive that the French are more apt to be beggars than choosers. But here again is unsatisfied France, with a prince at its front, clamoring for more, and now the Councils-General add their voices to the demand which has gone up out of the late elections. Over and above the Emperor's programme, some of the Councils appear disposed to ask rights for themselves. That of Dijon has entertained a motion for public sittings, for the right of the Councils to express themselves on every important public topic, for the election by ballot of local administrative commissions to serve during three years, and for the disqualification of imperial office-holders to sit as members of Councils. In another Council a motion has been made for municipal independence, for the reform of the conscriptions, and for the revision of the press laws. Although we see it officially denied that any considerable movement has been made in these department councils in the way of new reform, the facts recorded are sufficiently indicative. Prince Napoleon sounded a timely note in his late speech, which, whether it were or not an imperial feeler, has found the great French instrument rather loudly in tune. The illness of the Emperor, equally with the utterance of the Prince, makes sharp the significance of the hour to France, and we may now look for further progress in the direction of the municipalities and prefectures in the same expectation with which we viewed the results of the late elections. A new Ministry with Prince Napoleon at its head, as the London Times suggests, seems not so probable as plausible; but municipal selfgovernment is evidently a fixed feature of the new Reform bill, and the empire liberalized is France becoming republicanized.

"THE WORLD" AND NEGRO SUFFRAGE From the N. Y. World.

We are disinclined to give further promi nence to the negro suffrage issue, and have forborne to make any rejoinder to recent articles in the Tribune and the Times assailing our position on that subject. In spite of the Democratic party, the negro suffrage question is forced into the State canvass this fail. We briefly called attention to this fact in a recent article, expressing the opinion that the Democrats will unanimously vote against that provision of the new State Constitution which proposes to confer universal suffrage on our negroes. Vote on this question we must, one way or the other; and as the Democratic party have never desired negro suffrage, in this State or elsewhere, it is right that their votes (since the question cannot be blinked) should express their real sentiments and preference.

If the Republican party had not compelled us to meet the question, we would gladly have ignored it. The World's allusion to it was not gratuitous, because the issue is forced into the canvass by the Republican majority of the Constitutional Convention who insisted on such a provision, and by the Republican majority of the last Legislature who submitted it to the vote of our citizens in the approach-

ing election. We do not know that we should have given further space to the subject if a Republican journal in the western part of the State had not aspersed our consistency, and therefore our sincerity, on this vexed question of negro suffrage. Our traducer is the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser, from which we make this

extract:—
"It is hardly a month since the columns of the World contained such unterances as the above; and yet in its issue of Tuesday it suddenly doubled on its own track, and openly announced that the ancient issues of the party would be revived in the approaching State canvass. Negro sufrage in this State and the fifteenth amendment are to be fought against as revived issues. Even in advance of the convention of its party, the World inserts those two planks in the platform, and sounds the old bugle-call for the party to rally around them. They are the only issues which it mentions. extract:--

which it mentions.

"The marked contrast which this presents with its utterances for a year past, and up to the first of August, is noteworthy, especially when we remember that its present expressions of policy are entirely voluntary and gratuitous. There is nothing to demand so sudden a stultilication, not even an indication of the party of the party is not the party in the party in the party in the party is not the party in the party in the party in the party is not party in the tion that any respectable portion of its party in-tended to bring up those issues. The World has made a wanton exhibition of its insincerity, and has forfeited all claims to the respect of the conscien-tions portion of its party. Either it was false in 1868, or it is false now. The dilemma is one from which

What precedes this extract is a perversion of the course of the World in June, 1868, !

when we had a series of earnest articles ad-vising the delegates to the Democratic Na- The winter season is the time when we get tional Convention to say nothing in the platform about negro suffrage in the Southern States. The reasons for this advice were presented at some length and fortified by many illustrations; but the main position of the World was, that the platform had better be silent on the negro suffrage then newly forced upon the South, because, owing to the great Republican majority in the Senate and the ong terms of the Senators, the Democratic party was powerless to change it. The whole reasoning of the World assumed that it was desirable to reverse the odious experiment if it were possible; that it was inexpedient to attempt it only because the endeavor would be abortive.

The chief pivot on which our arguments turned on that occasion was the cardinal doctrine of the Democratic party, that the regulation of the suffrage belongs to the States, and not to the Federal Government. Before negro suffrage existed in the Southern States. adherence to this principle would have pre-vented its introduction; but after it had been introduced, it equally forbade the interference of the Federal Government for its removal. In the state of affairs then existing, we could neither ward off the evil nor redress it; it was too late to assert the doctrine of Federal non-interference for a preventive purpose, and impossible to so change the political complexion of the Senate as to leave the Southern States free to remedy the evil for themselves. We therefore advised acquiescence in an odious and abominable system. on the ground of sheer necessity; thinking that, since the Southern negroes were certain to vote, it was wiser not to interpose obstacles to their voting on our side.

A public journal must be stupidly obtuse or thoroughly dishonest to charge us with inconsistency and insincerity because we are still willing to prevent negro suffrage when it can be prevented, though we counselled acquiescence in it in the Southern States on the ground that there was no practical remedy. As if a farmer were compelled, in consistency, to set fire to his house, because incendiaries had got ahead of him, and made it impossible to save his burning barn.

Negro suffrage cannot be prevented in the Southern States; and even those States which stood out in the most persistent opposition to it, have at last concluded to acquiesce in the inevitable. But negro suffrage in the State of New York is not inevitable, and is certain to be defeated. If, unfortunately, we should prove to be mistaken in this opinion, we shall quietly accept the result, and forbear further opposition when opposition shall have become manifestly futile. Our position now is precisely what it was in June, 1868, when, in one of our articles on this subject, we said:-

"Had our New York Constitutional Convention, last year, completed the draft of a constitution and sub-mitted the question of negro suffrage to the people, the Democratic party of this State would have op-posed it with all their might. But if, in spite of all we could do against it, it had been adopted, we should probably have regarded the question as settled, and have made no attempt to reverse the de-

To acquiesce in negro suffrage when we must, and defeat it when we can, has been the uniform counsel of the World to the Demoeratic party, through all the stages of this tedious and now nearly obsolete controversy. We expect to defeat it in New York as a State regulation, and if the fifteenth amendment should fail, as we confidently believe it will, the regulation of the suffrage will remain with the States, and cease to be a Federal question. We congratulate the Democrats of this State that the negro question will this fall be presented as an issue in our elections for the last time. The tears all lie in an onion that will be shed at its burial.

THE WELL-SPRING OF MORMONISM.

From the N. Y. Times. Not very long ago Mr. Hepworth Dixon wrote a book to prove that the morals of the American people were falling into a sad condition, and in support of his statement he referred to the existence among us of Mormons and one or two other eccentric sects. His object being to produce a "sensation, without much regard to other considerations he neglected to inquire where the Mormons originally came from. We believe his attention has since been called to the fact that England and Wales constitute the great recruiting-ground of Mormondom. Future writers who follow in Mr. Dixon's steps will do well to make a note of facts ignored by the author of "Spiritual Wives." On Monday, for instance, 429 Mormons arrived at this port. About half of them are women, and there are also many children. They appeared to be under the impression that it is only a wicked invention which includes the practice of polygamy among the articles of Mormon faith. This faith is very carefully nurtured by Mormon agents abroad—in most of their sermons and public addresses they assert that a man is not allowed to take more than one wife. They would never entice so many honest women to Utah but for this pretext. But the point we wish to impress upon Mr. Dixon and his imitators is this:-Nearly all the 429 emigrants who came bound for Utah this week, were gathered from various parts of England and Wales. Wales is a stronghold of Mormonism. The Mormons emigrate to Utah because hitherto they have found greater seclusion and cheaper land there than England could afford them. Why not, then, treat Mormonism as a blot upon English morals? Why make America responsible for it? There are more Mormon meeting-houses in Wales and England than could be found in all the United States. But if Mr. Dixon had written a "spicy" book about his own countrymen they would have been able to detect his exaggerations. He pitched the scene 4500 miles or so away from England, and his romance is taken as a sort of new revelation. In the face of facts like that just mentioned, it may be doubted whether any respectable writer will repeat Mr. Dixon's daring ex-

GOLD GAMBLING. From the N. Y. Herald. To the outside world, unacquainted with the mysteries of gold gambling in Wall street or Broad street, the rise in the price of gold within three weeks from 1313 to 1373 must be very puzzling. They naturally look for some cause, some extraordinary drain of gold from the country, some heavy balance of trade against us, a general failure of crops, or something else, and are astonished to find none. Indeed, at the very time when the premium on gold might be expected to fall considerably, in consequence of the small balance of trade against the country and the abundant crops now coming in, it has gone up over six per cent. It was supposed a few weeks ago that the premium would be down by this time to twenty-five, and there is no commercial, financial, nor any other good reason why it should not have fallen to that or lower. The crops generally are abundant, as was said, and from the cotton crop alone there will be realized a surplus of two hundred millions or more of gold. This society product for the present year alone is worth of s nearly four years' yield of the gold him mines. Then our mines produce steadily and

out of debt to foreign countries for imports tions, and we are now approaching happy condition. If the premium goes up it summer, when we are geiting in debt, there might be some reason for it, but certainly there is none at the present time. On the contrary, it ought to go down to a low figure. The rise and fall of gold has nothing to do with the condition of the country. All the fluctuations are the result of gambling by few individual capitalists or stockjobbin firms. Yet the whole amount of gold held by these, and through which they influence the market, is not more than a few millions A small margin is all that is used for sales of millions upon millions. Such bogus transac tions would not be tolerated in any other business. All are done on paper or by credit, with or without the smallest sort of margin in gold, between a few individuals. Is it not absurd that such operations should regulate the market value of gold, and, as a conquence, of other things as well?

But the question arises here, How are these bulls and bears in gold to be killed off? How is their gambling to be stopped? It is difficult to reach the evil, if not impossible, by proscriptive legislation or by taxing their operations. Perhaps the Government may have to find a remedy in some other way. The question may arise as to the necessity of demonetizing the precious metals and of making a uniform paper money currency. There is no doubt that our present mixed currency, and the demand of the Government for gold duties on importations, are the indirect cause of gold gambling. If gold were not in demand for the payment of duties, and we were to have a uniform legal-tender currency used as money for all purposes, the gold operations of Wall street would cease. It will be difficult to reach specie payments, however much gold there may be in the country, so long as these gamblers have control of the market, and, therefore, it may become a question whether the Government should not, for a time at least, demonetize gold and make a uniform legal-tender currency as the only money of the country.

THE HABITUAL CRIMINALS ACT AT WORK. From the London Saturday Review.

The Habitual Criminals act is fairly in operation. Some of its provisions have been put in force during the past week. Several men have been sentenced to imprisonment with hard labor, for periods exceeding two months, as a punishment for assaulting the police. It is this principle of the new act the enforce-

ment of which will become known sooner, and make a wider impression, than any other. The "roughs" of the metropolis have so long been accustomed to pummel and kick the police that the application of the longer sentences will produce the same effect which a chiffney bit produces on a vicious three-yearold. Some of their kind it will entirely subdue; others it will irate to madness. In some districts the new law will produce profound quiet; in others, angry and vindictive reprisals. But the provision for punishing these assaults on the police, though an important, is not the most important, part of the new act. The distinctive characteristic of the act is that it has swept away one of the most timehonored prejudices of English criminal law. How often have not we all heard the effective appeal to the jury and the audience which vibrated in the words, "Every Englishman is innocent until he is proved guilty!" How often has the most practised criminal-the prisoner of eight or ten previous convictions -been covered by the shield of this principle, not only from every proof of former guilt, but from every hint at it. He might have come out of prison for the tenth time; but the most indirect allusion to his former life would have been denounced, not only as unfair, but as illegal. And how much of the roaming, roving, aggressive crime of the day do we not owe to the liberal spirit in which this principle was interpreted and carried out! Now, however, there is an end to the excessive latitude both of its construction and of its influence. The man who has been the subject of previous convictions will no longer profit by the studied reticence of the criminal law in his behalf. Part of his sentence, when he is found guilty, will be that he remain under the observation of the police for seven years. During these seven years it will not be sufficient for him to escape detection; he must also avoid suspicion. If after a second conviction such a man be suspected by any police officer of getting his livelihood by dishonest means, then the onus will lie upon him of rebutting this suspicion. If he fail to show that he is earning an honest livelihood, he will then be subject to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, with or without hard labor. The same punishment will hang over him if he be found lurking or

nission of, certain crimes. This is so great a novelty in our criminal procedure that it is not to be wondered at if nany people have not yet become reconciled to it. And it is one which requires a very urgent necessity to justify it. Severe as the new law is, we yet believe it to be fully justified by the condition of things which provoked it. When the old principle to which we have referred was first broached, the crimes of modern culprits were only accidental, not a trade. For the highwayman and the armed robber there was speedy and summary punishment beyond the scope of actual The class of offenses now brought under the severer cognizance of law is the slow growth of wealth, trade, and civilization. It was only when commerce and wealth had greatly increased that they offered, or seemed to offer, an adequate compensation for the labors of a life devoted to their plunder. Robbery of various kinds became a profession only when its professional gains balanced its dangers and privations. The profession existed a long time, while its professors still were regarded only in their individual, and not in their corporate, capacity. It is only after more than a century's experience of the strength and vitality which numbers, combination, and training give to systematic lawlessness, that we begin to view them in their real character. And it was high time that such a change should take place. When men passed three fourths of their lives in undergoing and qualifying for imprisonment, there was a humorous but mischievous irony in persistently treating them, after every new conviction, as casual backsliders from the path of virtue. The rogue was equipped by the law with the armor of an honest man to fight against society. He was as much an enemy as i pirate, a freebooter, a levier of black mail. But, though everybody else knew this, the judges and the jury were not allowed to know it, except under restrictions which would be unintelligible to continental tribunals. In recognizing his real character, society only uses the most obvious means self-defense. It simply deprives of a privilege which he of a should possessed, and

have

loitering about premises with the evident in-

tention of committing, or aiding in the com-

which be used to the injury of all about him. He is now to be watched, as a dangerous heast is watched, and to be imprisoned if caught attempting mischief. It must be a very distorted philanthropy, or a very mudoled notion of constitutional rights, which can see in these provisions any danger to the illerty of the subject or any damage to the character of honest men.

Two other provisions of the act are very important, and are essential to its operation. One relates to lodging-houses in which thieves are harbored. The other, to the receivers of stolen goods. It is obvious that men who live by theft must have auxiliaries and confidants. Money and jewels are useless to the most dexterous thief, unless he has some one to whors he can entrust his booty, and some one to whom he can sell it. His lodging-house keeper is the guardian of his person and his plunder; the receiver is the capitalist, who turnishes the reward for past, and the incentive for future, pillage. If there were no one to purchase stolen property, there would be no thieves. The vocation would die of pure inanition. Nothing perhaps so clearly exemplifies the slowness of the British intellect as the length of time it required to master so simple an idea. The trade was obviously a most lucrative one. A thief, worried by fears of detection, carrying with him the evidence of his guilt, was not likely to haggle about the price of his booty, even when he knew its value; and a man who was able to give ready money for it, and would hold his tongue might easily get it for a sixth or a tenth of what it was worth. It was impossible not to find tradesmen whom prizes of this kind would tempt to a systematic collusion with larceny and burglary. Accordingly, a trade grew up which numbered in its ranks many persons who passed for respectable in the world's opinion, and whose seeming respectability was guaranteed by the then state of the law. There was many a pawnbroker who had his decent suburban villa, who discharged the duties of citizen, ratepayer, and vestryman to the satisfaction of his neighbors, but who was more than suspected by the police of habitually purchasing stolen goods. The reverence formerly paid to these whited epulchres is dissipated by the new Act, which extends the consequences of a second conviction to receivers no less than to thieves, and enables a police officer to enter any premises in which he believes stolen goods to be concealed. It also imposes a penalty of ten pounds on the lodginghouse keeper who knowingly harbors thieves. together with a deprivation of license when the landlord also keeps a tavern or beer-

Thus, it will be seen, the act cures grave omissions of our criminal procedure, and gives new securities to life and property. At the same time it must be admitted that it confers great powers on the police-powers which, in the opinion of some persons, are unconstitutional and dangerous. It is quite possible, as they argue, that a man may be twice convicted of robbery or violence and yet may not justly come within the definition of an "habitual criminal." In such a case, they contend, it is unfair to subject him to the supervision of the police. We cannot see the force of this reasoning. A man who, despite two convictions, determines to be honest and to redeem his character, will be encouraged rather than discouraged by the consciousness that he has constant witnesse of his desire and efforts to reform. If he is sincere, he will find, not an enemy, but a friend, in every intelligent and right-minded officer of the force. And he will also find in the force a strong protection against the attempts of his former mates to seduce him back into the paths of crime. Moreover, it must be remembered that the vigilance of the police will be mainly directed to watching not the subjects of two, but those of five, ten, or twenty previous convictions. Nor should it be forgotten that a man of generally good character, who has drifted into crime, is not wholly dependent on his treatment by the police for his future career. Such a man will be aided, not only by the good opinion of his friends and neighbors, but also by the seasonable sympathies of that excellent association which has done so much to dispel despair from the mind of the reformed convict, and will now, we doubt not, redouble its endeavors to facilitate his return to an honest and respectable life.

Of course this act may be abused by stupid or wicked and malignant policemen. Of course it is possible that a spiteful policeman may worry a repentant criminal back into crime. But the possibility is minute; and it may be rendered infinitesimal. The remedy for the apprehended evil is to be found in the characters of the inspectors. No man will be subjected to such cruel persecution who lives in district which is under the guardianship of an honest and sensible inspector. And if ever the time comes when Colonel Henderson can have his pick of men of character and intelligence wherewith to fill the ranks of the London constabulary, it will be his duty to select only such as may be presumed to be incapable of meanness and cruelty; as it will now be his duty to purge the police at once of men proved to have abused their powers for the gratification of eruel, sordid, and vindictive feelings. But the qualifications of a good policemen, and the training necessary to ensure them, are subjects worthy of separate

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