

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Continued Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

WANTED—ST. GEORGE.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

In that most venerable of histories wherein are chronicled the triumphs of the seven champions of Christendom in their warfare against all "Pagans, infidels, and enemies of the God of Heaven," most notable mention and mastership is given to St. George, not alone for his invincible prowess, for his enchanted steed Bayard, and sword Ascalon, but for that he was "clothed with all gentle graces, that he was by day or night the courteous knight, of rare and princely behavior."

Nowadays there are no burning dragons or witch Kalybs for the champions of Christendom to overthrow. The conspirators against decency, civilization, and heaven must yet in legions; but St. George with his Barbary armor and enchanted lance would cut but a ridiculous figure before them. Our champions rout them manfully, one by one of the dark host, slavery, bigotry, and unbelief has gone down, or is to go, before the modern weapons of the pen and tongue. St. George and his compatriots needed physical strength and skill to meet their ghastly foes; but our knights must attack their spiritual enemies with spiritual forces; faith in God and man, shrewd mother-wit, and, above all, months like Aaron's, that will speak well. It is, as we all know, not only by their tongues they set forth the civilization, the lofty truths born into the world, during the days of dragons and witches: it is in their words, their graceful lives and presence, dignified by all nobility of manhood, that we find the old-time St. George, with his poor courtesy and effort at gentle grace set aside and utterly thrown into the shade as the rude type of a rude era.

Conceive that most grave and courtly knight, with his pure virgin lady Sabra, making a pilgrimage through the United States to witness the signs by which this rare civilization and progress of the nineteenth century manifests and justifies its life. Imagine the finely-toned manners, the rare courtesy, the gentle dignity of speech by which they would be instructed and warned of the new brotherhood among men. Do they take up a journal of the foremost thought in the central city of civilization intended for the morning supply of mental food for cultured men and delicate women? Eight of the twelve columns are devoted to "Heavily Murders," "A Thief's Games," "Chopping a Man to Death," or the details of "Burns' Pit," and accurate descriptions of the chewing therein of trained rats by a man. But hold! here is a history of a noble charity wherein homeless babes are taken in and cared for. Here the knight, whose vow was to protect the weak and helpless, can surely learn a novel lesson from these later times. Our modern champion finds it and reads it to him: "The lovely lady Sabra was presented and wore a gown of silk trimmed with gold color piping, and bestowed her wroathed smiles on all. The Secretary was ravishing in blue velvet, etc."

If St. George should fall in these dashes here and there by that most Christian knight Jenkins to detect any symptom of progress, or of the rare and princely behavior worthy of a country and an age which have spent their best blood in the cause of freedom, and loosened the chains of four million slaves, let him enter the halls of Congress and hear the daily discourse of men who represent and govern that country and that age. Here, doubts, in the wise benignity of words, in the stately gravity of bearing, he will find the reflection of that day of the world, a day more noble than any which Plato knew. He hears the lie given and taken without a grimace; he hears this man accused of bribery, another of theft, in the same language which he heard in the New York slums, and finally, at the mysterious words, "Shoo fly! don't bodder me," thinks it better to go down to the slums at once, and learn from the shoe-black teachers what Congressmen only give him second-hand.

But on the way, Sabra, let us suppose, desires to find a convention of her own sex, whereupon they journey to Newark. Women, no doubt, with the wider culture and lofty glimpses into truth afforded by the many passing centuries, have risen to the heights of strength and serenity to which the fair and gentle maiden of that past barbarous age can only look up in hopeless envy. Their desire, too, to assume the place and duties of man can only arise from the fact that they have conquered all those of their own: that in purity, refinement, tender womanliness they have no more to learn. Sabra seats herself in a chattering, turbulent crowd and hears one of her sisters announce that "Man was the whale; Jonah in his stomach was woman; and man would find it plenary hard to keep her swallowed." Another sister varies the figure and defines "man as a little Almighty in boots." Convinced that the language of these oracles is figurative and capable of some divine interpretation, Sabra gives it up and comes away. Where shall we direct the sanguine knight to take her for the clearest glimpse of our modern civilization? Shall we invite them to peep in the back door of H. R. H.'s bedchamber with us, to count over his collars and socks and finger his jewelry? or to the galleys to gloat over our next treat of a dangling wretch who dies game?

Or shall we honestly ask ourselves if there is not some altogether noble and gracious thing owned by this knight of the grave and gentle speech which we have almost left in our hurrying progress; a something which is fast becoming a lost art in our schools, our legislation, our women, and we had almost said our churches; the manner kindly, simple, and true, the speech, gentle and courtly, by which the champions of Christ honored him, their brother, and themselves. Shall we take a lesson from St. George?—and if we are willing, where can we find him or his likeness?

PRINCE ALFRED IN INDIA.

From the London Spectator.

If Prince Alfred will only keep himself from feeling bored, or even from expressing his feeling, his visit to India will, we think, be a decided success, a ceremonial worth much more than the very economical sum which is said to have been assigned to it, and which Lord Mayo has supplemented out of his private purse with more than Irish frankness. It is quite evident to anyone who reads the accounts of the Prince's reception with understanding that the natives are pleased with the visit, and they greatly enjoy that form of pleasure—a pageant which is also an honor being a native's idea of enjoyment—and they got too little of it. We objected very strongly to the waste of £10,000 of Indian money on the Sultan's reception, a pageant no native would see, but a little money spent in India on highly-colored scenes, on durbars and processions and coronations—the investiture of a native Prince with his regal office should

resemble a coronation—would, we believe, well repay a help to remove the native complaint, that British rule is like the sky, dulcet when it is most fertilizing. Calcutta has a million of people, and a trade of forty millions, and wealth untold, and does not see a pageant, a display either of pomp or power, twice in a generation. This is the harbor from the singular tone which the city, the third in importance in her Majesty's dominions, has for more than a century persistently maintained. Partly from the character of the people, ninety per cent. of whom are Bengalees, Coreays, or foreigners, partly from the remarkable absence of distress—actual hunger being nearly unknown—and partly from the conviction of the upper class, that whatever the merits or demerits of British rule, it means wealth for them, Calcutta has presented since 1790 the singular spectacle of an enormous city which is at once a capital and a port, which is ruled by foreigners, which contains from fifty to sixty thousand men who are fighters by trade, yet are not in Government service, and which has never yet seen a serious riot, or indeed a riot of any kind. Troops, we believe, have never yet been called out in Calcutta, and the swarming native town remained throughout the mutiny as quiet as the deck of a Queen's ship. No honor of the ceremonial kind, and especially no honor from the throne, can be said to be undesired by such a capital, and it is clear the people considered the visit of the Shahzade to be one. They turned out in thousands, sat with that marvellous patience which is to the Hindoo what resignation is to the Christian, for hours in the sun, cheered in their way with the sharp, shrill cry which suggests a half sob in the burrah, and lighted up at night with the best-tempered unanimity. There is not a trace in Calcutta of the Venetian feeling towards Austria, nor was there the slightest mark of any in the princes who had gathered together from the more warlike provinces to receive the Queen's son. Sindhia, it was said, was out of temper because he did not have a guard of honor—very like a duke wanting one—but he was not out of temper with the Prince, and everybody else came down to the festivities radiant with pleasure. It will be the same all over the Northwest, in Agra, in the heart of the mutiny districts, everywhere a deep sense of gratification will be both expressed and felt; and it may be worth while to explain, or try to explain, why it is so, why a race which, if it saw a chance, would expel the British to-morrow, and which, if it waits a thousand years—what is a thousand years to a race that never forgets and never changes its mind?—will expel them in the end.

It seems to us, however, that all those who have taken part with the line in the present dispute commit the error of confounding rank with command. If our readers will recall the letters on "Naval Discipline," addressed to the Times by a line officer, they will note that these letters take for granted that the two terms "rank" and "command" are synonymous and interchangeable. The very noticeable articles in the Washington Chronicle, which also argues the line side of the question, assume this same premise. One of these articles, we remember, declared that it was "detrimental to discipline to give the staff high rank, that a staff officer, having no command, can perform his duties as well without this rank as with it," and that it is "very injurious to discipline to so weaken the power and importance of the commanding officer." In like manner, the bills introduced by the line into Congress, regard this interdependence of rank and command as the key-point of the discussion. Such, also, it would seem to be from the evidence taken before the Naval Committees. And, in like manner, General Sherman says, in the letter we published on Friday:—

"I don't want to go to sea in any vessel with more than one captain, when in case of accident he will be the only one left to command, and he will not be clearly prescribed by law or naval custom."

Here then we come to the pivotal point in this prolonged and bitter controversy. Is rank equivalent to command? And does it follow that in conferring higher rank on the staff than they now enjoy we must perforce give them actual control of any ship in which they may chance to outrank his officers? If these questions must be answered affirmatively, obviously the staff claim must be denied, as those officers never have received the training necessary to command a ship. But, on the other hand, if these questions can be answered negatively, it seems to us that the line argument falls to the ground, and the privilege asked for must be conceded.

Now, what are the facts in the case? In the army, as General Sherman tells us, "all our staff officers have actual rank. They hold commissions from the President as generals, colonels, majors, captains, etc." But does this possession of rank carry with it a command in the field? Not at all. An Article of War expressly provides as follows:—"If, upon a march, or in quarters, different corps of the army shall happen to join or do duty together, the officer highest in rank of the line of the army, marine corps, or militia, by commission, then on duty or in quarters, shall command the whole."

Will it be pretended that such an arrangement is not equally feasible in the navy? Cannot the very regulation which confers rank also divest the staff of command? It certainly can, and in that case the line argument vanishes.

Now, in actual practice, in our army, "so long as a line officer is present for duty, he must command." General Sherman tells us that "if frequently happens that a captain or lieutenant commands forces in which are 'surgeons, paymasters, quartermasters, etc.' with commissions of colonel or major, who must obey his orders." Now, why may not the same be true of a captain or lieutenant in the navy, who has surgeons, paymasters, engineers, etc., under him, with commissions of commander or commodore? Why should this latter rank prevent them from obeying his orders?

General Sherman's letter, rightly interpreted, is not an argument for the line, but a very strong argument for the staff. He says:—"If by conferring actual naval rank on the surgeons, paymasters, engineers, etc., the power of the captain, executive officer (first lieutenant), or of the officer of the deck is diminished or made doubtful, I would consider the change very damaging to the service." But as he immediately shows by the army rule that this diminution of power need not occur, he robs his own hypothesis of all its force.

We repeat once more, that the staff claim is one that will bear the test of strict investigation; and it is therefore a great pity that, instead of confining themselves to strong points, some of its advocates go off into unpatriotic tirades against the whole service.

ANOTHER EARTHQUAKE IN SAN FRANCISCO. From the N. Y. Herald. We had some details Saturday morning of another earthquake in San Francisco and at various other places over a large area of the State of California. It occurred about noon on Thursday last. The duration of the shock was seven seconds, and its direction was from the southeast to the northwest. An instantaneous panic was of course created by the dreadful visitation, and there was the usual unceremonious rushing of the people into the streets on such occasions; but so far there are no reports of any loss of life or destruction of property from this subterranean tidal wave of liquid fire. Real estate, however, in San Francisco will not be enhanced in value by this unwelcome intruder, for the uncertainty as to the time and strength of the next vibration will make speculators in town lots and houses dubious about investments in a city liable without warning, and within the short space of ten seconds, to be shaken to pieces. The case would be different if this were the first shock "within the memory of the oldest inhabitant," because there is hardly a place in the world which since its occupation by man has escaped the warning of an earthquake, either directly upon the place or near enough to suggest that there is no place on the dry land absolutely safe from such disturbances. Old Egypt, for instance, which one would suppose to be dead for thousands of years to the pulsations of earthquakes, had a shaking and waking up some seven or eight years ago, very much like this latest sensation at San Francisco. But these California earthquakes have been sufficiently frequent during the last six or seven years to convey the idea that in that quarter they are a sort of chronic disease, never absolutely dormant, and certain to break out in some terrible paroxysm when least expected, even after many years of comparative quiet.

We incline to the opinion, however, that the Pacific seaboard of California, and all the States lying west of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains, lie west of the direct line of these volcanic forces, which run along or near the backbone of the continent from Patagonia into Mexico, and thence through Arizona and Nevada on the east side of the great mountain chain which divides that State from California; and thence by way of the volcanoes of Oregon and of Washington Territory into British Columbia. It was only a few weeks ago that they had in Nevada a very extensive and a very lively earthquake. Indeed, all that immense desert region, in its general character, lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada, and known as the Great Basin, abounds, as Fremont expresses it, in evidences of "fracture and violence and fire."

We are informed that the general direction of this latest earthquake at San Francisco was from the southeast to the northwest. This would indicate that it was an offshoot from the main volcanic gulf stream, if we may so express it, which flows under Sonora, Arizona, and the Great Basin, from Mexico and Central America. As the crust of the earth, however, judging from the surface, is from four to five thousand feet thicker, even in the valleys of the Great Basin, than at San Francisco, that city, even in a side movement from the main volcanic continental current, is liable to suffer. Accordingly, we abandon our effort to show that San Francisco is in no danger, and can only commend the citizens to build no more four-story houses and no more brown-stone fronts, and to sleep down stairs convenient to the front door for four or five years, and meantime to go ahead with their business affairs, trusting in Providence that after their late earthquakes they may be exempt from such dreadful disturbances for many years to come.

TAMMANY. From the N. Y. World. The ring has defied the better fame of Tammany not less than the good repute of Democracy. Tammany is an old and honored name in the history of the Democratic party. It must be rescued from the dishonor of its later days. Its subjection to the ring oligarchy must end. Once again it must count its adherents in New York city wherever Democrats are counted.

From the despotism of the ring which is ruining Tammany the honest Democrats of the State as well as of the city demand that Tammany shall be redeemed. Powerful by the number of its adherents even now, strong in its identity with the origin and the history of the party, it is weak only in the selfish, sordid rule of the ring. The Democratic masses no longer rule in Tammany. The ring rules Tammany, and is ruining Tammany. The sordid selfishness of the ring has driven from the walls of Tammany many capable and incorruptible Democrats, whose influence is entitled to weight in the councils of the party, but who, by being driven off to outside organizations, are deprived of voice in the conventions of the State and the Union.

Tammany cannot afford to lose these men from its ranks, for the word Tammany should be identical with the New York City Democracy. A little can Tammany afford to take guidance from the ring, instead of from the votes of the real representatives of the city Democracy.

The General Committee must be the representatives of the Democratic masses, not the registers and dummies of the ring. The World's war upon the ring is not a war upon Tammany, but, of course, includes a fight to redeem Tammany. Victory over the ring will be the redemption of Tammany itself from ring rule, the restoration of its rightful influence and authority with the voting, tax-paying Democracy of New York city, and its old estimation in the State and Union.

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