SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

THE DEMORALIZED DEMOCRACY AND THE PROSPECT OF PARTIES.

From the N. Y. Herald.

Only the other day a future full of power and promise seemed possible for the Demo-cratic party. Its success had spread from the city over the whole State; and as it was advised with no small sagarity, and had a general harmony of purpose, it appeared not rash to forecast its possible triumph in the next contest for the Presidency. But what a bubble all that promise was! What has be-come of the hope that the Democracy might once more act on the nation as a great, united harmonious, honest, liberal party? As the hope was built on the appearance the party presented in this State, what is left of it even hero? Only four or five snarling factions. We have "the ring," or recognized Tammany leaders; the silk stocking would-be leaders, under the general direction of Mr. Sammy Tilden; "the boys"—that is, the Jimmy O'Brien and Mike Norton party; the union Democratic organization and the country Democracy. The countrymen know and care all about the jobs in the rural and frontier districts. Canal jobs, for instance, are their specialty. Only leave them the manipulation of all the little bits of profit and plunder to be made on the canals, and there will be harmony so far as relates to them, for they relinquish even opinion with regard to the city. But with the city factions it is quite another story. They all want everything, and the simple reason of this is because not one of them sees anything nobler or better in success than that it will give the spoils to the winner. There is no pure motive, no exalted purpose, no national spirit, and, therefore, no great mind; no organizing, conquering brain, for great intellect is not produced in a party whose struggles are always the same mean, mercenary scramble.

Mr. Sammy Tilden, it is true, in declaring

to the contrary, calls our attention to his own elegance; but, alas for Sammy's argu-ment, it has been known that men have worn silk stockings who yet had very empty heads. It is the same with his reference to the 'liberality" of the august Belmont. Something else is necessary to consolidate a great people around a party platform beside the habit of tossing cash to the groundlings, though one can hardly expect men of Sammy's calibre to understand this. We even think that Sammy ought not to drag his "liberal" Democrat of the past into the arena again; for we do not doubt that our former Minister to the Hague would now distinctly concede that "shent per shent" has fairly failed in American politics. At a time when a country is standing in the very atmosphere of heroic achievements; when the women still wear crape for the hundreds of thousands of gallant fellows who died for the flag; when the people have freely made illimitable sacrifices in their persons, in their comforts, in their very liberties—all to secure the supremacy of an idea—at such a time it seems to us a little less than decent for a party to come forward with a financier as its head man and to announce that this gentleman is ready to make the most liberal terms. Cannot they refer us to anybody but their banker? Before a people pulsating with a reinvigorating sentiment of nationality it is scarcely handsome to present even the silk stockings of Sammy Tilden as the finest things extant. Yet what else does the Democracy proffer? Is it the noble disdain of law, order, and honesty that characterizes "the boys"—that young Democracy which is sowing its political wild oats in the city by the windows of the temple breaking the windows of the temple of Jus-tice, and presenting the statue of the poor old goddess standing on her head. Alas for the Democracy! Is this really all there is of

it in the country? There were weak points in the Republican party. It presented some signs of decay. It was the instrument through which the nation asserted its purposes in the recent great contest; but its vitality seemed eaten out by the corrupt traders who had abused it to their selfish designs. It is still, however, most in sympathy with the popular heart. It has the advantage of appearing to the country in the person of a man nobly identified with the greatest phase of the nation's existence-a soldier, a hero, a patriot; simple-minded, pure, without other ambition than to serve the country well. This is better than for a party to appear only in the person of its financial man. Grant does not dazzle the admiring eye with the brilliancy of his state-craft; but that is not what the American people want. Who is it that is carrying the nation onward in its straight course of peace and prosperity? Who directs the policy that puts money in the people's pockets? Under whose government is gold coming to par, and the debt growing perceptibly smaller month by month? Such points as these are the ones that are vital to this nation, and they indicate that the truest glory and best safety of the republic are in the continued supremacy of the party that governs with men like Grant.

TO LIVE OR DIE?

From the N. Y. Times. The Democrats have at length quite satisfied themselves of one important factnamely, that the mission of the Republican party is fully accomplished, and that hereafter it has neither a cause to excite enthusiasm in its favor, nor principles to give it vitality. This is the way in which some politicians are prone to speculate on the chapter of accidents as affecting their rivals. They say of a man who is a stumbling-block in their path:-"He is getting old, and cannot last very long. Besides, he has finished the work on which he set his heart, and now there is nothing else left for him to under-take." When the rival happens to be a true man, and not a makeshift, this kind of prophecy always ends in the disappointment of those who indulge in it. A man's life is never over until he is dead, and a political party

never dies except by its own hands. We are not surprised to find the Domocrats proclaiming that the hour has come for the Republicans to quit the field, but it is strange to see Republican journals ranging themselves on the same side. When the 'reconstruction process is fairly over," one paper gives us to understand, the destiny of the Republicans will be fulfilled. It would be just as reasonable to assert that when we have done with reconstruction it will be a sign that the world is coming to an end. Is it seriously supposed by our Republican friends that no more great problems of government are likely to con-front us?—that we shall never see vast diffi-culties occurring on which a considerable part of the nation will be divided in opinion? A party exists, not as the advocate of one particular cause, but as the representative of fixed and imperishable ideas. These ideas may be contested afresh to-morrow on some issue which no one has yet foreseen; and the great advantage of a permanent organization is that it always stands ready to meet any omergency. The good work to be achieved

reconstruction question. It extends far into shall be promptly paid by them?
the future, and embraces objects and ends Congressmen have taken good care to raise which we may not divine, and which we may not live to see, but which, nevertheless, must eventually occupy all the foreground. The party of progress, as opposed to the party of reaction and obstruction, can never be said to have exhausted its work. The Republicans who say, "Let us ask a decent burial of our foes, for there is no more for us to do in the world," can never have truly realized the expansive force and the undying vitality which a party acquires when it is based upon the theory that all men should find equal protection under the laws, and that we ought not to rest contented with a government until it has redressed every injustice of which great bodies of men may reasonably complain.

The Democratic plans for the future fore shadow a policy which nothing but our Re-publican organization can effectually frustrate. We are identified with an honorable payment of the debt, and with the cause of good and impartial government all over the country. But, besides the programme which could be sketched out to-day, there are all the unknown possibilities of the future to rebuke the reckless proposal to dissolve the party. In politics, no less than in other affairs of life, no man can tell what the morrow may bring forth. We only know from all past experience and all analogy that as one great question is "settled" another will arise before us. Was the mission of the English Liberal party accomplished when it reformed Parliament in 1832, or when it abolished the corn laws, or when it decreed the disestablishment of the Irish Church Is it ever at a loss for a subject on which to fight the Tories-or is not rather the press of such subjects so great that no living man can hope to deal with them all? The case is precisely the same with us. We have settled the slavery question, and are on the eve of closing the whole subject of reconstruction-but will no other events occur in the United States after that? Are the principles which brought the party into being now all withered and lifeless? Every man who looks around him will

answer, No. The Democrats are for reversing most of the legislation of the last five years-they say in their hearts, "Wait till we get into power, and then see how soon we will undo all that the radicals have done." We are in the position of a man who has built and furnished a noble mansion, and who is advised by his friends to leave it totally unguarded, after being warned that his enemies have completed a plan for seizing it. We have to defend the work of our hands. It would be an act of treachery without parallel in party history if we Republicans, as a party, now retired from the strife and allowed our foes to remain masters of the national destinies. All the evils of the past would be repeated in a still more disastrous shape. We should have made almost superhuman sacrifices for nothing, and shamefully betrayed that large section of the people who confided their interests to us. The last state of such a people would be worse than the first. But the Republicans, notwithstanding the advice of doctrinaires, would never consent to this infatuated piece of perfidy. They will strive rather to render their organization more perfect and more worthy of the great issues which will inevitably present themselves for settlement in the

A SACRED DEBT-PAY THE JUDGES.

From the N. Y. Sun. Nothing is more essential to the protection of the rights of the people than an independent judiciary; and to have an independent that they have no occasion to look outside of their salaries for the supply of their pecuniary wants. It is also necessary that their salaries be fixed and certain-at least that they be not liable to reduction; then the judges know what to calculate upon.

Our fathers, who were wise men, understood this matter, as they seem to have understood almost everything pertaining to the true principles of government. They accordingly provided, in the Constitution of the United States, that "the Judges, both of the Supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office." The Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States have accepted their offices under this pledge; and the faith of the Government— the faith of the whole people through the Government—stands pledged to its mainte-nance. Has it been fulfilled?

If a man promises to pay a thousand gold dollars, and he pays instead a thousand pewter dollars, does he fulfil his promise? You might as well ask whether if a man promises to pay a thousand dollars and pays a thousand cents instead, he has fulfilled his promise. Whether it be an individual or a Government, it is all the same in point of

Now, our Government went into operation on a specie basis, the salaries of the Judges were fixed on a specie basis, and when the older members of the present court accepted their places on the bench, nothing but a specie basis of payment was supposed pos-sible ever to be adopted. Yet a depreciated currency has been palmed off on these venerable men in payment of their stinted salaries, and in lieu of the gold and silver which they had a right to receive.

This is a plain violation of the Constitution. It is a principle of law, and of equity too, that a wrong shall not be perpetrated by doing that indirectly which cannot be done directly. The salaries of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court are fixed by law at six thousand dollars, and the Constitution, as we have already shown, provides that these salaries of the Judges "shall not be diminished during their continuance in office." When they were fixed, specie was the basis. The people, through the Government, contracted to pay the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court each six thousand dollars in specie. That was the legal construction of the contract. Now what difference does it make whether, in the face of this constitutional prohibition, of this positive stipulation, you compel the Judges to accept two thousand dollars instead of six, or compel them to accept a depreciated currency, worth only one-third the amount of specie Is it not, in substance and effect, one and the same thing? And yet the Judges have been paid for years in a currency which at one time fell as low as three dollars to one in gold, or only one-third the value of specie.
Will any one contend, in the face of these

facts, that the constitutional provision has not been violated? that the salaries of the

Judges have not been "diminished during their continuance in office?" And will not Congress make amends for this injustice?

Will they not repair the wrong by passing an act providing that the deficiency shall be made up, and that the arrearages due the

Judges in consequence of their having re-

their own pay—as, indeed, pay in all branches of labor has been raised—and to make it proportionate to the depreciation in the currency; but never a thought have they given to the patient, laborious, useful Judges. Yet Con-gressmen are not debarred from other lucrative occupations, as the Judges are. If they are lawyers, they may still practise their pro-fession; but this is forbidden by law, and very properly, to the Judges. At the same time, the salaries of the Judges, considering their eminent talents and learning, are very small. Many a lawyer receives, in a single case, fees amounting to as much as the aggregate sum of a Judge's salary for five years!

Look at the learned, excellent old Grier, as he could be seen one year ago, when his body was too feeble to walk alone, tottering, sup-ported by a man, to and from the court—his mind still clear-and remember that he adhered too long to his laborious duties on the bench because, honest and poor, he had been cheated out of half his honest salary. Look at Nelson—we shall not look upon his like again-after he has spent half a century o findefatigable labor in nobly administering justice to others, shall this pitiful injustice be done to him?

But it is not alone by paying the judges in a depreciated currency that their salaries have been diminished and the Constitution has been violated. Their salaries have been further diminished by deducting from them the odious income tax. Congress has no power to tax the salaries of the judges. "The power to tax," says Chief Justice Marshall, 'involves the power to destroy." And certainly Congress can have no power to destroy that which it has no constitutional power to

We respectfully invite the attention of the Committee on the Judiciary, both in the Senate and the House of Representatives, to the principles which we have stated. Mr. Lawrence, of Ohio, is also an able man and a sound lawyer; what has he to say on the subject? And we should suppose that the sense of justice which habitually prompts Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, would lead him to look into the matter.

THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT. From the N. Y. World.

Certain inspectors of election in Western New York, acting in the spirit of a too eager bridegroom who might regard a betrothal as equivalent to a marriage, and be too impatient to wait for the ceremony, have been ad-mitting negroes to the ballot in the town elections. It is questionable whether these political nuptials with the black race are allowable at all; but there can be no question that the enamored parties are at least bound to await the forms of law.

The duties of inspectors of election in relation to colored voters are defined by the statutes of the State. They are to require a colored person offering to vote to take an oath by which he swears (among other things) that he possesses a freehold estate of the value of two hundred and fifty dollars above all debts and incumbrances, and that he has been actually rated and paid a tax thereon within the preceding year; and on no other condition can his vote be received. We quite agree with the observations of the Rochester Union on the conduct of the inspectors who have violated the law in receiving negro votes, and hope measures may be taken for bringing them to justice.

We do not, however, feel quite so clear that our respected contemporary is right in the opinion it incidentally expresses—or rather implies without formally expressing that after the fifteenth amendment is declared adopted, an act of Congress will be necessary judiciary the judges must be well paid, so | for carrying it into effect. If the amendment itself is null in consequence of the Southern ratifications being extorted, any act of Congresss to enforce it would be equally null, and would deserve no more respect than the naked amendment. If this State decides to obey such a law if it should be enacted, it thereby decides, in effect, to be bound by the amendment; and as Federal interference with our elections is on all accounts undesirable, it would be better for the State to adopt that course which would reduce such interference to a minimum. If we are going to accept the amendment when Congress passes a law to enforce it, it would be wiser to comply at once and take away any pretext for Congressional intermeddling.

The chances of successfully resisting the operation of the amendment after it is declared adopted, are very slender. Foreible resistance is not to be thought of. If the validity of the amendment is contested in the courts, the prospect seems quite hopeless in view of the fact that when the vacancies in the Supreme Court are filled the Republicans will have seven of the nine judges. It is better to let the miserable agitation over the negro end here than to supply it with further aliment by a bootless contest in which we are certain to be defeated, and which would not only give the radicals the advantage of another triumph, but enable them to enlist all the newly-made colored voters in their ranks.

If the fifteenth amendment is valid at all, or is to be practically acquieszed in as valid under any circumstances, no legislation is necessary either by Congress or the States in order to give it effect. Every amendment which becomes a part of the Constitution repeals, proprio vigore, all State laws and provisions in the State constitutions which are inconsistent with it. The Constitution says of itself that it "shall be the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary not-withstanding." If the fifteenth amendment, when declared adopted, is to be regarded as a part of the Constitution, then the State judges will be bound by their oaths to disregard all State laws which make any difference in the rights of voters founded on race or color. A colored man whose vote is refused will have the same remedy as a white man. The courts of justice cannot decline to hear his complaint and grant him redress. The law for protecting the rights of voters in this State is in these words:—"If any person shall deter any elector of this State from giving his vote or ballot, or disturb or hinder him in the free exercise of the right of suffrage, at any election in this State, and shall thereof be convicted; such person, so offending and convicted, shall be adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor, and be fined or imprisoned, according to the discretion of the court before which such conviction shall be had; such fine in no case to exceed five hundred dollars, nor such imprisonment one year." If a person should be arraigned for preventing a negro from voting, and should plead the law of the State in justification, the court would disregard the plea if the fifteenth amendment should be held to be a part of the Constitution. tution.

If there is any method of successfully thwarting the fifteenth amendment, we hope it will be promptly pointed out and well supported by arguments; but if no such method

by the Republican party is not bounded by the | ceived their salaries in a depreciated currency | can be stated and put in a convincing light, it is not expedient to provoke Congress to pass oppressive and intermeddling election laws by a show of impotent opposition which will turn the whole negro vote against us.

THE CHURCH AND STATE MOVE. From the N. Y. World.

There has been of late a convention in

session at Pittsburg engaged in drawing up an indictment of intidelity against the American people, specifying that said people have no recognition of God in their fundamental law. One of the articles of this indictment or, to put it as the convention put it, one of the resolutions adopted, refers to the neces sity of affording "the fullest security against a corrupt and corrupting church establish ment;" by which, we take it, the convention means to allude to that Catholic faith pro fessed by so large and respectable a body of our fellow-citizens. Now, we means to com pare divers of the resolutions adopted by this convention with certain of the canons in the schema lately put forth in connection with the Œcumenical Council, and desire the careful attention of the reader to the exhibit thus made:-

CANON XVIII. Whosoever says that the power necessary for the government is grounded, like rememt of a civil State does of not emanate from God, or man as a social creature; that one is not bound by and that it has its powers bivine law to submit himself to such power, or that such power is repugnant to the natural liberty of men, let him be anathema.

PITTSBURG.

Resolved. That civil government is grounded, like the family, in the principles of the nature of man that it has its powers and functions thus determined by the Creator, and is, therefore, like the family, an ordinance of God.

Resolved. That civil government is grounded, like principles of the nature of man as a social creature; and functions thus determined by the Creator, and is, therefore, like the family, an ordinance of God.

ma.

CANON X. Whosoever as sovereignties wielding says that the church is moral as well as physical not a perfect institution, power, and having moral but merely a corporation, as well as material effects, or that it is of such a nature, with regard to civil society or the State, as to be subject to temporal power, let him be anathement to our national Constitution so far from attention at the sound so far from a such as a such as a such as a such as a such at the such as a s

ment to our national Constitution, so far from institution, so far from

The worthy gentlemen who met at Pittsburg, and drew up, among other resolutions, those above set forth, would doubtless consider if a very grievous thing were any to charge them with seeking a union of Church and State; and yet see how closely the utterances of these gentlemen who express an abhorrence of that doctrine agree with the declarations of those other gentlemen at Rome who do really believe in Church and State, and are, therefore, consistent, at least in their opinions as above given. So remarkable a similarity, much as it may griove our Pittsburg friends, does mean Church and State; and that meaning is intensified by the fact that prominent in that convention were such well-known politicians as J. W. McClurg, Governor of Missouri; General O. O. Howard of the Bureau; and Bishop Simpson, of the Methodist Church. We beg these gentlemen, and those others with whom they are associated in this matter, to have a care as to what they do. This country has already griefs enough, without bringing in as a fresh dis-traction the blood-stained old dogma of a union of Church and State.

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