

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

DISORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

From the N. Y. Herald.

Looking at the enormous wealth and wonderful development of the material interests of the country on one hand and at the disorganization of political parties and the consequent rush for public plunder on the other, it is evident there is going to be such a carnival of extravagance as we have never seen before.

True, we hear something occasionally from Congress of retrenchment, of reducing the taxes or of modifying the tariff a few millions; but this is a bagatelle compared with the vast and now necessary expenditure, and is used merely by Congressmen for political capital in their districts at home.

The consequence of this state of things is that all are scrambling for public plunder. Those representing the iron and coal interests of Pennsylvania, the manufacturing interests of New England and the land-grabbing railroad interests of the West, are intent upon making the most for themselves and their sections, regardless of the general welfare of the republic.

These remarks, though intended for the Federal Government especially, will apply as well to the State of New York and to our city government. We must be asked heavily—that is inevitable, but the wealth of New York is accumulating so fast that the people can bear it. Only let us have something to show, as we said before, for the cost.

will be in accordance with the present order of things and the mighty future of our country.

CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY.

From the Albany Journal.

We regret to see in the Troy Whig charges of conspiracy against the friends of ex-Senator Morgan. The allegation that there was a conspiracy to put Folger ahead at the expense of his associates is not warranted by the figures.

We submit to the Republicans of the State that it is time all such suspicions and allegations were abandoned. We have enough to do to whip the enemy without beating ourselves.

THE REFORM OF THE BAR.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

The organization of a reform association by the members of the legal profession in this city was a sufficient acknowledgment of the corruption of the New York bar, were no other evidence at hand.

The legal profession of this city comprises all classes, from the faithful advocates of simple justice to the Tombs "slyster" who divides a greenback with the first unfortunate panel thief.

and year after year do, gain admittance through the examining committee before their course is half over.

The argument that by admitting all applicants we secure the worthy and only have to wait for the others to stare out, is a faulty one. For men, especially lawyers, die hard; and it is this gasping for professional life, this struggle for the necessary legal bread, which compels many to degrade themselves and their profession.

BLUNDERING LEGISLATION.

From the N. Y. Times.

It is undoubtedly necessary to give effect by legislation to the fifteenth amendment, but a grave blunder will be perpetrated if this purpose be made a pretext for creating fresh disabilities, or for enacting penalties more harsh and vexatious than the circumstances of the case require.

The Republicans of the South have honored themselves in nothing more than in the moderation—a moderation in some instances amounting to magnanimity—with which they exercised the power conferred upon them by law. They had the opportunity, in the formation of the State Constitutions, and in the measures which legislative majorities subsequently enabled them to pass, of imposing tests and qualifications that would have produced extensive disfranchisement.

WILL GENERAL GRANT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF LAST TUESDAY'S ELECTION?

From the N. Y. Sun.

The national interests and the national honor, backed by public opinion, call for an immediate change in the State Department. The Cabinet needs reconstruction otherwise, but in other departments the demand is not so pressing.

We have gone further than this; we have not only been made to cringe before the threats of this crumpling despotism, but have built gunboats at her bidding, and furnished her with warlike munitions, wherewith she might crush the struggling patriots of Cuba, who have simply emulated our example by setting up republican institutions and abolishing negro slavery.

We have been even lower still; for we have looked on with closed mouths, and hands hanging listlessly at our sides, while the myriads of Spain have shot and garrotted American citizens, who were guilty of no crime but loving liberty and denying the independence of an island lying right by our shores.

For a century, and a half England has maintained her place among the leading powers of Europe, chiefly by the spirit she has shown in vindicating the rights even of her humblest subjects when violated by foreign States. However perilous the circumstances which confronted her, she has been ready, at whatever cost of treasure and blood, to stand by her people whenever and by whomsoever their liberties were put in jeopardy.

THE SORROWS OF INTESTACY.

From the N. Y. World.

The addition to the sum of human misery, and much more to the general stock of human malice and all uncharitableness, which has been effected under color of those devices by which the law attempts to secure to a man the right to the disposition of the worldly goods which the Scripture and our senses assure us he cannot carry away with him, has been so grievous as to some minds to appear to be much more of a nuisance than a benefit, and to cause sundry cynics to wish for a remission of society in this respect to a state of nature; or, in other words—

That they should take who have the power, And they should keep who can. That pleasing Celtic tenure which left property to be ostensibly scrambled for, at the expiration of its possessor's earthly incumbency of it, by all his immediate and remote kindred indiscriminately, and which has had the effect to propagate that countless horde of the heirs-at-law of ancient kings whom we encounter in our twilight rambles through the numerous groves of the Sixth ward or other Celtic settlements of this metropolis, has seemed to such observers more consonant to reason and to justice than the modern system of devisal which, while it does not diminish the frequency or the scandal of such scrambles, necessitates such scrambles to be pursued under the forms of law, and substitutes spitefulness of spirit and uncleanness of conscience for the broken heads of an earlier and simpler administration.

That a man by no means escapes these posthumous outrages, however, by abstaining from making any will at all, is made plain by the investigation now in progress into the pecuniary affairs of the late Captain Alexander. That lamented person derived his title from a nautical career, in the course of which he had accumulated much money, and acquired an eccentricity of temper which induced him, among other things, to insist upon carrying the evidences of his possessions slung about his neck in "two bags."

The daughter of the late Mr. Alexander interposes at this point with proof that, within a short time of his death, her father had been in possession of an amount five or six times greater than the amount his late landlady admits to have taken from him, which it was his habit to carry in two receptacles, instead of the one she admits having taken from him; and that, being notified soon after his death that his daughter was a claimant for his estate, his late landlady refused to deposit with any responsible third person the amount then in her hands, pending a decision upon her right to it.

Against this evidence the happy family of admittedly aggrieved Gardiners have only to swear, which they all conscientiously do, that the eccentric and intestate Alexander had declared his intention of "making them comfortable," and that when, in the article of his death, Mrs. Gardiner "looked and out away the bag" which held his money, he "fell back with a most heavenly smile, as if he was fully satisfied that it had gone where he wanted it to go."

It may be observed upon this that, granting the Gardiners to be the most "fit and desartless" persons to judge and testify of the meaning to be attached to this smile, a man who was capable, in his last moments, of expressing so elaborate a sentiment in so unmistakable a way by so simple a contortion, was an irreparable loss to the comic stage. One would think that a "heavenly smile" was not the exact expression with which a dying man would greet a person who refused to wait for his death to despoil him. This par-

ticular "heavenly smile" must, therefore, have meant either that the smiler was anxious to pay a second time, and at an exorbitant rate, for several years of a Harlem boarding-house, or else that the mere sight of the landlady of his boarding-house sufficed to call up that celestial expression. Either of which is inconceivable.

THE TRIUMPH OF LAY DELEGATION.

From the Methodist.

After eight years of unceasing effort, the Methodist has the satisfaction of announcing the triumph of lay delegation. The East Maine Conference, the last in the United States to declare its opinion, has given a vote of 44 for to 14 against. This, with the surplus available, secures the necessary three-fourths, even though the vote of the Gormany Conference should be unanimously against. But such a vote in Germany is not supposable; on the contrary, all our advices leave us to expect that the vote of our brethren in Europe will be unanimously for us.

And so the great debate of fifty years comes to a peaceful conclusion. The movement, suppressed in 1828, reappears in 1851, is pronounced inexpedient by the General Conference of 1852, offers its modest petition in 1856, and meets with sufficient favor from the General Conference of 1860 to obtain a reference to the vote of the ministry and people. The Church is not yet ripe for lay delegation; the people and the itinerant ministers vote it down. Undismayed by defeats, its friends begin again, and rest not till they win the Church over to entire acquiescence in their opinions. Beginning with the John Street meeting, in March, 1863, and from thence to the St. Paul's convention in New York; thence to the convention of 1864, the first ever held simultaneously with a meeting of a General Conference, and the first also to present a direct address to that body; from thence to the sessions of the Annual Conferences immediately following, which were successfully appealed to to ratify the pledge given by the General Conference; and thence to the Convention of 1868, also meeting simultaneously with the General Conference, and presenting to it a second direct appeal, and finding its appeal welcomed, and thence to the recent popular and ministerial votes—the movement has found an ever-growing acceptance of its principles and purposes by the Church. Its array of friends has increased; its line has become longer and stronger; they who had hitherto cried "faction" have been effectually silenced. Here is no faction, but a great Church, whose stations are found in both the old world and the new, ratifying and incorporating into its polity a fundamental principle of Protestant Christianity.

It is to the honor of the laity that, while engaged in promoting this change in our ecclesiastical polity, they have sustained with entire fidelity the institutions of Methodism. Since the defeat of 1861-2, and the inception of the last and successful effort, they have entered into the church debt-paying movement, and have contributed for its purposes more than thousands; they have brought the missionary contributions of our connection to their present unprecedented amount; by their liberality they have made the Centenary of American Methodism a memorable fact in modern Church history, and they have increased their individual benefactions to the cause of education, both in numbers and amount. First and last, they have been for the Church; were they defeated to-day, they would still be for the Church. In all their weary waiting, they have had faith in their brethren; they have had faith in God.

We will not mar the happiness of such a time as this by speaking at length of the opposition which lay delegation has encountered. It was natural that the motives of the friends of our cause should be misunderstood, and they have been misunderstood. It was natural that there should be harsh criticism of their proceedings, and harsh criticism there has been. But we can point to the fact of a fundamental change in the polity of the Church, effected without convulsion, without special party organization, and without the manifestation on the part of its advocates of party passions. They have laid restraint upon themselves that they might win their cause—and they have won it fairly, honorably, and Christianly.

We have reason for rejoicing too that the travelling ministers have fulfilled the pledges given by them to the people. Despite the efforts made to mislead them they have not been misled. They have kept faith, and have served not from their steadfast integrity. The future historian of the Church will dwell upon the fact of the cheerful assent by a compact and powerful corporate body to the claim of the people to share the government with them. It will be proof that in at least one instance of Church history the long and undisputed possession of power has not darkened the sense of justice. As we always said they would, the Methodist ministry have shown themselves equal to this great test. And so the new era hopefully begins.

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