Evening Telegraph

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PHILADELPHIA

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3 31/50 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1870.

THE EVENING TELEGRAPH, from Its original establishment, has been in the receipt of telegraphic news from the New York Associated Press, which consists of the Tribune, Times, Herald, World, Sun, Journal of Commerce, Evening Post, Commercial Advertiser, and Evening Exbress. The success which has attended our enterprise is, in itself, a sufficient evidence of the freshness, fullness, and reliability of the news which we have received from this source. Last March we entered Into a special contract by which THE EVENING TELEGRAPH has the exclusive use of the news furnished in the afternoon by the Associated Press to its own members, the North American, Inquirer, Ledger, Press, Age, Record, and German Democrat, of this city, and the leading journals of the East, North, West and South; and hereafter THE TELEGRAPH will be the only evening paper published in this city in which the afternoon despatches of the Associated Press wiil appear.

The earliest regular edition of THE EVENING TELEGRAPH goes to press at 11 o'clock, and the subsequent regular editions at 21, 31, and 41. Whenever there is important news of the progress of the European war, extra editions will be issued after this hour, and before the regular time for the early edition.

710N.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVEN-WE are glad to notice that the proposed Convention continues to attract the favorable attention of a number of journals in the interior, and that the necessity for a radical revision of the fundamental law of the Commonwealth is generally acknowledged. The ultimate success of this movement will depend in a large degree upon the spirit in which it is conducted and the character of the delegates chosen by the people. It is possible that the Constitution might in some respects be injured instead of being improved, and weak or bad men would affect a Convention as injuriously as they affect the Legislature. What is needed is that the best members of both parties should make an earnest endeavor to promote the interests of the people, and if the voters of Pennsylvania improve the opportunity likely to be presented, this great end can be secured. But already hints are thrown out that some of the Democrats will make a desperate effort to have the Registry law abrogated by the convention, that attempts will be made to overthrow some of the existing restrictions upon corporations, and in various other ways private axes will be ground. It is far better, however, to incur the risk of such dangers, against which the people have the sure safeguard afforded by an opportunity to vote down an obnoxious new Constitution, than to suffer the present Constitution to remain unamended. It is vitally important that deliverance from the existing evils should be energetically sought, and in addition to the various reform propositions to which we have heretofore referred, it is perhaps desirable that provision should be made for the election by popular vote of a Lieutenant-Governor, as well as for a restraint of the pardoning power, which has been sadly abused by our Executives. The most important object to be obtained, however, is the reformation of the Legislature. If a plan can be devised whereby good men can be sent to Harrisburg to pass good general laws, they will correct evils as they are developed from time to time. We know of no constitutional change which seems so likely to effect this end as an increase in the number of members. Practically this system works well in New England, many of her best citizens being every year chosen as legislators. The objection is made in some quarters that an increase of the number of members would convert the Legislature into a mere mob; but the proceedings of the National House of Representatives, containing nearly two hundred and fifty members, British Honse of Commons, which contains more than six hundred and fifty members, and of the National Conventions of the Republican and Democratic parties, prove the fallacy of this objection. In large deliberative bodies men of real talent generally attain leadership, donkeys and imbeciles are coughed down, and comprehensive measures of general importance are much more apt to be considered than petty private bills. In our present Legislature the real leaders are notorious mainly for their venality; useful public laws never receive attentive consideration; the public interests are habitually neglected; and the bodies now annually assembled in the Capitol at Harrisburg

larged membership seems to give to national

and the House of Commons.

THE DEMOCRATIC PROGRAMME. THE Democratic politicians of New York have made up their minds to claim not merely the leadership of the party, in a general sense, but the next Presidential nominee. To answer the objections likely to arise from Seymour's candidacy in 1868, with its disastrons consequences, the World alleges that that nomination was forced upon the last National Convention by the Western Demoeracy despite Seymour's protests and the opposition of the New York delegation. Tammany and Tweed have set their virtuous hearts upon the nomination of John T. Hoffman. He has been the serviceable tool of the rascals of his party in New York city and in Albany, and millions of money will be wrung from the New York tax-payers to promote the present intrigue for enthroning him at Washington. The Democracy of the future is to be embodied in Hoffman, Free-trade, and Tammany thievery. By the revenuereform movement, which has already weakened Republican strength in several important quarters, the Tweedites hope to promote the additional Northern defections which are necessary to secure Democratic ascendancy, while in the South selfish and wrangling Republican leaders are rapidly paving the way for the complete overthrow of the Republican party. Under this programme Pennsylvania is marked out as a victim from the outset. Her industrial interests are to be sacrificed for the benefit of the New York importing houses and European manufacturers, and the influence of her Democracy, in Democratic councils, is to be overshadowed by the commanding decrees of their triumphant New York brethren. These circumstances, however, fortunately increase the chances for continuing Republican ascendancy in Pennsylvania at the moment when the necessity for securing her aid in the next Presidential election becomes imperative. If the late Congressional contests are to be regarded as a test of public sentiment, the loss of the Keystone State in 1872 would be fatal to the Republican party. If she follows New York, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Virginia, Florida, and Alabama into the Democratic camp, the Democratic party will regain control of the National Government; and the great political necessity of the hour is to strengthen Republicanism in this Commonwealth. Since the attempt to redeem New York has proved a dead failure, there is no more important field for patriotism, prudence, and partisan efforts than this neglected Cinderella of the American sis-

A BUREAU OF NAVAL JUSTICE. PLATO wrote a rather extensive work for the purpose of defining justice, but the impossible commonwealth by means of which alone he concluded that abstract justice could be realized, presented a good many peculiar features that we Americans, who live under a republic that is some degrees removed from ideal perfection, would consider manifestly unjust. There is a good deal of injustice under our system, undoubtedly, and if abstract justice cannot be realized under either an ideal or a practical republic, the advocates for fair play and no favors may well conclude that they have a task before them as endless as that of Sisyphus. By a reasonable amount of vigilance in looking out for our own interests, we in civil life can, however, as a rule, manage to pass through the world without being called upon to seriously speculate upon Plato's problem; but there are a good many evidences to prove that in our military service, and especially in the naval branch of it, a clear and definite understanding of what the word justice means is sadly needed. It is therefore with a certain amount of satisfaction that we note the fact that the first steps have been taken for the organization of a Bureau of Justice-in the Navy Department, and we sincerely hope that the results it will achieve will be commensurate with the importance of the subject over which it will have jurisdiction. Candidly, we have no very great idea that this Bureau will immediately, at least, accomplish a great deal in the way of convincing officers who sit upon courts-martial that certain clearly defined laws of Congress, no less than the abstract principles of justice, ought to guide their decisions, and not their own individual or class prejudices. The whole present organization of the navy, its traditions and its system of training, which commences from the first hour that a midshipman sets his foot in the Academy at Annapolis, forbid us to hope that any average naval court-martial will be able to judge the offenses of an Admiral according to the same standard as those of a common sailor. A bureau presided over by old line officers, hardened in the traditions and prejudices of their class, is not exactly the place where a court-martial finding and sentence will be likely to receive impartial revision. But while our expectations of good to be accomplished by the proposed bureau fare not particularly exalted, we do expect considerable edification from the report which the Secretary of the Navy has ordered Rear-Admiral A. A. Harwood and Captain W. G. Temple to make for the information of Congress and the country. These officers have just been named Judge-Advocate and Assistant Judge-Advocate of the Navy, and their appointment is considered the first step towards the organization of a Bureau of Justice in the Navy Department.

ings and sentence in each case. If Admiral Harwood and Captain Temple do their work thoroughly, their report will be interesting if not agreeable reading, and it will prove to an astonished country that the proceedings, the findings, and the sentences thus lack the very characteristics which enof naval courts-martial in innumerable instances have been marked by the most flaconventions, the House of Representatives, grant injustice and violation of the rights of persons accused of offenses against military | in the "sugar season."

In order to provide them with employment

the Secretary has directed that they shall re-

view all the records of trials in the navy,

whether by general or summary courts, and

advise the Secretary in regard to the proceed-

law. To go no further back than the war for the suppression of the Rebellion, the records of the Navy Department will show how Secretary[Welles repeatedly set aside sentences of naval courts-martial because they were contrary to law, and how the stinging rebukes that he administered time and again to the officers comprising such courts were unable to produce any decided reform in the administration of naval justice.

As specimen nuggets from the mine in which the new naval Judge Advocate and his assistant have been directed to work, we may mention the case of Surgeon Greene, who was convicted and sentenced for the high crime and misdemeanor of refusing to declare a sick man well at the bidding of his commanding officer: the case of Lieutenaut-Commander Seely, who was convicted of outrageous crue ty to seamen under his command, and who was merely sentenced to a reprimand from the Secretary and to suspension for a few months;-this sentence was essentially the same as that in Dr. Greene's case, and it was only procured by the Secretary sending the findings of the court back for revision several times. It is worthy of note also that Seely's commanding officer, who was responsible to a great extent for his performances, was never put on trial at all; - and the case of Second Assistant Engineer William Pollard, who was expelled from the service notwithstanding the fact that not a single technical offense was proven against him. He was cashiered by a court-martial upon "general principles," because some of his superior officers considered him a nuisance in persistently sticking for his legal rights, and refusing to allow himself to be overriden. The injustice of the sentence in Mr. Pollard's case was recognized clearly by Congress, which passed a law at its last session authorizing his reinstatement.

The two first cases we have mentioned are tolerably familiar to the public, and they are excellent examples of the manner in which naval justice is administered in the different cases of line and staff officers, and an impartial public may well inquire, if such a discrepancy exists in the application of the rules of law and equity to line and staff officers of about equal rank, what must be the difference between the treatment that an Admiral and a common sailor are likely to receive from a court of naval gentlemen sworn to judge impartially according to the law and the evidence? That a Bureau of Justice in the Navy Department will accomplish much towards reforming the state of affairs we have indicated we do not believe, but if the report of Admiral Harwood and Captain Temple is properly prepared, it may call the attention of Congress and the country to a great wrong that ought to be remedied, and may prevent the passage of a law that will do away with some of the obsolete features of courts-martial that are disgraceful to the civilization of the age, and that will provide some system of trying persons accused of military offenses under which they may have reasonable expectations of receiving justice with as much certainty as they would receive it in the civil courts.

Ir anything can add to the satisfaction felt by the citizens of Philadelphia in paying that portion of their tax bills which goes to the support of the police, it will be the reflection that some of these gentlemen are so full of patriotism that the confines of the city and State are too narrow for its exhibition. To what better use can we put our municipal funds than the payment of men who foment riots at a Camden election?

THE NEXT HOUSE.

Its Pelitical Standing According to the Latest Returns—A Probable Republican Majority of 39. of 39. In the table below we give the result of the

charges for members of the Forty-second Congress, according to the latest returns received, the delegations marked thus (*) being estimated, as elections in these States have not yet been held. The standing of the House in the Fortieth and Forty-first Congresses is also 40TH CONGRESS. 41ST CONGRESS. 42D CONGRESS

Rep. Dem. Rep. Dem. Rep. Dem

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Florida 1	1		
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A full House c	onsists of 24	3 members	W
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the next House 39, and do not believe that later returns will materially reduce it.

-Pittsburg roughs find amusement in smashing \$150 panes of glass.

Parson Broderick's fee was four seed cucumbers for marrying a couple of Iowans. -A club of students in the Baptist Theological

Seminary at Chicago are boarding themselves at a cost for provisions of \$1 a week each. -A Western millpond is annoyed by a snake, sixteen feet long and as big as a stove pipe, which makes way with ducks and goslings with

perfect case. -In Utah "sweet clover" grows from six to ten feet high, and a shrewd Yaukee thinks a good thing might be made by tapping it for sap NOTICES.

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