

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

THE FALL OF FRANCE.

From the N. Y. Herald.

As the end of the present hopeless struggle approaches we are naturally drawn from France of the past to France of the future, "fallen from her high estate." The mind accommodates itself with difficulty to the novel conditions which reverse the whole previous current of history. Our eyes have been so long filled with the spectacle of a supreme and dominant France that they have long refused to see what must now be her place in the world. And we have had our hearts filled so long with the bright and happy thought of civilized nations living together in progressive peace that it has scarcely been possible for us to realize that the future of humanity, in the Old World at least, will be regulated not by that ideal, but by the very different one of the stronger, wiser, and more cultivated people holding down by sheer force those who have not reached such a height of moral and material force. But, above all things, we must study things as they are; and these shape themselves now for France and Europe in a way unexpected by which may yet prove beneficial to mankind.

The great point to be observed in forming opinion upon the future of France, and accordingly of Europe, is that her armies have not merely been defeated in the field, but the nation is subdued by the German nation. It is a vanquished people, and will soon be a completely subjugated land; nay, it is so already. That question was decided virtually when the provisional government determined to continue the contest with Germany after Sedan, instead of submitting at once to the decision of the frontier provinces. It is useless now for the most ardent sympathizers with France to regret what has happened. For it was not to be, with the splendid traditions of the great nation, that she should have confessed herself unable to expel the Germans after Sedan. Those who held the foremost rank in the world do not abdicate until sheer force compels. And, whatever be the future of the bright people of France, they will always be a nation, and more self-respecting for having tried a last desperate effort to save themselves after their wretched empire went down in shame and blood. This last noble and spirited appeal to the moral power supposed to be latent in the name and idea of a republic was a grand example of chivalrous though Quixotic exaltation of mind; and Frenchmen, while their language lasts, will be always able to say, "Our Paris and our France fell, but fell fighting to the last with face turned to the foe."

But the game is lost, and apparently lost, so far as human foresight can go, forever. The future Government of France, in the broad and radical sense of the term, will now be regulated according to the interests and determination of victorious Germany. The Germans are very thorough, very searching, very scientific in their theory as well as their practice; and it is not merely a king or an emperor or a diplomatist who will have to settle the future condition of France, but the scientific mind of Germany at large. Emperors and diplomatists will be but the organ of this vast general purpose of the Teutonic people. And we may be satisfied that the question will be dealt with not upon any humanitarian or cosmopolitan grounds, but the single principle of disabling France from ever renewing her attack again upon the united Germany which for the first time comes into political existence. It is not altogether the most pleasant idea in the world, but we may be sure that France will henceforward be dependent and disarmed, and that from the vantage ground of Metz and Strasburg the vigilant German mind and eye and arm will henceforward keep inexorable watch over the defeated people, repressing every tendency to military resurrection. Such government as France can form now will be the creature of the necessity of the hour, and virtually, though not formally, the offspring of the conqueror's will. And he will consist, first of all, his own necessity and interest, thinking only in the second place of the welfare of France.

It is very difficult to forecast so dark and uncertain a future, but at a moment when every intelligent man is asking what is to become of France, we cannot help trying to peer through the gloom to see if, haply, there may be some brighter thing beyond; and, so striving, we can see this at all events—that the best chance for the brilliant French is to be so watched and guarded from the revival of the military demon within them as to oblige them perforce to turn their splendid faculties and generous temper to culture and to commerce, to science, to literature, and to art. But the problem is one of inordinate difficulty, and to watch its solution will be incomparably the most absorbingly interesting object ever presented to the political and social observer. For hitheerto force has been the ruling principle in French politics, and her fanatical parties have fought war abroad to stave off mutual extermination at home. What will now happen when France will have that resource cut off altogether—now that she has no more and some means of settling her domestic affairs without recurrence to the stimulant and sedative—for it has been a sedative to France, queer as the thing may sound—of foreign war? How will her five parties of Legitimists, Orleanists, Imperialists, White Republicans, and Red Republicans live together in some form of common citizenship without the intermittent fever of bloodshed? How will French history write itself now that it can no longer oscillate between civil and foreign war? These are indeed grave questions, and wise would be the man who could answer them.

In the meantime it must not be overlooked that some of the most advanced minds among the Germans are beginning to propound very extraordinary doctrine upon these questions. They suggest that at the present day and in the present generation they are absolutely incapable of solution, and that it may be that German troops and German officials will have to remain for a generation or two in France to teach a new race of Frenchmen geography and good temper, and flavor the highly-seasoned French disposition with just a drop or two of humility, so that the French of the twentieth century may live in peace and amity with their neighbors. These advanced German minds declare that France cannot now govern herself; that she has tried it for a century and failed; that, in point of fact, she never did form a decent government; that her ancient regime was one long horror of violence and wickedness, and her revolutionary period has been but a succession of failures in domestic government, marked by assaults on her neighbors. These much-brooding Germans declare, amid the tobacco-fumes of those long pipes which seem to typify their

long-headedness, that it would be a sin and a shame to leave Frenchmen any longer to their own devices, and that they must place the whole people under their tutelage for a long time, until a generation arises which acknowledges that Germans are not barbarians and the old poison of egotism is expelled from French veins. All this seems extravagant enough, but the thought is there and will tell. To suppose that Germans will hold French territory indefinitely may seem a wild thing; but they are at least not likely to leave until they are paid their vast indemnity. And ever afterwards, at the very least, the German sword will hang menacingly over the head of France. But she will have great compensations. Freed from military burdens, she may grow rich with astonishing rapidity. And what bounds can be set to the intellectual victories which her brilliant people may achieve when culture of the German type is universal through the land? At the bottom of this dreadful Pandora's box there is hope, a bright hope, yet.

THIEVES AND DETECTIVES.

From the N. Y. Sun.

The method upon which the municipal detective service is conducted in the principal cities of this country requires a thorough overhauling and an immediate reform; for at present it is utterly demoralized in its tendency, and in many instances affords protection and encouragement to the most hardened thieves and transgressors. From the first introduction of the infamous "stool pigeon" system the service has been going on from bad to worse, until now its practical operation has become simply intolerable. We do not say that there are not honest and well-meaning men engaged in the vocation of detectives, although it is a wonder that any such are to be found under the system now generally in vogue.

Those who form their idea of the American police detective from the Hawkshaw of the stage, or the accomplished protean actors described in novels, know little of the actual facts. The American detective of to-day is a fashionably dressed gentleman with a propensity for diamonds, who is known to all the thieves and on the best of terms with the whole race of them. Philadelphia has the unenviable reputation of supporting detectives who are on more intimate relations with the criminal classes than those of any other city; but neither Boston nor New York is much behind in this respect, and it is not an unusual thing in either of the three named cities to see the detectives drinking and associating on terms of intimacy with the most notorious criminals. The result of such a course must be evident to all. The detectives will almost inevitably become more or less contaminated through their social intercourse with criminals, while the latter, finding themselves treated with familiarity and consideration by the official representatives of the law, grow bold and reckless in their operations. Thus they are encouraged to think that thieving is a pretty respectable occupation after all, and come to look upon robbery as a legitimate speculation in which they take certain chances, fully expecting to lose their liberty in case of failure, unless their friends of the detective force are able to help them out of their difficulty in return for money, valuable information, or other satisfactory consideration.

This intimate association of detectives and criminals leads, and is expected to lead, to mutual confidences; and the former, anxious to handle liberal rewards and achieve a reputation for smartness in their profession, frequently enter into agreements with the latter through which adroit and skillful soundrels are guaranteed immunity in their nefarious pursuits, in consideration of information given in relation to the misdoings of other and perhaps less dangerous rogues. Worse than this, it is not an unusual occurrence for innocent parties to be seduced into the commission of crime for the express purpose of being betrayed into the hands of the police; while the experienced criminals who lay the plans and tempt the victims escape scot free, with full liberty to plunder the public without fear of molestation. It is known to all familiar with police matters that it is not an unusual occurrence for thieves to divide their spoils regularly with detective officers in consideration of being allowed to pursue their occupation unmolested; while as a rule it is the detective who acts as go-between in the work of compounding felony in cases of bond robberies and other depredations where thieves come into possession of property which they cannot safely convert into money. It will at once be seen that with such a state of things the honest detective who seeks only to do his duty stands no chance beside the corrupt officer who, while stuffing his purse with the spoils of crime, by his double dealing and cunning contrivance to be betrayed continually before the public as a zealous and efficient officer in consequence of the frequent arrests that he makes.

Thorough reform is imperatively demanded, and the sooner it is done the better for all concerned. No detective, known as such, should be allowed to associate with criminals on terms of equality; and the fact of a detective being guilty of such association should be considered a sufficient proof of a corrupt disposition. The employment of known criminals to entrap others of their own class should be entirely prohibited. When the exigencies of a case require that the confidence of suspected or known criminals should be gained, outside parties should be employed to do the work under the supervision of experienced detectives, unless the circumstances are such that a regular detective can accomplish the matter himself without exposing his identity. And under no circumstances whatever should a detective or other police officer be allowed to have any part or lot in the recovery of property by compounding felony.

THE NEW PARTY.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

Nearly a year ago, there was a gathering of "revenue reformers" in Washington, and a bitter and determined enemies in Congress, witnesses would not testify, and the law would remain inoperative. Nobody supposes, of course, that the two Senators are not sincere in desiring reform, and that their bills are not meant to bring it about; but it may not be amiss to remind them that the introduction of just such impracticable measures as theirs is one of the means to which those who want to defeat a reform most frequently resort. There is no way so effectual of throwing its friends off their guard, and blunting the edge of criticism.

then Democrats. We promptly copied and called attention to these bulletins of victories yet unwon. The programme thus agreed on has since been carried out, to the extent of the planners' ability. They have, by the disfranchisement of the crippled soldiers in the National Asylum near Dayton, returned Lewis Campbell in place of General Schenck; they have exulted over the defeat of Messrs. Morrell and McCarthy by other protectionists; they have given over Illinois to the Democrats, beaten three out of four Republican Congressmen in Illinois; and would have beaten Messrs. Kelley of Pa., Bingham of Ohio, Ketchum of N. Y., and several other Republican protectionists if they could but have polled enough votes. On the whole, they have reduced the Republican strength in the next House by ten or a dozen votes, and have a joyful hope of beating two or three more Republicans by Democrats in the States which have yet to choose their Representatives. This is not, bad for a beginning.

The moment the November elections were over a more ambitious programme was put forth. The Chicago Tribune proclaimed, in effect, that old parties and old issues were dead; and that a new organization was destined to sweep the country. A free-trade Republican was to be chosen Speaker of the next House by the votes of all the Democrats combined with the revenue reformers, upon an understanding that the Democrats should have their say about the committee. The Evening Post, St. Louis Democrat, and others, assailed General Grant's administration more openly and virulently than before—the Post exulting over the increased Democratic (mostly Rebel) vote at the South, as proof of the unpopularity of the President. For a time the cabal—having eaten another and still better dinner in company—fancied that the world lay meekly at their feet.

But a change has come over the spirit of their dream. No tenor has been elected to next House can be named who do not scout the suggestion that they can ever be induced to vote with the Democrats to organize the House adversely to the great body of the Republicans. Nay, more: not half the Democrats are ready to vote for any man as Speaker who is not an avowed Democrat. And it is well understood that, should a majority of the Democrats undertake to plough with any strange heifer under the flag of revenue reform, a very strong minority, including nearly all the Pennsylvanians, will stubbornly refuse to be drawn into such a questionable alliance. It is probable that there are at this moment as many "pig-iron Democrats" as Republican free-traders elected to the next House.

Hence we note profligate assurances that the new party is indefinitely postponed—that the revenue reformers purpose to fight their battle inside the Republican lines—that they never intended to be other than Republicans, etc. etc. But, whatever they may have intended months ago, it is plain that most of the reformers now mean to call themselves Republicans for the present.

But, gentlemen, we submit, your notions of what adherence to a party implies are peculiar. The recent partial successes of the Democratic party are mainly your work. You handed over Missouri to the Democrats; your organs exulted over the defeat of Schenck, Morrell, etc., by Democrats; you have taught your disciples to detest the great majority of the Republicans in Congress as monopolists and plunderers; and those disciples therefore vote the Democratic ticket. Your nominal adherence to the Republican party can do no good so long as you tell the people that most Republicans are intent on subjecting them to extortion and robbery. We are used to such imputations from our open adversaries, and are little harmed by them; but, from men professing our political faith, they are more damaging and offensive.

POLITICAL BLACK-MAIL.

From the N. Y. Times.

Senator Wilson has brought in a bill to prevent the levying of assessments on office-holders for political purposes. It is creditable to the Senator's intentions; but we ought to call his attention in the strongest manner to the inexpediency of touching this subject at all without going to the root of the matter. A law against assessments, like the laws against bribery and usury, and many other laws which can only be proved to have broken them, must virtually be a dead letter. The person who pays the assessment, like the person who makes the bribe, is not likely to be a possible motive to reveal the transaction to any one; and yet without his informing and giving proof of the commission of the offense, no conviction for it can be obtained. The result of the passage of Senator Wilson's bill will therefore be, that while the country will have received fresh proof of the need of some kind of civil service reform, the statute-book will be burdened with one more inoperative law; and the public, or a portion of it, will, perhaps, be deceived into the belief that something has been done to remove the evils of the present system, when in reality nothing has been done. This remark applies in an equal degree to the bill brought in by Senator Trumbull last session, making it a misdemeanor for any Senator or Representative to engage in office-seeking at any of the departments, or recommending candidates for places, unless his opinion was asked by the Executive. No such act could be enforced. Heads of Departments would not prosecute. They could not afford to make bitter and determined enemies in Congress; witnesses would not testify, and the law would remain inoperative. Nobody supposes, of course, that the two Senators are not sincere in desiring reform, and that their bills are not meant to bring it about; but it may not be amiss to remind them that the introduction of just such impracticable measures as theirs is one of the means to which those who want to defeat a reform most frequently resort. There is no way so effectual of throwing its friends off their guard, and blunting the edge of criticism.

There is one general principle which is applicable to all abuses, for which individual legislation is responsible, and it is that instead of trying to punish people for doing wrong, we must take away from them the power of doing it. It is not generally recognized that the only way to cure the corruption arising out of special legislation is to take away from Legislatures the power of passing special laws "with money in them." There is no use in forbidding bribery as long as we leave it worth anybody a while to bribe. The way to prevent the sale or abuse of the power of nominating cadets at West Point, is to take it away from Congressmen altogether; everybody is now of that opinion. We cannot frighten the Whittierites and Butlerites by the threat of expulsion; they will always be ready to take the risk for the sake of the money. So, also, with regard to assessments on office-holders, and all the other abuses and corruptions attendant on the present system of office-seeking. The remedy for them is to relieve the office-holder from his obligations by his money, he will decline, and thus all necessity for prosecuting anybody and fining or imprisoning anybody on account of assessments will be avoided. Very few Government clerks would give any money for political purposes if they could help it. Their salaries are very small, generally too small; in the case of men with families dependent on them, wretchedly small. The reason why they pay assessments is either that they regard them as part of the price for which they obtained their offices, or fear that if they refused to pay assessments they would lose their offices.

Change the mode of getting and keeping places in the public service, and we reach the root of the difficulty, but it cannot be reached in any other way. The best members of Congress are almost as much disgusted with the present state of things as the office-holders and the public. To the men who are really occupied with the work of legislation, the whole business of finding places for party adherents is a dreadful bore and nuisance. The members who deliver a sermon from it which Mr. Kelley, of Philadelphia, put forth last winter, expressed the feeling of nearly every man in both houses whom the country is really interested in keeping there. A member who has his mind occupied—as every member ought to have his mind occupied—with the tariff and the currency, and the internal revenue, and the land grants, and the banks, and the Indian question, has neither time nor attention to spare for the work of getting the Browns into the Treasury or the Smiths into the Custom House. If this class of legislators could be allowed to settle the matter, there would be a speedy end to the whole nuisance. But the difficulty is that the number of those who owe their seats in Congress to persons whom they have undertaken to reward, and whose minds are constantly occupied with the readiest means of retaining them, is very great, and they are sufficiently opposed to any change to make change impossible, till it is demanded by a stronger pressure of public opinion than now exists. There is, however, hardly a Congressional district in which evidences of deep feeling on this subject do not begin to appear, and every year is sure to make it deeper. The great body of the voters do not want offices, either for themselves or their friends, and do not care who gets them, provided the work of the Government is properly done. But they do want the time of their members of Congress to be devoted to the public business, and they are beginning to understand very rapidly that until some change is made not over half of it, and in too many cases none of it, will be available for this purpose.

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

PHILADELPHIA AND READING RAILROAD COMPANY, Office No. 227 S. FOURTH STREET.

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 20, 1870. DIVIDEND NOTICE.

The Transfer Books of this Company will be closed on Wednesday, the 14th of December next, and reopened on Tuesday, the 10th of January, 1871.

A dividend of FIVE PER CENT. will be paid on the Preferred and Common Stock, clear of State tax, payable in cash on the 27th of December next to the holders thereof, as they shall stand registered on the books of the Company at the close of business on the 14th of December. All payable at this office.

All orders for dividends must be witnessed and stamped.

S. BRADFORD, Treasurer.

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS.

OFFICE—No. 104 SOUTH FIFTH STREET.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 1, 1870.

NOTICE.—All persons having claims against the Department of Highways, for labor done or material furnished during the year 1870, are requested to present them for payment on or before the 15th day of December, in order that they may receive the proper attention of the Committee on Highways.

MAHLON H. DICKINSON, Chief Commissioner of Highways.

OFFICE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY.

PHILADELPHIA, November 1, 1870.

NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS.—The Board of Directors have this day declared a semi-annual dividend of FIVE PER CENT. on the Capital Stock of the Company, clear of National and State taxes, payable in cash, on or after November 30, 1870.

Blank powers of attorney for collecting dividends can be had at the office of the company.

The office will be opened at 9 A. M. and closed at 3 P. M., from November 30 to December 3, for the payment of dividends, and after that date from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M.

THOMAS T. FIRTH, Treasurer.

FRENCH BAZAAR FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE VICTIMS OF THE WAR IN FRANCE.

To be held at the CONCERT HALL, from December 14th to December 24th, CHRISTMAS EVE.

An appeal is respectfully made to Philadelphia, the State of Pennsylvania, and all other States, to contribute in gifts or money towards our Bazaar in behalf of the sufferers in France. The ladies in charge of tables will gratefully receive any donations made in favor of the country of Lafayette and Louisbourg.

W. R. SHERIDAN, Jr., President.

C. JACOB, Secretary.

FARMERS' AND MECHANICS' NATIONAL BANK.

PHILADELPHIA, December 8, 1870.

The annual election for Directors of this Bank will be held at the Banking House on WEDNESDAY, the 11th day of January next, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 12 o'clock P. M.

W. RUSHTON, Jr., Cashier.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT AN application will be made at the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the incorporation of a Bank, to be entitled THE BULL'S HEAD BANK, to be located at Philadelphia, with a capital of one hundred thousand dollars, with the right to increase the same to one million dollars.

ALFRED C. HALMER, President.

MARTIN LANDENBERGER, Treas.

MICHAEL NISBET, Secy. 10 1/2 wfm gm

BRICKMAKERS' CLAY-SPADES AND TOOLS.

Miller's make, No. 309 S. FIFTH STREET, 12 1/2 wfm gm

OYSTER KNIVES OF FINE

Cast Steel, No. 309 S. FIFTH ST.

NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS.—A DIVIDEND OF FIFTY CENTS PER SHARE will be paid by the HESTONVILLE, MANUFA. AND FAIRMOUNT PASSENGER RAILWAY COMPANY, free of State tax, on and after December 27th next, at the office of the Company, No. 113 South FRONT STREET.

Transfer books will be closed December 15th and reopen December 31st.

CHARLES P. HASTINGS, Treasurer.

12 1/2 wfm gm

SOUTHWARK NATIONAL BANK.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 10, 1870.

The annual election for Directors will be held at the Banking House on THURSDAY, January 13, 1871, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 12 o'clock M.

12 1/2 wfm gm

P. LAMB, Cashier.

BATCHELOR'S HAIR DYE.—THIS SPLENDID Hair Dye is the best in the world. The only true and perfect Dye. Harmless—Reliable—Instantaneous—no disappointment—no ridiculous tints—Does not contain Lead nor any Poisonous Ingredients. It is the Hair or Society. It is the Hair and leaves it soft and beautiful; Black or Brown.

Sold by all Druggists and Dealers. Applied at the Factory, No. 16 BROAD STREET, New York. 12 1/2 wfm gm

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT AN application will be made at the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the incorporation of a Bank, in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth, to be entitled THE GERMANIA BANK, to be located at Philadelphia, with a capital of one hundred thousand dollars, with the right to increase the same to one million dollars.

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