

SPiRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

BOILER EXPLOSIONS.

The explosion of a steam-boiler is prima facie evidence of carelessness in its construction, or in its maintenance, or in its use. It is so regarded by the engineers, and ought so to be regarded by the law.

The history of boiler explosions is authentic and definite. The boiler has usually been erected under the full light of modern science. All the attending circumstances of the explosion have been immediately communicated to the public; curiosity has aided science in making every man an investigator of these circumstances.

Now the remarkable and unexplained result of all this investigation is not the division of any large body of experts into schools—but the universal conviction of all concerned that boiler explosions are certainly in most, and probably in all, cases the result of malconstruction or mismanagement, and of nothing else, and that the usual immediate cause is the unchecked deterioration of the boiler in service.

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Now that the causes of boiler explosions are so well understood as to be a matter of commercial calculation—where companies make money by insuring such boilers as are constructed and maintained according to established professional rules—it is to be regretted that the Government should stand helplessly by, and see scores of people sealed to death every few weeks for the want of an adequate law and a system of inspection.

GAMBETTA'S POLLY.

It seems that Mr. Gambetta is to be added to the long list of those statesmen who are admirable in speech and worse than useless in action. The members of the Provisional Government who remained in Paris have made the best attainable arrangements with the victorious enemy. A truce is provided for which with common prudence and discretion might result in peace and the final establishment of a settled Government in France.

The war, and it has not shown enough of the elements of permanence to exert upon the rural districts that powerful moral influence which in France exercises such unquestioned control over elections. Its only hope was in firm and resolute unity, and in a determination to cast aside all personal considerations and postpone all feuds until after the war.

The decree of the Bordeaux Government excluding from the deputations all members of the reigning families, and all those who have held office under the late Imperial Government, is a violent and wholly unjustifiable attempt to obviate the natural effect of Republican denunciations by prescribing to the people of France what votes they shall cast.

It is true, as stated in our despatches, that Mr. Simon has assured the journalists of Bordeaux, who with more discretion than their rulers have protested against this tyrannical decree, that the Government of Paris does not approve it, and will not recognize it.

ASUGGESTION FOR THE NAVAL STAFF. From the N. Y. Herald. It has been proposed, and very properly, that to transport the provisions intended for supplying France one or more vessels of the navy should be placed by the Government at the service of the committee having the charity in charge.

THE IMPERIAL RING. From Harper's Weekly. During the long Republican ascendancy in this State, the Democratic party constantly alleged that the city of New York had been virtually deprived of self-government by the system of commissions appointed by the Governor and Legislature.

There are in the city of New York four well-known persons—Mr. Tweed, Mr. Sweeney, Mr. Connolly, and Mr. Hall. They are the managers of Tammany Hall; and the most conspicuous of them, Mr. Tweed, has been described often and at length in one of the organs of his party in the city (the New York World), in terms which, if not justified by

knowledge, were the most wantonly injurious that could be applied to any man. And it is one of the signs of the power of which we speak that the World is now as bitterly the organ of the imperial ring as Paul de Cassagnac's paper was of Louis Napoleon. The four persons whom we have mentioned are the authors of the present city charter, which was passed last spring by the Democratic Legislature—many Republicans voting for it because of a registry law which Mr. Tweed permitted to pass for the purpose of procuring an appearance of unanimous support for his charter, and which he now intends to repeal.

The charter vests the executive power in the Mayor and the heads of departments. The Mayor is elected for two years; and the system by which Tammany controls what are called elections is notorious. The Controller is elected every four years. The heads and commissioners of departments are appointed by the Mayor to serve from four to eight years. The charter was passed, and took effect immediately. The Mayor was Mr. Hall, and he instantly appointed Mr. Tweed Commissioner of Public Works, and Mr. Sweeney the head of the Department of Parks.

The next step is now to be taken in the formal subversion of the popular system. The imperial ring has introduced a bill in the Legislature which constitutes the Mayor (Mr. Hall), the Controller (Mr. Connolly), the Commissioner of Public Works (Mr. Tweed), and the President of the Department of Parks (Mr. Sweeney) a Board of Apportionment, which, after providing for the interest of the city debt, and for the city's proportion of the State tax, shall appropriate all the pleasure all the money that is raised by taxation in the city. To make this extraordinary grant of power more acceptable, it is decreed that the amount raised in 1871 and 1872 shall not exceed a sum equal to two per cent. of the valuation already fixed for this year by the Commissioners of Taxes and Assessments.

Meanwhile, to divert public attention from this practical imperialism which the Democratic party has established, it imitates the Roman despots, in assuming the people with games and public displays, while they destroyed liberty. Thus there is a show of care about the public grounds, and of anxiety to complete the system of water supplies. There is an ostentation of charity to the poor. But while every man is glad that suffering is relieved, he shrugs his shoulders when he is asked if the money that relieved it was honestly gotten. While this is the outer show, the secret aim of the imperial ring is to dishearten opposition by showing its hopelessness, and to terrify capital by a relentless exercise of the mastery of property which the law can, but it spares no blow, open or secret, to cripple those whom it fears, and the terrorism is deepened by the public knowledge that certain judges upon the bench are the supple tools of this enormous and arbitrary power, so that the citizen is conscious that he is deprived of the last remedy of injustice.

Thus the result of the ascendancy of the Democratic party in New York is the destruction of popular government in the city, as it would have been in the country at large if the people of the United States had not chosen war as the least fearful alternative. Nor is this surprising. The Democratic party in its long national ascendancy was steadily hostile to the fundamental principles of a free government. It was a vast conspiracy to make slavery the fundamental law of the republic. That purpose required absolute national demoralization, and the great effort of the party was to produce it. A clear perception of the true spirit and principle of free popular government was fatal to Democratic dominance, and therefore the party ruthlessly sought to obscure it. In the city of New York while the party has never lost its supremacy, the men who guide it to-day are politicians bred either in total ignorance or in utter contempt of American principles. They are brought in constant contact with the most ignorant and venal men; and without faith in individual honor, and without the master-class of politics, they distrust mere honesty as hypocrisy, and undoubtedly despise "the people" and their representatives as heartily as Robert Walpole.

Any Democratic protest against this imperial power, whether from the mere adventurers of the party like the World, or from honest men who cherish the vain illusion that they can control it, is swept away like a leaf upon Niagara. To-day the protestants of last spring are, either like the World, kissing the imperial feet, or, like those honest men, lending the prestige of their names and the weight of their votes to schemers whom they utterly distrust, and to practices which they abhor. The imperialism of the ring is the rule of corruption by money and by fear. It is a plague-spot in the centre of the American system. It is the fresh attack upon American institutions and the benighted Democratic state of society without honest Democratic institutions. He thought it the worst form of tyranny. This is the spectacle which the city of New York now presents, and it challenges the thoughtful attention of every political student, as of every American citizen who is looking caudally to see with which party in this country the just development of the American constitutional and popular principle is most assured.

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