

SPiRiT OF THE PRESS.

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

THE NEW REIGN OF TERROR—IS PARIS STILL FRANCE?

From the N. Y. Herald.

Our news from France is quite sufficient to make the heart sick. No such disheartening news to those who loved the French people has been received in the memory of living men.

What is the situation? After a war of more than eight months France has been compelled to bow to the conqueror.

Her Emperor has been for over six months a prisoner in the hands of his enemies. His Empress and all those, including his son, who belonged to what was called the Regency, have been for the same space of time exiles in England.

As nearly as possible, four hundred thousand of the picked men of France, the best and most trusted generals of the empire included, have been, since Sedan, prisoners in fortresses absolutely under German control.

Since Sedan France has revealed no lack of pluck; but the six months' fighting, whatever we may say of the pluck, has served mainly to exaggerate France's misfortunes; and, what is more important still in the premises, the French people, accepting the fate of their country, have, in a constitutional manner, made peace with the conqueror.

They have accepted the terms imposed upon France by the German leaders, and, indeed, heavy, but the Germans went about their work with so much caution and consideration that no man of intelligence, no matter how much he sympathizes with France, can help confessing that the French people fairly tested and fully endorsed the peace policy of the government of M. Thiers.

It was the opinion of many thoughtful men that although the money demands of Prussia were something unprecedented, the demand for the cession of territory something more than humiliating, and the whole peace arrangement altogether too hard, France had magnanimously bowed and done the best she could do in the circumstances.

To-day every well-wisher of France and of the French people has changed his mind, and the universal sentiment is that the French are absolutely unfit for self-government.

It is a source of pride at this moment to be able to say "I am an American, or a Britisher, or a German;" but where is the man who is not ashamed to confess "I am a citizen of France?"

These questions are not by any means out of place in present circumstances. No one can tell what may happen. Anything—everything is possible.

monarchists, but more promising than they were two weeks ago.

Much will depend on circumstances which we cannot foresee. It is possible that the excesses of the mob of Paris will so disgust the order-loving people all over that France, as one man, will rally around the person of President Thiers.

WHICH PARTY SHOULD GOVERN?

From the N. Y. Times.

After all that we have passed through during the last few years, it seems quite incredible that Republicans should now be found laboring with might and main to place the Government in the hands of the very party which strove to break up the Union.

Such, however, is one of the unexpected "developments" of this very progressive age. Having shed blood like water for the sake of establishing certain principles, and endured fiscal burdens such as very few nations have been called upon to bear, we are now invited by Republicans to quietly surrender the Government to the Democrats.

And this advice is not offered to us under any misapprehension with regard to the objects and aims of the Democracy. To do the leaders and fugitives of that party justice, they let us know pretty plainly what they are driving at.

When they are very much under a cloud, they sometimes put a guard upon their lips. But they are just now fully convinced that they have no longer anything to fear. The dissensions of Republicans embolden them to come out with their "programme."

They want to "restore the Constitution" for one thing—and what that means, our experience during the war ought to have taught us. The great lawgivers of the Democratic party tried to convince the people that there was no authority under the Constitution to put down rebellion, and prevent the dissolution of the Government.

They attacked the same importance to their principles now as they did in 1861, while the Republicans, enervated by a long lease of power, are inclined to think lightly about the cause for which they fought.

We can conceive of no greater misfortune for the country than that which would be involved in its relapse into Democratic hands. Compared with the danger of its falling under Democratic rule, all other dangers, and all other issues, seem hardly worth a moment's consideration.

What are local or personal causes of dissatisfaction in comparison with the disaster which would certainly befall us within a twelvemonth after the restoration of the Democrats to power?

More than this, he was first elected to the Senate by the Democrats of Massachusetts, among whom he had been born and bred.

During that memorable Senatorial struggle he was brought out by the Democracy as their candidate against the distinguished Whig nominee, repeatedly received the vote of every Democratic member of the Legislature, which at that session happened to contain a large body of the most influential Democrats in the State.

Mr. Sumner has on some great occasions fought shoulder to shoulder with distinguished Democrats. In 1848 he affiliated with the New York Barnburners in support of Martin Van Buren for the Presidency, and carried a free lance in that famous struggle by the side of Prince John of Lidenwald, Dean Richmond, Samuel J. Tilden, Judge Church, and other shining lights in the Democratic firmament.

Mr. Sumner's well-known catholicity of sentiment in regard to existing parties is no more of an objection to his selection as the Democratic candidate, than was that of General Jackson to his selection under like circumstances forty years ago.

During the administration of Mr. Monroe, General Jackson, who in his youth had leaned toward the Federalists, and in his riper years had quarrelled with many of the leading Democrats of the country, addressed two or three letters to Monroe recommending an abandonment of old party lines and a reorganization of the political elements of the time on a broader basis of catholicity, and urging him to signify his acceptance of this view of the situation by appointing prominent Federalists to office.

So far from these doctrines proving an obstacle to the subsequent nomination of General Jackson as the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, they were heralded by the Democrats themselves as a striking proof of the forecast of their nominee; and they turned out to be one of the most popular and attractive elements of his character during the exciting campaign of 1828.

What the Democratic party needed in the days of Jackson they require now. Politics are in a transition state. Old party lines are disappearing.

And why should the Democracy expose themselves to the perils of a doubtful canvass, when by nominating Mr. Sumner they may make the election perfectly sure? We speak as to wise men and not to fools.

Special Notices. Office Fire Commissioners, S. E. corner Fifth and Chestnut. Philadelphia, March 15, 1871. Notice. The Volunteer Fire Department having been reformed and the new Department placed in operation at 10 o'clock this evening.

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