

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' CONVENTION.

From the N. Y. Tribune. If young men's fancies, as the poet tells us, lightly turn with the warm spring winds to thoughts of love, middle-aged men's apparently run as fast to conventions. They herd together during every May and June on the slightest pretext of union. They meet and know each other as Quakers, Presbyterians, prize-fighters, or patriots; and now as photographers. Some speak of good, we suppose, is struck out of all this friction; a certain cordial emulation and guild-spirit, if nothing better. That improvement and new ideas may come from this great annual Association of Photographers is a matter in which we are all personally concerned.

The convention, we learn, was large and enthusiastic; delegates and specimens were present from all parts of Europe; our own large houses in every State contributed their best inventions. The said Quaker City glistened with lenses and gratings. The smell of collodion and blue lights filled the air. There is probably no mechanical art which has made such rapid advance as this since the days of Daguerre and Niepce, as is shown by the numberless inventions and the exquisite softness and beauty of the specimens exhibited in Philadelphia; but in an aesthetic point of view the profession, we are forced to hint, has lagged far behind. In the cities where success would pay men with real artistic talent to adopt the business, they have frequently done so; but outside of these large markets it is, usually left to any young fellow who can command money enough to buy a camera and expertness enough to handle it. Photography, like wood engraving, while it offers a field for a great artist, suffers from the fact that the process is easily learned, the materials are cheap, and the poorest workman will always find work and wages. The average operator, as we all know to our cost, has no knowledge of the first principles concerning light or shade, nor any glimmer of the idea that there might be skill in placing and draping his victim which would secure a beautiful and attractive picture out of the most meagre and inharmonious materials. He plunges him into a chair of torture in a room heated to 92 deg., screws his head into a vice, and then placidly orders to "wait until he has assumed his best expression." Hawthorne's morbid fancy that the secret devil in every man peered out of his face somewhere in a photograph may have had its foundation in fact. The treatment of human nature undergoes in that chamber of horrors brings whatever is diabolical in it to the light. There is an old story of a Greek artist to whom came an unhappy subject in the shape of a man blind, lame, and with a broken arm. He painted him taking aim with a bow—kneeling on the lame leg, closing the blind eye, drawing back the broken arm. Our modern photographer would have scorned such art as sheer compounding of a felony.

Seriously, this is no matter for jesting. We may leave what footprints on the shores of time we please in the shape of characters or good deeds, but our real selves, our faces, are inexorably in the charge of these minions of the sun for posterity; and whether we will or not, they choose that every wrinkle and smirk shall go down unflinchingly. For the great majority of us, twenty years after we are dead, the only trace left of us on earth will most likely be a photograph in some dusty album. Is it unnatural that we should wish this to be at least the just shadow of what we were? The most practical Gradgrind among us would fain look with a cheerful face into that golden age to come, unknown world of strangers though it be, and not scowl back to it a grisly ghost. We beseech the convention to scatter some notions of true art among its members. Kryolite and velvet cases and invisible rests are no doubt excellent things, but a subtle sense of grace, and fitness, and beauty is not altogether to be despised. Have mercy upon us, Messieurs Photographers; you have the immortality of this generation in your keeping; for the love of justice do not any longer confirm the Darwinian theory by sending us down to unborn ages in the presentation of a race of gorillas.

THE DEMOCRATIC SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

From Harper's Weekly, edited by G. W. Curtis. "Mr. Orator Puff had two tones in his voice," and consequently, as the affecting narrative informs us, he could not escape from the pit. The Democratic party, with the same vocal variety, is in imminent peril of a similar catastrophe. Its Northern voice and its Southern voice speak different tunes, and as its object is to haul the public into that discotic only more thoroughly arouses the country. Mr. Vallandigham had scarcely blandly alluded to the fact that the goose hung high when Mr. Jefferson Davis savagely retorted that not only did he not "accept the situation," but that he "accepted nothing." So, also, while Tammany Hall complacently heard the praises lavished upon it by the freighting Mobile Register, it was confounded by the vigorous observation of the same journal that, of course, Tammany would not expect to nominate its candidate. Alas for the "great statesman" of New York, the executive agent of the Erie Ring! Indeed, a more laughable tragic-comical spectacle has not been lately seen than the present situation of the Democratic party. It is engaged in the praiseworthy but not hopeful attempt to dissolve oil in water, and to mingle in sweet silence gunpowder and fire. It is divided into two factions, the Northern and the Southern. The cleverest of the Northern leaders are anxious to break the chain that binds them to the corpse of slavery and to the disastrous past of their party—a party false to the country, to its honor, and to its sacred nature. But they have no platform to propose except acquiescence in Republican action and denunciation of Republicans. This, being a tacit confession of the total failure of their own party and a repudiation of all its traditions, does not warmly commend itself to the mass of the Democratic voters. It seems to them, and very naturally, an insincere course; and they declare, with animation, that such counsels are offered by those who have no faith in Democratic principles, and who are, therefore, no better than the enemy. "If holding the offices and sharing the public plunder is the only principle involved in the politics of to-day," says a Kentucky Democratic paper, "there is no necessity for keeping up two political organizations."

While thus some of the more sagacious Northern Democratic leaders advise acquiescence in the situation, the Southern chiefs, who have been both the brain and the heart of the party, with scornful and defiant brows insist upon what they call the principles for which the Democracy have always contended. These

principles are really the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of nearly eighty years ago—resolutions which assert State sovereignty to a point which is incompatible with National supremacy—that is to say, the Southern Democratic chiefs insist upon the right of secession. They declare that the "lost cause" is traditional Democracy, and that, when you abandon the constitutional principle upon which that cause is justified, Democracy, as a party name, is meaningless. Indeed, there are a large number of those who were the sincerest Rebels, who lost everything in the war, and who now insist that the Democratic principle have been overpowered, there should be no hesitation in abolishing the State Legislatures, and in establishing "one right, one government, one law." The ablest of the Southern leaders and papers insist upon the lost cause as the only rational Democratic platform. And Jeff. Davis, the best beloved Democratic leader in the Southern States, declares in reply to the "new departure" that a little patient waiting only is necessary to secure the victory for which he and his friends contended.

This was the spirit and these were the chiefs who controlled the Democratic party at the last Presidential election. They propose to contest the mastery again next year. They deride and denounce the Northern acquiescers as men of no faith in principle, as mere temporizers and Luddites. And this position is so strongly taken, and the censure is so free, that the Northern leaders are already aghast. The very worth of their tones shows their alarm. For while they are profoundly persuaded that there is no other chance of Democratic success than express acceptance of the situation, they are as profoundly convinced of the tenacity of their late masters at the South. A few weeks ago the Southern views were described by the Northern managers as the eccentricities of "our gallant and chivalrous friends," who would, as good Democrats, gracefully yield when "we" knocked them on the head in the convention. But all this is changed. The Albany Argus now disposes of our gallant and chivalrous friends in this manner:—"The boisterous Montgomery Mail is dead. The senile Mobile Register has changed its coat and fallen into line, an humble, and, we trust, repentant follower of those whom it tried to browbeat into its waned-up folly. The Memphis Appeal alone remains as a vociferator of nonsense and a gabbler of platitudes." And the New York World, the friend of the Erie agent, says of the other great statesman of its party: "The truth is that Jefferson Davis is not only a badly beaten general, a failure as an executive head of a resisting people, a thoroughly whipped Rebel, but a politician who stupidly, criminally (to use the mildest phrase) blundered." And these be brethren!

From all this it is plain, first, that the Northern Democratic leaders are convinced that the Southern voice must be silenced or the party is already defeated; and second, that they feel much stronger than they did in 1868, and propose not to wheedle but to lash the recusants into submission. But the fact is none the less evident and significant that the support of the Southern wing is indispensable to Democratic success. Therefore, if, in the National Convention of the party, Mr. Vallandigham, who in 1864 made the Chicago platform of surrender to the rebels, should in 1872 make another platform of surrender to the Republicans, it would certainly be an occasion of satisfaction to every patriot that the party did not take an openly revolutionary position, but it would as certainly be no ground for supporting a party which contains every revolutionary and disturbing element. The question, as we stated last week, would then be whether a pruder administration or greater fidelity to the new order could be more reasonably expected from the Democratic than from the Republican party. There can be little doubt that the Vallandigham platform would help the Democratic party in the Northern States, but it would as surely exasperate the staunchest Southern Democrats. Meanwhile those who are disposed to think that the Democratic party is always handled with admirable sagacity, and that it can rely upon its stern discipline, may refresh their memories with the history of its last three National Conventions in 1860, 1864, and 1868, of which it may be said that each surpassed the other in political blundering.

OUR NEGRO POPULATION.

From the N. Y. World. Superintendent Walker, of the Census Bureau, reports the negro population of the United States, under the enumeration just taken, as 4,895,264, stating, however, that this total is obtained by estimates in some few localities, but that "the differences made by revision will probably be limited to units, tens, or hundreds." In this view the figures given do not express our negro population with an accuracy sufficient for all practical purposes, and by a comparison with the figures of the enumerations respectively of 1850 and 1860 and the ratios of increase in either case it appears that the blacks are dying out since the war. To elucidate this let us give the several enumerations mentioned, and the increase absolute and ratio of increase in each case. The table stands:—

Table with 4 columns: Year, Population, Increase, Ratio. Data for 1850, 1860, and 1870.

Now while it appears here on the face of it that there was an increase of 459,555 in our negro population from 1860 to 1870, and that the per cent. of increase was 10.36, it is evident upon reflection that this period of ten years in which the increase might be supposed to have taken place evenly year by year is, in fact, divisible into two equal parts of five years each—from 1860 to 1865, when the negroes, or nine-tenths of them, were in slavery, and from 1865 to 1870, when all were free. In the first half decade there was, of course, no new element in the life of the negro. The storms of war, to be sure, rolled about him, but his position was too humble to be one to be hurt by the blast; and while battle was decimating the white race the black remained in its old attitude of security and, as it is fair to assume, at its old ratio of increase. In other words, the negro from 1860 to 1865 was just where he was from 1850 to 1860—the death-roll of the colored troops being ridiculously small—and as he increased from 1850 to 1860 at the rate of 21.90 per cent., so from 1860 to 1865 he increased at that same rate proportionately, or at the rate of 21.90 per cent. per year. For five years this is 109.5 per cent., and adding 10.36 per cent. (489,555) to the figure (4,405,709) of 1860, we find that in 1865 the negro population of the United States must have been 4,895,264, or 26,155 more than the census of 1870. Admitting the premise that the negro population increased from 1860 to 1865 at the same rate as from 1850 to 1860, and the conclusion is irresistible that in 1865 it was greater than it is now. The only way to contravene this result is to say that the table we have given shows an increase of 10.36 per cent. from 1860 to 1870,

and to this the answer is instantaneous.—What made the ratio of 21.90 in the seventh census drop instantly on the beginning of the eighth decade to 10.36, or less than half? What great convulsion changed the whole life of the negro in 1860 to make him less than one-half as fecund as he had theretofore been? There was of course no such great disturbance for the negro until 1865. Then the change came; then was his whole life altered; and from that time we are to estimate the effect of emancipation upon him. The case is analogous to that of a man who is well from the first to the fifteenth of the month and pulled down by a fever from that to the thirtieth; his loss in flesh is not the month's work, but that number of days only from the time the fever set in. "To ascertain the effects of an anomaly we must begin where the anomaly begins, and taking up the negro population of the United States from 1865, when its whole condition changed, we find that population has not only made an increase in the last five years, but has actually fallen off. Beyond this fact, Mr. Walker's report is not specially remarkable, though, as we have heretofore mentioned, Kansas exhibits the curious increase of its negro population from 625 in 1860 to 17,498 in 1870, and Kentucky and Virginia have fewer blacks now than ten years ago—the former having 222,210 to 236,167 in 1860; and the latter 530,321 against 548,907. These losses are explainable by the fact that during the war many Kentucky negroes fled North, and that the war the Virginia blacks have drifted freely into the better paid field of cotton culture in the far South.

IMMIGRATION AND ITS COURSE.

From the N. Y. Times. Everybody admits that we owe no inconsiderable portion of our prosperity and rapid development to foreign immigration. The rapid growth of the Pacific coast has been remarkable, but the population of the States west of the Sierras was drawn, for the most part, from the older States. The West and more especially the Northwestern States, attest the value of immigration. During the decade just passed there was a considerable decrease in the number of arrivals. The causes for this, both in this country and Europe, are now happily removed. At the beginning of the decade our own war, and in the last year of it the war in Europe, operated against large immigration. Those who have made the subject a special study predict that in the present decade the increase of population from foreign immigration will far surpass that of any former period. Emigration from Ireland has reached its maximum, and will, without doubt, show in the next ten years, considerable decline. This will, however, be more than counterbalanced by the increase from Germany, and in addition the people of other countries from which immigration has heretofore been small, will be attracted to the United States by the certainty of bettering their condition. The immigration from Sweden and Norway in the last decade is worthy of attention as illustrating how rapidly the increase will be from any country as soon as the superior advantages of the United States come to be known. In the decade ending with the year 1860, immigration from Sweden and Norway was but 20,931; in the decade ending with the year 1870, it increased to 117,799. This large immigration sought the Northwestern States, adding to the wealth, and aiding in the rapid increase of population, which bids fair to give to this section a preponderating influence in directing the affairs of the nation.

The Southern States, relieved from the burden of slavery, are now seeking to develop their resources by encouraging immigration. They have learned the secret of the success of the Northern and Western States, and are resolved to profit by it. Lands are abundant and cheap, and a large portion of them capable of cultivation; the climate is desirable and the products varied; water and timber are abundant, and the markets are easy of access. Agents of different States are now in Europe for the purpose of bringing the advantages of the country to the attention of intending immigrants. But as these agents represent a patriotic interest, their representations of the superior advantages South will not be implicitly believed. Large grants of land have been made by the Government to certain railroads, and these also have agents in Europe, but their representations are open to the same objection as those made by agents of the Southern States; and the immigrant, while listening to each and comparing their statements, will, as heretofore, rely on the information contained in the letters of his countrymen who have made homes for themselves in the West.

On the whole, favor immigration, but the people of other countries require a knowledge of them. Little care has hitherto been taken to give the immigrant information with regard to the resources of the different sections of the country. The skilled workman knew that he must remain in or near the large cities and manufacturing towns, and the agricultural laborer, having a small sum to invest in land, or seeking employment, that he must "go West." The special report of Mr. Edward Young, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics, just published, will afford the immigrant all needed information. With infinite labor, and large sums of statistics relative to the agricultural advantages of each State, and the wages of labor, skilled and unskilled, in different sections, has been collected and arranged. It is indeed the immigrant's hand-book, and will be found equally valuable to the foreign immigrant and to the citizens of the older States who contemplate removing to a newer country. The price of land, its nearness and accessibility to market, the kind of produce and its market value, a nature of soil, cost of stock, wages of skilled and unskilled labor, and many other valuable data are given, which will enable the immigrant to contrast the advantages offered by different sections, and to decide in advance of embarkation where he will settle—thus saving him much time, anxiety, and expense. This work, which is published by authority of the Government, will exercise an important influence in determining the future direction of immigration, and it brings into notice many regions which are at present almost unknown to the foreign workman or agriculturist.

THE COMPARATIVE WORTH OF THINGS AND MEN.

From the London Spectator. The general grief and horror with which the news of the devastation of Paris in this fratricidal war has been received, the consternation with which Englishmen and Frenchmen alike have heard that "a palace of strangers is like a heap," "a defended city a ruin," cannot but strike us, when we remember the comparative indifference with which we had come to hear of the terrible slaughter of human beings of which the history of the last nine months has been full. For it is not the human misery, the loss of life and loss of livelihood to the inhabitants of Paris, which we think most of when we read of the Tuilleries in ruins, the Louvre

partly destroyed, the Luxembourg blown to pieces, and of so many of the grand historical buildings of Paris left with hardly "one stone upon another that has not been thrown down." It is of the beautiful city itself we think, and not mainly of its people. We sorrow for the miracle of art and magnificence, the fairest capital in Europe, the chief intellectual stimulus of the whole Western world, the one place which nobody visited without receiving a new impression of the vividness of life and the brilliancy of man, the spot on the surface of our planet where human faculty seemed the keenest and the most available, where human wit had reached its culminating point. And this, of course, though the work of the French people, was not the work of the French people in any one generation. In every sense Paris has been a capital, for she had inherited the accumulated intellectual wealth of ages, and the great palaces and terraces and monuments and gardens which made her so fair were as much the products of savings, as much artistic capital essential to the magic she wielded over the minds of men, as the mills and looms of Manchester, the products of Lancashire's past savings, are essential to the great industrial work of every new year of our cotton manufacture. Paris was "a city of confusion that is broken down," Paris with shattered monuments and ruined palaces, and tumbled bridges and wasted gardens and a city choked with fragments of masonry, cannot exert her old spell over the imaginations of men till the waste places are restored, and the wilderness again blossoms as the rose. There are adjuncts to the power of men which are essential conditions of its exercise, and therefore it is, we suppose, that we feel authorized to grieve more when we hear of a destruction which prevents France from being to the future of Europe what she has been to the past, than we grieve even when we hear of the sweeping away of a great portion of a generation of Frenchmen in the hurricane of foreign and civil war. Men may come and men may go, but while the spell of France remained, there would always be Frenchmen enough to use it and transmit the great French tradition to the world. But now, when "all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone, in the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction," who is to cast the spell of France over us? With Paris in ruins, the staff of the enchanter is broken and her magic lost. The "Capital of Pleasure" has become a wilderness, and while it remains so France must lose her peculiar place in the world, and the heart of the continent will cease to beat.

It can hardly be denied, we think, that there are physical conditions of human life so full of significance and so difficult to create anew, that their loss diminishes the moral significance of the life of the men who are their natural interpreters even more than the loss of any number of those interpreters themselves. A plague in Rome that destroyed half the population would be a fearful thing, but would it be wrong to feel it a less calamity by far than the physical destruction of Rome itself, even though the inhabitants had time and warning to escape? It cannot be inhuman to think so, for did not our Lord himself, who named himself the Son of Man to show his intensity of human sympathy, speak of the physical destruction of Jerusalem with a shade of almost deeper pity and sorrow than he expressed in referring to the mere carnage and loss of life which would accompany it? The destruction of a typical city, of a centre of age-long life, is the end of that age, in a sense in which the mere cutting off of half a generation of men need not occasion any loss at all. What was, in an end, who but prophet can tell what will be? How shall we know that the old spell which the suicidal armies of the Commune and the fratricidal armies of Versailles have destroyed between them shall ever be revived? No one would desire to see it precisely what it was. There was enough of Circe in Paris to turn even the wisest of men who had no antidote "moly" in their hearts, not only into the most grovelling, but into the maddest and most possessed of swine.

The report of the destruction of the city of Paris, which we have received this week with even more awe and misgiving than from the news of the bloodiest battle-field and the most destructive campaign. There are external conditions of life which thread together history, and the annihilation of which ends and begins an era. It is possible, may it be quite probable, that the burning of Paris is a catastrophe of this nature,—the more so that it arose from the collision of social discord, and not from the shock of conquest. If only as a measure of the fierce interecine passions that have been at work in the very heart of French society, this mighty explosion must shake France to the very centre, and mould her future into a new and probably less unconstrained and buoyant life than that of her past.

The importance that is so naturally attached to the physical devastation of Paris is not, then, in our opinion, due to that weakness of imagination which is unable to realize the meaning of a great accumulated mass of human misery so vividly as it can realize a great loss of material grandeur and wealth; on the contrary, it is due to the instinctive feeling that a very much greater change is coming over human life than any mere shortening of the period of one generation's existence could imply. It may be quite true that if any great building were on fire, the man who deliberately postponed the duty of securing the endangered lives of the sleeping women and children to that of restoring the treasures of art it might contain, would be regarded as inhuman. Our sympathy is imperiously claimed by living sufferers even at the cost of sacrificing a multitude of the refined enjoyments and educated tastes of posterity. We might respect the man who gave his own life to save a great Raphael or a Turner, but we should hardly justify one who offered up another's for the same end. Even in Paris, the man who should have deliberately elected to kill an innocent soldier for every picture saved to the Louvre, would be rightly esteemed to be a wretch worthy of instant death, and this though it is quite certain that many a picture would do vastly more for the future life of the French nation than many a citizen. But though that is true, that is no reason why we should not deliberately grieve more over the destruction of all the greatest ornaments of a great capital, than over the loss of a host of innocent lives. It would be wrong to commit a single delibe-

rate murder, even in order,—if such a thing were conceivable,—to save Mont Blanc and the Lake of Geneva to Europe; yet no one would think of feeling the same horror at hearing of a new murder which he would feel at the thought of the final loss to Europe of those magnificent forms and colors. Or, to take a more possible case, it would clearly be utterly demoralizing to save a bank by breaking and putting a whole population from destitution and penury, by putting a violent end to a single life, yet it would be very heartless not to feel far more regret at the occurrence of the former case than at the occurrence of the latter. It is quite easy to invent fifty cases in which it would be utterly wicked to ward off a great catastrophe by intentionally causing one of much less magnitude, though it would be both natural and right to regret the occurrence of the latter. A failure of the harvest is a far greater and more lamentable evil than a small injustice, but no country which habitually and deliberately committed small injustices to prevent the failure of a harvest, would have any promise of a great future. The destruction of Paris might almost compare as a calamity with the destruction of a vein of genius in the character of a great people, while the destruction of a multitude of Parisians could only compare as a calamity with a temporary suspension of that vein of genius; yet even for the sake of not only preserving but stimulating that vein of genius, no one would have sanctioned the deliberate murder of a multitude of Parisians. We hold, then, that the universal horror which the week's news has brought us is perfectly legitimate, even though the same degree of regret has not been felt over the hecatombs of lives lost on the field of battle. The ruin of Paris is the catastrophe of a thousand years—perhaps even greater in its consequences than the meeting of the States-General and the storming of the Bastille, but, at present at least, purely dark, and without any of the bright hopes justly excited by those events.

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