

BLACK ON THE THIRD TERM.

THE PROBABLE EFFECT OF A VIOLATION OF THE UNWRITTEN LAW OF THE REPUBLIC.

Judge Jesse Black in North American Review.

Where the Chief Magistrate is vested, as ours is, with great power liable to gross abuse, if there is no law or practice which forbids him to be re-elected, he can remain in office for life as easily as for a term. He has the appointment of all officers, the making of all public contracts, and a veto upon all legislation, besides the command of the army and navy. By an unscrupulous use of these means he can coerce not only his immediate dependents, but he can control the corporations and become the master of all classes under his feet, corrupt the venal, frighten the timid, and check all ambitions but his own. He can force the elections of every State he desires to carry by the bayonets of his army. If that fails, he can order a false return, and pay for it out of the public Treasury. The people would soon perceive opposition to be useless and accept the situation; elections would be as mere a matter of form as they were in Rome when such Consuls as Nero and Domitian were elected regularly every year under the supervision of the pretorian guards. If there were no more than remote possibilities prudence should guard us against them. But they are near probabilities; the signs of the times warn us that the peril to our institutions is imminent; the danger is already on the wing. It is vain to remind us that the President swears to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and see the laws faithfully executed. That is true; and it is also true that, if there be no perjury in the case, the Constitution, laws and liberties of the country are safe. But the last twenty years have given us ample proof that an oath is not much restraint upon a President who is incited by ambition, rapacity or strong party feeling to break it. It is true that this presupposes a people much degenerated and a magistrate animated mainly by the vulgar love of power for its own sake; but exactly such a conjunction of things has always been feared with good reason, and hence comes the desire to put every check on that tendency to "strong government" which is now manifesting itself in many quarters. What is the remedy? How shall we avert the dire calamities with which we are threatened? The answer comes from the graves of our fathers: By the frequent election of new men. Other help or hope for the salvation of free government there is none under heaven. If history does not teach this, we have read it all wrong. In the republics of ancient and modern times the chief magistrate was entrusted with only temporary power, and always went out of office at the end of a short period, fixed and prescribed by law or custom. It was this, indeed, which made the substantial distinction between them and the monarchies around them. An unpunished transgression of the customary limitation was uniformly followed by destruction. Everywhere and always it was the fatal symptom of decay—the sure forerunner of ruin. When Caesar refused to lay down his Consulship, as his predecessors had, at the end of a year, and was re-elected time after time with the acquiescence of the Senate and the people, all that was real in Roman freedom ceased to exist. Two republics in France were brought to an end in the same way. Napoleon began by being Consul for a term, then was elected for life, and finally became Emperor, with the power of an absolute despot. The last Bonaparte was President for four years, was re-elected for ten, and ended, like his uncle, in grasping the imperial crown. "May this be washed in the Lethe and forgotten?" Shall these lessons be lost? Shall the lamp which guided our forefathers be extinguished? Shall the broad daylight of all human experience be closed up in a little dark lantern manufactured at Milwaukee? I think this cannot be done; "the eternal verities" are against it. The most powerful third-termers may as well try to blow out the sun, as he would a tallow candle, with the breath of his mouth. A third term for Grant does not mean a third term only, but any number of terms that he chooses to demand. The imperial method of carrying all elections by corruption of force, or of declaring them to be carried when they are not, is to be permanently substituted for the system of free, popular choice. The figure of Grant standing with the seal of primacy on the mountain top and looking down on the inhabitants of the plain below, gives a measure of the elevation which his sycophants flatter him with the hope of attaining. They urge the necessity of a strong government almost in the very words used by the adherents of Caesar and the two Napoleons. Strong government, in their sense, means weak laws and a strong ruler; in other words, a substantial monarchy,

powerful in its scorn of all legal restraints.

HOW LONG WILL JUSTICE SLEEP?

From the Altoona Sun.

The case of that brave, accomplished and greatly wronged soldier, General Fitz-John Porter, still hangs fire in Congress under the miserable excuse that the passage of the bill long since reported and which if passed will in part make restitution for the crime perpetrated against him, will provoke a political discussion. With the Chronicle-Herald the Sun repeats the interrogation, "Are Democrats too cowardly to be just?" If the Democratic leaders have read history to any purpose they know that there is nothing upon which the people look with more contempt than cowardice. Even a venal party has a better chance of running the gauntlet of public opinion than a cowardly party.

The course for the Democrats to pursue is very plain. They must promptly take up the report of the committee and act on it. If the Republicans insist upon fighting the war all over—if they are determined to ransack the prisons and tear open the graves—let them do it and make out of it what political capital they can. If the Republicans resolve to be ghouls the Democrats needn't be fools enough to step into the pit which their adversaries dig.

There is nothing for Democrats to fear from Fitz John Porter's case or any other reminiscence of the war so long as they keep their heads and bridle their tongues. We are not far removed from the war and passions for any question connected with that unhappy period to be freely discussed in Congress without the Republicans taking advantage of the occasion to "fire the northern heart."

But the northern heart cannot be fired by northern men alone. Southern men must play into the enemy's hands and furnish him with material to be contorted and howled over. They must do what Ben Hill did for Blaine in the famous debate which so endeared Blaine to the stalwart wing of his party.

It may be very exasperating for southern men to hear themselves reviled and branded as monsters of inhumanity where they have equal right to talk; but when Republican politicians want nothing better than indignant and, perhaps, indiscreet, replies to their charges, it is then that silence becomes golden.

Fitz John Porter's case needs votes more than talk. The man is the victim of a wrong of long standing. The recent military inquiry has removed any doubt there might have been of his innocence of the horrid charge on which he was tried and hurried to conviction. The country demands justice for him—such justice as Congress alone can dispense. Treatment so foul cannot remain unatoned for without disgracing the country which inflicts it. Are the Democrats too cowardly to do justice?

GENERAL HANCOCK'S CANDIDACY.

From the Washington Herald.

After this year it will no longer be possible for New York and the South to elect a President. The census of 1880 will give the Northwestern States a far greater proportion of the electoral vote than they now possess. The Democracy will therefore do wisely to consider whether it can afford to throw away any chance of electing a President. Democrats who really believe the success of their party to be necessary to the welfare of the country should lay aside all mere personal preferences and prejudices and seek the strongest possible candidate. One candidate alone appears to combine every element of strength, and that candidate is General Hancock. A bitter war on the financial question has been for years going on within the party ranks. The contending factions are still as wide apart as the poles, and hopeless of agreeing. General Hancock has been kept by his position entirely out of this embittered controversy. Any Democrat can vote for him, while votes would be lost by the nomination of any man who has ever taken a positive part in the financial discussion. It is essential to success that the votes of Greenback Democrats should be secured without alienating those of a different sentiment. Here is the first point of General Hancock's supreme availability.

Then, the very composition of the Democracy—consisting as it does so largely of men lately in insurrection—requires that it should have for its standard-bearer a Union soldier. The chief reliance of the Republicans is in appeals to the smouldering passions of the great rebellion. The fires of civil strife are not extinct; and fatal is ever the day when the Democracy forgets their presence. His war record is the second great point of General Hancock's availability.

Yet it would not be difficult to find a more or less obscure candidate who has been neutral in the still intense money conflict, and who fought for the Union. These, though essential, are only negative ones. General Hancock has, besides these, positive merits of a surpassing kind. He is the most eminent of all those soldierly figures which now stand forth in the ranks of the Constitutional Democracy. He has proved that he possesses the ideas and habit of mind of the statesman. His official writings embody the soundest conceptions of

law, and show an intimate knowledge of the principles which form the basis of the civil liberties of our race. Thus General Hancock possesses in an eminent degree the qualities which will excite the enthusiasm so desirable in a political campaign. Splendid as a soldier; wise as a civilian; his candidity would bring out upon the stump a host of men who have never before taken an active part in our politics. He has no following among politicians, having maintained during all the time his name has been before the country as a candidate the dignified silence and abstention from intrigue and personal effort which are most befitting the character which would adorn such an exalted position. Having never been a politician, General Hancock is surrounded by none of those political workers who naturally gather around men who become prominent in political life. The strength which the movement for his nomination exhibits throughout the country is therefore a spontaneous strength, which does not come from organization and effort, but which springs directly from the popular heart. It is this kind of strength that is irresistible. Have the Democracy the wisdom to see it and to seize their golden opportunity?

THE POETS AND THE BIRDS.

WHAT MISS SANBORN CHOSE FOR THE SUBJECT OF HER YESTERDAY MORNING'S TALK TO LADIES.

From the New York World.

Having found the parlor of Dr. Crosby's Church too small for the many ladies who attend her Thursday morning talks, Miss Kate Sanborn yesterday spoke from the little platform at the end of the chapel or lecture-room belonging to the same church. Here, shut off from the sound of horse-cars and elevated trains, which on the occasion of her first lecture last week proved impertinently disagreeable, everybody who had the good fortune to be present thoroughly enjoyed herself (for Miss Sanborn's large audience contained only two males). Miss Sanborn, who is promptness itself, entered the lecture-room a moment or two before 11 o'clock and depositing on the desk before her a large pile of manuscript, frankly told her hearers that the subject she had chosen to talk to them about had run away with her. "It is so voluminous," said she, with a despairing sigh, "that, try as I will, I cannot get it into shape for a lecture. This, ladies (desperately), is not a lecture. It's a ramble—let's call it a flight. 'Birds as Sung by Poets.' That is the title I have given to it. It's a good subject. I know it is. I'm in love with it. But the difficulty is in paring it down into a round little lecture of an hour's duration. It is a difficulty which, as I said before, I have not surmounted. My sister says it is too 'birdy.' My fear is that it will be burdensome. Forgive me. Let us fly into the clouds at once.

"On a train one sunny morning in June I saw a little bird fly by my window and on and up into the illimitable blue. My first thought was of this airy freedom and graceful flight as contrasted with the cramped car and snorting engine pulling along its load of human luggage amid the heat and dust. I sighed for wings, and then came the thought, 'As you cannot very well be a bird'—which was quite true—'why not look up the many beautiful things that poets have said about them? There you will find all that you feel but have not the ability to express.' This has been my task. Ruskin will certainly commend me for it if nobody else does, for he grumbles that 'no English gentleman in recent times has ever thought of birds except as flying targets or flavorous dishes.'" Having made Aristophanes, Chaucer, and Boccaccio responsible for utterances concerning the winged subject she had chosen, Miss Sanborn said: "The first English song about birds that I have found is on the owl and the nightingale, and as to which had the finer voice, and bear the date 1278. This is important, as it is about English bird poetry that I am chiefly going to talk. Which two birds do you suppose are the most famous in English verse? Does anybody know?" Miss Sanborn paused for reply. "Come," she continued, as nobody answered, "as this cannot be a lecture let us make it conversational." Still none of the ladies spoke, though all of them looked interested enough to do so had they dared. Miss Sanborn laughed. "Well, pardon me," she said, "I cannot help taking a delicious and malicious delight in proving my superior knowledge on this subject, since I have been two whole years digging at it. The birds to which I refer are the nightingale and the lark. There are, indeed, few poems of any length in either of the languages of Europe in which allusion to one or other of these birds has not place. The noblest poets have been boon companions of these birds, beneath skies saluted by the lark, among groves haunted by the nightingale. These little creatures sang with Homer and Sappho among the isles of Greece, for Virgil and Horace on the plains of Italy; they cheered Dante in his life-long wandering exile and Petrarch in his solitary hermitage." Miss Sanborn then read many extracts from poems of all ages devoted to nightingales. As she is a good reader, and had in the main selected poems which might reasonably be supposed to be familiar, the quota-

tions were enjoyable. The same was done for the lark, James Hogg's poem beginning "Bird of the Wilderness" being read in whole, and eliciting much applause from the audience.

"The Robin Redbreast," continued Miss Sanborn, turning to that more familiar bird, "has often been designated by the poets as the 'friend of man.' It has been supposed to take pains in covering dead people with moss and leaves. Wordsworth notices this tradition, and in Herrick we find: "Sweet Amaryllis by a spring's Soft and soul-like murmurs Slept—and thus sleeping—thither flew A Robin Redbreast, who at view Not seeing her at all to stir, Brought leaves and moss to cover her. But while he peering there did pry About the arch of either eye The lid began to let out day. At which poor Robin flew away, And seeing her not dead but all dislaved He chirped for joy to find himself deceived."

"This little bird, according to the popular legend, was commissioned by the Deity to carry a drop of water to the souls of unbaptized infants in hell, and its breast was singed in piercing the flames." Miss Sanborn then read Whittier's verses on "The Robin," founded on this legend, than which no poem of the morning called forth heartier applause from the audience of ladies. "But," she continued, "a whole flock of birds, little and big, with gay feathers and dull, with sweet notes and harsh, are singing around and pleading to be given places in this aviary which I have invited you to inspect. Let us look at these birds as they fly by. First come those noted in mythology as Juno's peacock, Minerva's owl, Jupiter's eagle; then the single birds made famous by a poem, as Anacreon's dove or Lesbia's sparrow, "The Jackdaw of Rheims," or Celia Thaxter's "Sandpiper," Willis's belfry pigeon, Bryant's bobolink, or Poe's grim bird on the bust of Pallas. Don't be nervous; I'm not so raven distracted as to attempt that! Then too, there are birds honored by the poet which are held in special reverence, as the petrels, named from the Disciple Peter, because they seem to walk on the water—although, by the way, Peter didn't seem to walk the water—and also called Mother Carey's chickens—a queer corruption of "Mater Cara"—sacred to the Virgin and thought to betoken good luck to sailors." Of the solemn, stately stork Miss Sanborn had much that was interesting to say, and also read Bayard Taylor's last poem, which was, as will be remembered, devoted to this melancholy bird. Then she showed by many apt quotations how the birds are always at man's service to illustrate habits, dispositions, dress and the various incidents and actions of social life.

"Do you remember," said the lecturer in closing her chat, "those poems of Longfellow, Hallock and Mrs. Sigourney on the blue bird, or Lowell's lines:

"The blue bird shifting his light load of song From post to post along the cheerless fence."

"Bryant, too, was a genuine lover of nature and a keen observer of her forms, but he was more remarkable for accuracy than for insight. His perception was less sympathetic than clear. Just compare Lowell's poems, 'The Bobolink'—

"Anacreon of the meadow, Drunk with the joy of spring—"

"with Bryant's 'Robert o' Lincoln.' Bryant describes the bird, his plumage, his habits, his domestic and home life, giving a charming imitation of his note and a pretty picture of his existence. Lowell attempts nothing of this kind, but makes one feel the thrilling glee, the heedlessness and overflowing joy of the little songster."

Having finished her talk Miss Sanborn invited Miss Thompson to read Bryant's "Robert o' Lincoln" with which request the young lady complied, and, reading exceedingly well, was compelled by the enthusiastic audience to read something more. Next Thursday morning Miss Sanborn's lecture will be devoted to "Dora d'Istria; Her Life and Writings."

How Bismarck Drinks Brandy.

From the Portland Argus.

A prominent officer, who returned from Europe recently, tells of an evening he spent with Bismarck as follows: "I thought that I had seen hard drinkers, but I found during this evening with Bismarck that the drinking men I had met were mere tipplers in comparison with this great man. Bismarck had invited no guest for that evening save myself. After a few moments spent in pleasant chat, Bismarck called the servant and ordered him to bring in brandy and glasses. The glasses were of the smallest size, the same size as the glass we call a pony. I saw there was no sugar or water brought, and when Bismarck poured two glasses full of the brandy, I saw it was white, so I concluded it was a milder drink than the French cognac and thought if he could drink it clear I would not be outdone. I took a sip of it, and never in my life did I experience such a sensation. It was the most fiery stuff I ever tasted. I gasped and strangled a little, but seeing Bismarck toss his off as so much water, I made as little fuss as possible. By slow, careful sips I managed to drink the glassful, but declined to take any more. Well, I stayed during the evening, probably until 12 or 1 o'clock. Bismarck continued tossing off the brandy, one glass after another, and when I left not a drop remained in the pint bottle,

which had been brought in full at the beginning of the evening. His capacity for drinking must be something wonderful, for with the exception of his face getting very red, no one would have suspected that he had been drinking at all. His conversation was clear and his manner as quiet as at the beginning of the evening.

THE ARTIFICIALS.

From the Philadelphia Times.

MacTear's diamonds failed and now Hannay's are said to be successful. They do not claim to be imitations of the diamond, but the real diamond itself. They scratch sapphires, and when properly set on fire while resting on a slip of platinum they go off in a whiff of blaze and smoke, just as do the diamonds from Brazil or South Africa. The cunning Scot claims to have done in his laboratory exactly what nature has done in hers. His processes are different and he produces smooth diamonds instead of the rough ones which are usually found in the mines. Hannay's diamonds will bear cutting, after the manner of diamonds of the old-fashioned sort, and for all practical purposes it would seem that they answer as well as far as they go. Many people suppose that, now that we are to have artificial diamonds, we will have them as big as turkey eggs and as cheap as buttons. These people jump too hastily at this conclusion. Possibly diamonds may one of these days be made as large as great pieces of chalk and equally cheap. When this comes to pass the dazzling gems will be so common that the public generally will have to wear blue spectacles for the protection of eyesight. As yet Professor Hannay's diamonds are of infinitesimal size. If the principles on which he makes them are correct, he will eventually make larger stones. Meantime scientific men are divided in opinion. An eminent Italian chemist, who professes to know all about diamonds, says that Hannay's gems will prove as delusive as MacTear's.

It is probable that if artificial diamonds shall be successfully made they will be rather of commercial value than as ornamental gems. The makers will have much to contend with. The laboratory of science is vastly different from that of nature. We may take a natural product apart and discover each one of its several elements with exactness, both as to character and proportions. Then we may take the various substances in as correct proportion as we can weigh and measure them, and try to put them together to counterfeit nature. The result is generally to teach us that nature's chemistry is a different affair from ours, and that there are occult processes which we have not mastered and whose secrets we are not yet able to fathom. It has been thus in the manufacture of artificial stone. Knowing the component parts of stone, it seemed easy to take certain rocks apart and put them together again. Within the last quarter century many fortunes have been spent in unsuccessful attempts to imitate nature in this respect. Most of the results were like Colonel Sellar's eye-water. They were all that could be desired except in the lack of one ingredient. Some of the counterfeit stone would crumble to pieces in a few weeks. Some was good enough on the outside, but inside like so much brown sugar. Some, which managed to hold together tolerably well, broke out in a sorry-looking efflorescence which spoiled its beauty. It is not to be denied that various respectable varieties of concrete have been produced, some of which answer well for building purposes. But real rock has not yet been made, and present indications are that it will not be for a while.

While we confess the incompleteness of many of the attempted imitations of nature's work, we must admit that in some departments of this class of invention ingenuity has been crowned with triumph. Bald heads are ornamented with flowing locks which not only simulate nature, but sometimes laugh nature to scorn. Toothless gums are furnished with nerveless porcelains which neither ache nor decay, and which can be sent to the factory for painless repair, when repair is needed. The world would be in darkness at the going down of the sun but for the success of the makers of artificial light. For generations the sperm whale helped us out of our darkness. When he began to fail us, we found relief in the generous adipose of the unctuous hog. When we grew tired of turning swine into oil, carburetted hydrogen came into fashion despite the protests of even the scientific. When gas companies taxed us too heavily, we blazed defiance at them with oil pumped from the bowles of the earth. Now electricity threatens to sweep gas, and all the family of illuminating oils, out of sight. Possibly some future inventor of artificial substitutes for sunlight may knock electricity, just as electricity threatens to knock its predecessors.

The progress of ingenuity in preparing artificial diamonds knows no bounds. Glass eyes are sold by the thousand. They wink and stare almost as nicely as the eyes they imitate. Almost everybody is getting to wear ceramic teeth. A poor fellow who lost his nose is getting a new one built-up out of his thumb and finger. Millions of good people wear wigs, and a California actress has a thirty-five-hundred-dollar wooden leg, which runs, jumps, skips and

dances so that nobody can distinguish it from the natural one. We welcome the Scotch professors and all other ingenious inventors to the largest victory in the diamond business. Possibly we may yet have diamond globes for electric illuminators. Night will be turned into day, and the sun may, if he chooses, take as long a holiday in regard to our zones as he does in regard to the Arctic regions.

ALEXANDER AND HIS PEOPLE.

From the Washington Post.

It may fairly be questioned if there is a more unhappy man on earth than the Czar of Russia. The poorest peasant who eats his black bread in peace, and sleeps on his pile of straw without fear, has an enviable existence compared with that of Alexander. Even the wretched exile in Siberia has passed the crisis of his fate, has reached the worst, and his dreary days are not haunted by the fear of instant and horrible death. Almost any certainty, however cruel, is better than the awful suspense in which this Emperor is compelled to endure life. When he eats, there is the fear of poison in his food to destroy his appetite. When he walks abroad, he is not sure that a murderer is not pointing a gun or pistol at him. Hand grenades are liable, at any moment, to be hurled into the royal carriage. Dynamite mines blow trains and palaces into the air, and all this to destroy his single life.

Yet this man whose life is thus haunted until every hour of existence must seem like an eternity of torment, is Alexander, the Liberator. When he came to the throne he introduced some of the greatest reforms of the age. The abolition of serfdom and the institution of trial by jury are among the blessings which he gave to his country. But instead of satisfying his people and securing their support and affection, he has had a more troubled reign than he would have had in following the example of the despots who preceded him. He gave a taste of blood to a pack of hungry wolves when he decreed a portion of the natural rights of mankind to the long-oppressed lower class of his empire.

Agas of tyranny had so degraded the lower classes that they were incapable of appreciating the new reforms. In trying to improve their condition Alexander was compelled to trespass on what the nobles regarded as their divine rights. Thus the crown is left between the upper and the nether millstones. The judges of the courts sympathize with the Nihilists, and often acquit those who are clearly proven guilty of crimes against the government. The Nihilists appear to have no definite policy except the destruction of existing institutions. They hold that assassination and all other crimes are justifiable in their warfare against monarchy.

According to our American idea, it is the right of any people to decide their own form of government and name their own rulers. But if Alexander's throne were overturned to-day, and a republic set up in its stead, there would be another revolution in three months. Russia is not prepared for republican institutions. If Alexander were to adopt a constitution similar to that of Great Britain, there is no reason to believe that his concession would stay the tide of revolution. Nihilism would not be placated with anything short of democracy, and a democratic government for such a people would mean anarchy.

We see nothing better than a stormy future before that unhappy country. The abdication of Alexander, which is not unlikely to occur at any time, will not bring peace and order. It is not against him, but the system, that rebellion is waged. Any other head of the same system would be quite as offensive.

He Turned the Tables.

From Derrick Dodd in San Francisco Post.

There is nothing like presence of mind, after all. One dark, rainy night last week old Dr. Botts, who lives out on Van Ness avenue, was trudging homeward when he discovered that he was being dogged by a burly ruffian, evidently intent on robbery. They were in a lonely part of the town, and the man was just at his heels when the Doctor, buttoning up his coat to his chin, suddenly turned back and said to his pursuer:

"Please, sir, give me a dime to buy something to eat. I don't want to get whisky, indeed I don't; haven't had anything to eat for two days."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the footpad, repocketing his slungshot with profound disgust, "to think here I've been piping off a d—n pauper for over a mile." And he walked off cursing the infernal luck to blazes.

GENERAL GRANT has an exalted opinion of Florida's capabilities, and says the country is capable of supplying all the oranges, lemons, pineapples and other semi-tropical fruits used in the United States, the one hundred millions dollars of sugar now imported, materials for rope, bagging, coarse matting, etc.; any quantity of good pine, spruce and live oak timber, rice, etc. He thinks the State affords the best opening in the world for young men of small means and great industry.

A WISE MAN is known by the silence he keeps.