

NEGRO SUFFRAGE.

Several correspondents have addressed us recently on the question of universal enfranchisement, without distinction of color. We have not discussed the question hitherto because we could see no solution of the issue, and even now we cannot pretend to define a policy and its probable results. We have noticed much discussion of the question in public journals, and have read impassioned speeches in behalf of extending the right of suffrage to the negro; but no one has yet pointed out the way by which the desired result can be readily attained.

President Lincoln studiously avoided the issue, not because he was unwilling to have his views known on the subject; but because he could see no means, within the scope of law, by which the general government could enlarge or abridge the elective franchise. In his last address, just before his assassination, he expressed the wish that the right of suffrage could be extended to all who fought to preserve the life of the Republic; but he felt powerless to enforce his own convictions of right without fearful peril to our institutions. President Johnson has followed in the steps of his predecessor, and discards the policy of treating the revolted States as conquered provinces or territories. He holds that no State can secede, or obliterate its organic existence. Its government may be in abeyance, but the temporary triumph of treason, just as a mob may for a time overthrow the municipal authorities in a town or city; but the existence of the sovereignty of the State remains perpetually, and resumes its powers whenever the disturbing cause is removed. Preserving the existence of the States, Congress is thus without power to define the qualifications of the citizen; and the laws in force when treason usurped power, resume their supremacy as soon as the power of the insurgents is broken. Upon this principle State governments have been re-established by the loyal people in Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee and Virginia, and in all of them there has been no extension of suffrage to the freedmen whose disenthralment all acknowledge; and provisional governments have been organized in North Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Texas, simply to restore the civil rule in the various departments, and each, under the proclamations of the President, to choose officers by the exercise of the elective franchise in accordance with the laws in operation before secession—excluding of course such as have, by their overt acts of treason, made themselves public enemies.

While this policy seems to defeat negro suffrage, at least for the present and perhaps indefinitely, in the revolted States, we can see no remedy within the scope of law. It would have been a flagrant usurpation had President Johnson by an arbitrary exercise of power, proclaimed that in the organization of the State governments persons should vote who were denied the right of suffrage under the laws of those States. Under no circumstances whatever could the President exercise such a power. If the States are to be treated as conquered provinces and subject to the laws which govern territories, Congress, and not the President, must define the qualifications of citizenship; and if they are to be treated as States, whose legal power was for a time overwhelmed by treason but not obliterated, then the President has no more authority to proclaim the enfranchisement of the negro in North Carolina or Texas than he has to do it in Pennsylvania. In any aspect of the question, the Executive has no power whatever to enlarge the right of suffrage. We think that he has acted wisely, because lawfully, in the determination of the question, and the issue must in time be decided by the competent power of the respective States. To do might else would be to confront the constitution; to bring about the change by violence to law and precedent, and the evils resulting therefrom would counterbalance the good an hundred fold.

We share none of the feeling that revolts at the exercise of the elective franchise by the negro. If he protests against it merely because the negro is black, or because he has been wrongfully enslaved, how to unmanly prejudice or unpardonable ignorance. We have committed the crime and paid the terrible penalty of their enslavement for three-quarters of a century, and thousands of them have participated in the great struggle for the preservation of the Republic, and sealed their devotion to free institutions with their blood. They entered the struggle in the darkest hour of the war—when treason was victorious, defiant and threatening them with pitiless butchery; and they have won from every unprejudiced mind the respect due to undaunted valor. To deny the soldier of the Republic the right of suffrage because of an exceptional race and color, would be an act unworthy of a free people; and we hope to see the day when there shall be such distinction among our common defenders.

emancipated slave, let us not be unmindful of the cause of his pitiable deficiency. It is chargeable to the predominating race rather than to the victim of slavery. It is our act, our law, our social, political and business ostracism, that has plunged and held him remorselessly in mental darkness, and when the crime thereof has just avenged itself in a most fearful baptism of blood, it becomes not to stand aside and perpetuate his enslavement in another form because we have denied him the fitness for citizenship. Our first duty to the freedmen is to enlighten, encourage and strengthen them in their new state; and the problem of their citizenship will in time solve itself lawfully and justly. That they will become citizens or practically slaves, or extinct as a race in the United States, we regard as inevitable. They cannot remain as they are now. They will progress or retrograde—increase under enlightened and liberal laws, or degrade and diminish under the despotism of caste, as the States may be just or ungenerous; and the solution of the great question we do not pretend to foresee.

Looking practically at the proposed enfranchisement of the freedmen, we see no hope for it at an early day. It cannot be brought about, as things now are, except as time may prove their fitness for citizenship and dissipate the causeless prejudices which are cherished against them. The general government cannot, by any possible means, lawfully secure to them the right of suffrage. To the States alone belongs that power and duty; and thus far not one of the regenerated States has proposed it. A national convention has been suggested; but that would require the States to ratify its action, and the States would thus hold the issue in their hands in any event. In Pennsylvania it could not even be formally proposed for three years, and it would require five years to strike the word "white" from our organic law. By the 1st section of article 3d "every white freeman of the age of twenty-one years" is a voter, and article 10 provides, that "no amendment or amendments shall be submitted to the people of this State in any form, until one year after the date of their submission." Last year the people ratified the amendment enfranchising our soldiers, and no other amendment can be offered before 1869, unless by calling a constitutional convention. Regardless of the doubtful issue in this State on the merits of the question, Pennsylvania is thus precluded from formal action on the question at present.

—We have thus presented the question rather as it is than as we would have it, and must be content to abide the fruition of time for its solution.

SHALL THE LEADERS BE PARDONED?

Robert E. Lee, late commander-in-chief of the rebel armies, and Alexander H. Stephens, late Vice President of the so-called Confederate Government, have filed applications with President Johnson for special pardon. There are doubtless scores of similar applications from rebels of lesser note, who have held important positions under the government before the war, and under the Davis usurpation during the war. Ex-United States Senators and Congressmen, ex-Governors, and ex-Army officers of all grades, seem to have flooded the Departments of Washington with petitions for their restoration to all the rights of citizenship.

This journal has steadily advocated a liberal policy toward the revolted States, and magnanimous dealing even with leaders of the rebellion, now that they have failed disgracefully and must be impotent for evil henceforth if merely let alone, but to pardon them and make them again citizens, would be a degree of clemency positively criminal on the part of the general government. No man who has held a commission in the Army or Navy of the United States, or who has been a Senator or Congressman and subsequently joined in the rebellion, or who accepted office as a Senator or Congressman or member of the cabinet under the government of treason, or who as Governor of a State aided in its secession, or accepted the position of Executive under the rebel constitution, should ever be restored to citizenship under any circumstances whatever! There can be nothing to extenuate the treachery of such men, and it would be suicidal to the interests of the Republic just rescued from their bloody grasp, and a crowning wrong to the loyal people of the Nation, to make them again eligible to the trusts which they used to betray the government by shameful perfidy.

so let them remain. Let them live to wander through the land they have stained with gore from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, homeless and citizenless, as monuments of the mingled power and justice and magnanimity of the great Republic of the World.

WHEAT.

The ravages produced in the wheat crop this year by the rust, fly and weevil demand the serious attention of farmers to the character of the seed they will sow next fall. Nearly if not quite every variety of wheat in general use in this section has suffered more or less by the enemies above named; and it is never safe to continue to sow any variety that has once been seriously injured.

We believe that the farmers of the Cumberland Valley have never given much attention to the production of superior seed. They will go to any reasonable labor and expense to procure a promising variety, but we know of but a very few instances in which pains are taken to produce a superior seed by the propagation of the grain from selected plants. It is in this way that the best varieties of wheat are first secured, and they are then used with special care in the preparation of the seed from year to year until they all end in very ordinary qualities and cease to escape the enemies which have become so common and so fatal.

The "Giant Wheat" and "Pedigree Wheat" grown by Mr. Hallett, of England, in 1851 produced fifty-six bushels per acre, and have since attained great celebrity in the wheat growing countries of the world. The wheat was brought to perfection by selecting from year to year not only the best heads of wheat, but the best kernels of the finest ears and using them for seed. Some of the heads thus produced measured seven inches in length, and one grain has produced seventy-two heads and six thousand four hundred and eighty grains. The highest product Mr. Hallett attained on an acre was seventy-two bushels. Schuyler county, Ill., has produced wheat heads six and a half inches long, and Talbot county, Md., had a field of nearly thirty acres in 1850 that yielded fifty-five bushels to the acre, and nine of which produced sixty-four and a half bushels upon each acre. Mr. Hotchkiss, of Niagara county, New York, had six acres of wheat in 1850 which yielded sixty-three and a half bushels per acre and Mr. Powell, of the same county, raised seven acres in 1853 which yielded within a fraction of seventy bushels per acre. All these extraordinary products were attained by the selection of the best heads or grains for seed from year to year, until something like perfection in the stock and head was attained.

There are very few fields in this section this year which have entirely escaped the rust and weevil; but in very many localities there are portions of fields free from these ravages. From such spots farmers should be most careful to select their seed; and if they will take the trouble to select the best heads from such portions of their crops, they will, we believe, be amply repaid. It can be done after the wheat is cut and gathered in the barn, by opening the sheaves and selecting therefrom only such stalks as have clean, unbroken straw and well developed heads. It is not so tedious a process as might be supposed, and considering the small quantity wanted for seed, and the fearful losses sustained this year by farmers generally, it would be well worth the trouble to make the trial. At least, let every farmer select in this way a portion of his seed—enough to test the wisdom of the plan, and then his own experience can guide him thereafter. It is well established that a very high degree of perfection in both stock and grain, and a large increase in the yield can be attained in that way.

Congress after a contest of great bitterness, but he never took his seat, preferring to remain on the bench, which he adorned by his great legal attainments and blameless integrity. In 1833 he was elected U. S. Senator, in which position he served until President Jackson appointed him Minister to Russia. He continued abroad as Minister until 1843, and in February, 1844, was appointed Secretary of War by President Tyler. He had also been elected to Congress again in the fall of 1843, but served only a few weeks until he entered the Tyler cabinet. After the expiration of Tyler's administration he remained in private life until 1855, when, much against his will, he was nominated for the State Senate, and elected by reason of a schism between the Republicans and Americans. At the age of 76 he entered the State Senate, after having served in both branches of Congress as Foreign Minister, as Cabinet Officer, and both State and Federal Judge, and he commanded an unbounded measure of respect from men of all parties. Ever genial, most fascinating in conversation, and singularly graceful in manners, he was not only beloved but venerated by all around him. His most notable effort in the Senate was his leading off with Brewer, Randall, Steele and one or two other Democratic Senators in favor of the sale of the State Canals to the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Company—a measure against which there was much prejudice at the time, but which has been more than vindicated now as one of the most beneficial legislative movements of the last quarter of a century. He lived to see the full fruition of the measure by the completion of the Erie road from the seaboard to the Lakes. He was a consistent but liberal Democrat, and was always highly respected by his political opponents. He was twice married—his second wife, who still survives him, being a sister of the late Vice President Dallas. He was a most accomplished scholar, and an earnest and forcible writer, an eloquent orator, and was a true type of God's noblest work. Few men die so widely lamented as William Wilkins.

THE Spirit is attempting to capture President Johnson by gradual approaches, in imitation of its party. Each week it becomes a little stronger in its commendation of some of his official acts. In last week's issue it says that "the Democracy have seen in the course of the President much to approve, and very little to condemn," and in a few weeks more it will probably declare him a second Jackson. We congratulate the Spirit on its lucid intervals, and bid it good speed in getting over in support of a sound Union administration. If it had landed a little in that direction in the dark days of the Republic, when Johnson stood up against the sugges of treason North and South like a wall of adamant, and when it counseled only in the interest of the country's foes, it would have done the nation some service. Now, when to go wrong would be hopeless folly, the Spirit crawls in under the shadow of a Union President, and like all new converts, seems more Union than Union men themselves. Go in freely!

GEN. CAMERON, chairman of the Union State Committee, has postponed the Union State Convention called for the 19th of July, and requests the State Committee to meet on that day at the Lochiel House, Harrisburg, at 3 o'clock P. M. He says that the convention has been postponed "in compliance with the earnest appeals of many prominent Union men, citizens of different counties in the State." The Democrats had previously postponed their convention from June until August.

We welcome Thomas McElrath, Esq., back to the list of publishers. For many years he was the leading manager of the Tribune, and under his direction it attained the highest measure of success ever reached by any journal in the country. He now appears as publisher of The Citizen, a weekly journal devoted to news, and many matters, politics, literature and science, and it sparkles with freshness in every column. We heartily commend it to persons who would read a first class weekly from New York. Price \$3 per annum.

Gov. CURTIS is endeavoring to have the State prisoners, confined at various military forts, brought before the proper authorities, that they may be punished if guilty, or be set at liberty if innocent. His object is to save the National Administration from being misjudged by the Northern masses.

WASHINGTON.

The Weather.—The City Fall of Southerners—President Johnson and the South Carolina Delegation.—The Conspiracy Trial.—John W. Forney, His Career and His Home.

Notwithstanding we have frequent showers of rain, the weather remains uncommonly hot and sultry, and is driving many transient persons to more congenial places in the North, leaving but few strangers, other than those from the South, and they are legion. They are rapidly filling up every nook and corner in the city, so that soon again this will be a city of Southerners in place of Yankees. The swag and haughty demeanor which predominated in them in their better days still is visible to a great extent, but generally they conduct themselves with great propriety.

am a Southern man; have owned slaves, bought slaves, but never sold one. You and I understand this better; we know our friends are mistaken, [here the President rose; up and continued emphatically,] and I tell you that I don't want you to have the control of these negro votes against the vote of this poor white man. I repeat our friends here are mistaken, as you and I know as to where the control of that negro vote would fall. When they come to talk about the elective franchise, I say let each State judge for itself. I am for free government; for emancipation; and I am for emancipating the white man as well as the black man.

A Delegate.—I see you are for maintaining the Government and the Constitution.

The President.—Yes, sir, intact.

Debate.—We are at this present moment without law. You have the power.

President.—Don't let us proceed upon the idea of power, but upon that of right. My opinion is that, for the present, you must have an agent of Government—a military or civil Governor, call it what you will; then have a convention, amend your Constitution, abolishing slavery, adopting the amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Debate.—As far as white and black men are concerned, they come into the market as laborers, subject to the same general laws of supply and demand.

Debate.—But it is necessary to have a convention upon some question of fact.

President.—Certainly; and then it remains with the Government to receive them, or to leave them out in the cold. I will use a common expression.

Debate.—Then our admission or rejection would depend upon our adopting or not adopting what you think right?

President.—No; I only advise: I would have you understand me more correctly. In the first instance we proceed upon this idea, that the Constitution guarantees to every State a republican form of government. Now there comes a rebellion which has suspended the functions of the Government; in order to restore to the State its republican form of government, which it has lost, it is necessary to take some initiative step.

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Debate.—But there is the fact that slavery is not mentioned at all in the Constitution of the State.

President.—(Smiling).—But there is the fact that it has existed in the State, and you can amend the Constitution so that it will say it does not exist there.

Debate.—Then this is a sine qua non to proceed on being restored.

The President informed them that it was.

Judge Foster, a delegate, then said that the people of the South would submit, and he had no doubt they were coming out of the struggle wiser than they went into it and it is a part of wisdom to make the best of circumstances. The Delegation was then requested to nominate a Military Governor. The President said he would submit the whole to a Cabinet meeting on next Tuesday and would see the delegation again after that.

The Military Commission meets again on Tuesday, when Governor, the witness whose evidence was suppressed, and whose statements were denied by Gen. Wood and parties in Canada, who charged that he personated another individual) will be placed again upon the witness stand. Governor has been reported missing ever since the day he gave in evidence. He had several aliases, serving the rebels under the name of James Watson Wallace and as Col. Geo. W. Margrave. It is now said that he went from here to Montreal, where the gang Sanders, Cleary & Co. transferred him into a steamer denying that he was Governor, at all, and compelled him to swear that the evidence was given by some other man who had stolen his personality, and in order to clear their names compelled him to offer a reward of \$500 for the arrest of the counterfeiter Governor. After this he was freed and fled toward the States.

Before crossing he was recognized by a Police officer who arrested him—order to get the reward he himself had offered. He was taken back to Montreal, but again escaped by the aid of friends. This is the gossip now going and no doubt some interesting details will be brought out on Tuesday.

Miss Harris, who will be recollecting shot A. J. Burroughs in the Treasury Department on the 30th of last January, is to be arraigned for trial in the criminal court on Monday, July 3d. It is stated that she has just recovered from a malignant attack of small-pox, which has greatly marred her heretofore good looks.

Forty more regiments are ordered to be mustered out of the Army of the Potomac, which will amount to wind it up as an organization.

Roger A. Pryor has taken the oath and commenced the practice of law in Petersburg.

The loyalty of John Minor Beards proves a profitable investment, for we learn that already he has succeeded in getting an order for the payment of \$10,000 for wood destroyed, taken or furnished since the war began. If this is so, many men, much more loyal, who have furnished coal, wood, meat, &c., over two years ago, and who are yet waiting and spending money in endeavoring to have their claims adjusted, will be rather disgusted with this settlement of the claim of Mr. Beards, who, if he does nothing to aid the rebels, never did do anything to aid the Union cause.

During the past week a large number of clerks have been appointed in the Treasury Department, principally men who have faithfully served their term in the army.

All men connected with the Signal Corps whose term expires prior to October 1st, are to be mustered out.

Every person that was here on the day of the grand review will recollect the beautiful horse rode by Gen. Custer, and which ran off with him from in front of the reviewing stand, having become frightened at the bouquets showered on the General. The horse was captured in an expedition up the Shenandoah Valley, and is valued at \$9,000. It has been stated that the owner has proved his loyalty and received an order from Secretary Stanton to take him, wherever found.

We have authority to state that Mr. Stanton has given no such authority and no owner has called concerning the horse.

A government sale of 1,500 wagons and 20,000 sets of single mule harness will commence here on next Wednesday.

PERSONAL.

—Maj. Gen. Couch has resigned and is at his home in Taunton, Mass.

—Hon. Jos. W. Forney will deliver the oration before the literary societies of Dickinson College to-day.

—Maj. Harry Gilmore, the rebel who was so conspicuous in the burning of Chambersburg, is in Fort Warren, and may be brought here one of these days to face a Franklin county jury.

—George A. Trenholm, formerly Secretary of the Rebel Treasury, was arrested at Columbia, S. C., last week. He was taken to Hilton Head, and it is expected that he will be sent from there to Fortress Monroe.

—The Richmond papers say that Dick Turner, the keeper of Libby Prison, under rebel rule, was recaptured on Saturday week, and is now confined in one of the cells of Libby, constructed by the rebels for the confinement of Col. Straight.

—Edmund Ruffin, of Virginia, the man who fired the first gun on Sumter, blew his brains out near Richmond on Saturday week. A statement was found among his papers to the effect, that he preferred death to living under the United States Government.

—Jefferson Davis, it is now understood to be settled, will be tried by a civil tribunal, and probably by the U. S. District Court for the Maryland District, Chief-Justice Chase presiding. We do not yet learn whether he is to be tried for treason only, or for other offenses also.

—Cooper Gibbs, in command of the post at Andersonville, is in Washington on parole. Captain Henry Wirz, who had control of that terrible prison pen, is also there in confinement, awaiting his trial for murdering our prisoners. A Judge Advocate has already been assigned, and is now preparing the testimony.

—The Times' Washington special says the Government has received documentary proofs incontrovertible, of the guilt of Jeff. Davis, in the matter of the inhuman and most brutal treatment of Union prisoners. When disclosed to the public as facts, as they will be in a few days they will astound the civilized world.

—Letters of administration on the estate of the late President Lincoln were issued on Thursday week by the probate Court of Sangamon County, to Hon. David Davis, of Bloomington, Judge of the United States Circuit Court for the Southern District of Illinois. The Hon. J. F. Stuart is surety upon the bond. The value of the estate is \$75,000.

—The family of the President, consisting of Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Patterson (the new mistress of the White House), and Andy, Jr. who is expected to supply the place of the frolicsome Tad, arrived in Washington last week. The party were met at Cincinnati by William Prescott Smith of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, who accompanied them to Washington.

—Hon. Geo. Rush Smith died at his residence in Philadelphia on Friday last. He has been more or less prominent in the politics of the State during the last twenty-five years. He entered the legislature about 1841 and served four or five years, but not consecutively, and in 1859 he was chosen to the Senate. At the time of his death he was Health officer under Gov. Curtin. He was a kind and genial gentleman.

—We have the sad duty of recording the death of Rear Admiral Samuel Francis Dupont, of the United States Navy. He died at the La Pierre House, in Philadelphia, at five o'clock on the morning of the 23d. He was born at Bergen Point, New Jersey, September 27, 1793, and was consequently sixty-one years old. He entered the navy on the 19th of December, 1815, and received his present commission on the 16th of July, 1862. He vacated but a few months of filling out an honorable half century in the navy of his country. Rear Admiral Dupont sailed with old Stewart, of the Constitution, in 1817; commanded in the Congress, off California, in 1847-8, and in 1856 carried the United States Minister to China in the Minnesota, relieving Mr. Reed, of the Powhatan, and Com. Tatnall. He returned in 1858, and in 1861 took command of the Philadelphia yard. He commanded the squadron which captured Bay Point and Hilton Head. The 7th of November, 1861, will long be remembered, as also his assault on Charleston in 1862-3. Admiral Dahlgren relieved him two years ago on the ensuing Fourth.

—The death at Washington, on the 21st inst., of Mrs. Frances Seward, wife of the Hon. Wm. H. Seward, will be widely and sincerely mourned as more than a family bereavement. Mrs. Seward, born Francis Miller, daughter of Judge Elijah Miller, one of the honored pioneers of central New-York, had attained the age of sixty years, and had filled for thirty years an exalted position without once exciting an enemy or offending a friend, and without ever meeting one who had either the power or the wish to speak ill of her. Intellectually gifted and cultivated far beyond the average not merely of her sex but of her age, she gave much lead and thought to public affairs without neglecting or slighting any of the duties of a beloved, exemplary wife and mother; and every pulsation of her heart beat strongly for Justice, Humanity, and Freedom to all.

An inviolable and sufferer for several years past, she had necessarily withdrawn in great measure from society, solaced by the admiring love of a devoted family and walking cheerfully heavenward in the light of an unshadowed Christian faith. She has remained for the most part at home during the last four years, but hastened to Washington on the first tidings of the murderous assault on her husband and son, and the overtaxing of her impaired physical strength by that trying journey probably shortened her earthly career. All her children (three sons and a daughter) survive her. Her mortal remains will doubtless rest in the cemetery of Auburn, the city of her birth, which, though not always her residence, was always her home.

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