

Evening Telegraph

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1866.

Republican Form of Government.

To the Editor of The Evening Telegraph:—BURLINGTON, December 7.

In your editorial in Friday's TELEGRAPH, entitled "The True Point at Issue," I notice the following paragraph:—

"And the Constitution, in imposing upon Congress the guarantee to every State a republican form of government, necessarily clothed that body with the power of deciding what are and what are not republican forms of government."

The only ostensible reason given by superficial politicians of the Republican school why the Southern States are not in the enjoyment of a republican form of government, is, that they have not conferred inequality before the law, or in the matter of suffrage, constituted a departure from a republican form of government, than the framers of the Constitution were either knaves or fools.

"But the authority extends no further than to a guarantee of a republican form of government, which supposes a pre-existing form of government of the form which is to be guaranteed. As long, therefore, as the existing forms of government are continued by the States, they are guaranteed by the Federal Constitution to be maintained."

Mark too, more especially, the language of this latter clause, "When the States may choose;" not the Congress, as your theory would have it. Now in this brief extract is presented an overwhelming answer to all the crudities and sophistries of the Republican party, as to the meaning of this clause in the Constitution. It makes manifest that it gives no authority for the United States, either through the Executive or Congress, to interfere in the formation of the Government of States. It is a luminous and authoritative exposition of this clause, made by one of the framers of that instrument, who did more to shape and fashion it than all the others engaged in the great work.

It really appears to me, looking at the entire course of the Republican party, both in the sentiment expressed by its press, and by the abnormal action of its majority in Congress towards the defeated section, tearing from them such concessions that if granted, will only serve to encourage discord and strife, and in the end destroy all hopes of a lasting peace; that, in the words of Dryden—

"At least such subtle covensants shall be made, 'Till peace itself is in a masquerade."

It is a dangerous sate, rest assured, that you are playing, in substituting revenge for justice—the will of the stronger for constitutional obligation. You remember what Mr. Webster once said:—"That it is no matter whether the Sultan of Turkey robs a subject of his property and his rights; or whether, under the notion of republican equality, the property and rights acquired by one shall be taken from him by a majority."

For a time you may triumph, but be assured that you are only "laying up wrath for the day of wrath." The result of the recent elections, in this awful crisis of the country's history, have made the Republican party the trustees of the public liberty and safety. Never before in the world's history was so momentous a trust imposed upon a political organization. You have it in your power to restore unity, peace, and lasting prosperity to a distracted and divided country. If you are the great national party you profess to be, you can rise superior to the ignoble passions and narrow prejudices of the hour, and make your name and fame eternal by the beneficial agencies through which you can accomplish these lasting blessings for the nation.

If these blessings are not secured, after the freight cost that has been so freely paid for their attainment—if you prove incausally false to the solemn pledges you have even, receiving the gratification of a mean partisan malignity and revenge to the unity and peace of your country—then, brilliant and unprecedented as has been your triumph, so much the more fearful will be your fall. That Nemesis, "which never yet of human wrong left the unbalanced scale," will have its judgments in store.

—There are times when the fullest discussion of public questions should be welcomed. Hence, we publish with pleasure the able and well-written article of our correspondent. Let us indicate a few points in reply:—

First. The Constitution clearly implies that the question as to whether any particular State, or States, have a republican form of government, may arise. Whenever that question does arise, we ascertained, in the article from which our correspondent quotes, that Congress is necessarily clothed with the power of deciding what are and what are not republican forms of government. Does our correspondent deny this?

erments, erected by the President, republican in form? A large majority of the people in some of these States deny that they are, and appeal to be delivered from them. Congress must necessarily decide the question. Mr. Madison's theory contemplates the guarantee to the States of their existing republican forms of government, or of other republican forms of government which they may choose to substitute therefor. This will do very well as far as it goes; but it is very evident that the Constitution also covers the case of a subversion of a republican form of government in any State by a foreign power or by the people themselves. If Great Britain were to seize upon the State of Maine, for instance, and, subverting its republican form of government, were to erect an aristocratic or despotic form in its stead, and were to hold it in that condition for five years, and the United States were then to reconquer it, does anybody doubt that we should have the right to institute a republican form of government there? If the same State were itself to become so enamored of royalty as to cut into a monarchy, and maintain that form of government by arms for five years, does any one doubt that, upon conquering and overthrowing that monarchy, we should have the right to reconstruct the State of Maine, and guarantee a republican form of government to it?

Thirdly. Our correspondent, though evidently not inclined to be a "superficial politician," is certainly not posted in regard to the early history of the country, when he asserts that in not one of the old thirteen States could free negroes exercise the right of suffrage. On the contrary, at the time of the ratification of the Articles of Confederation, free negroes in free of the States (and New Jersey was one of them) possessed the franchise of electors on equal terms with their citizens; and by these Articles free negroes were made citizens of the United States. It is true that slavery then prevailed in all the States, but it was almost universally condemned, and looked upon as a temporary and vanishing institution.

Fourthly. It may be difficult to determine to what extent a State may deprive its citizens of equal rights, and still maintain a republican form of government. But there must be some limit. A State which disfranchises a very small portion of its citizens may, perhaps, on the principle of de minimis non curatur, have a republican form of government; but one that should disfranchise a large majority of them, could hardly be said to have such a form of government. There can be no such things as the people ruling themselves, the rule of the majority, the people making their own laws, etc.—elements which would seem to be essential to a republican form of government—where a majority of the people are deprived of political power. The established rule of the minority is the essence of aristocracy. We hold that the Declaration of Independence and the preamble to the Constitution enunciate the true principles of a republican form of government.

Fifthly. The Republican party seeks to establish equal rights among all the citizens of our common country. Grant the fullest scope to its most radical members, and they would do nothing more than to make all men equal before the law. If this shall invoke upon us any "Nemesis," it will certainly be that one "which never yet of human wrong left the unbalanced scale." We hold that the country has not much to fear from a party against which the gravest charge its enemies can bring is, that it would establish universal justice and equal rights. We hold that, in the existing state of affairs, Congress not only has the right, but is by the Constitution solemnly bound, to institute in the late Rebel States republican forms of government; and that in so doing, and only in so doing, will essential justice be done.

Political Hypocrisy Exposed.

JACK ROGERS, of New Jersey, the present Democratic leader of the House, got into deep water yesterday before he knew it. He was indulging in the usual cry of his party, that the people of the South were being compelled to submit to taxation without representation, when Judge Kelley brought him up standing with the pertinent question, whether he admitted that the colored men of the South, who pay taxes, ought to be allowed representation? Jack at once dropped the cry of justice, and fled for refuge to the Dred Scott case. But Mr. Kelley pressed the question, whether it was liberty or despotism that denied, not only representation, but citizenship, to people who were taxed?

Jack squirmed and dodged, with the reply that if the gentleman's theory of despotism was correct, the framers of the Constitution were despots. Mr. Kelley then kindly suggested that he had not asked about the opinion of the founders of the Government, but about the opinion of the leader of the Democratic party of this House—the honorable gentleman from New Jersey. Was he in favor of denying both the right of representation and the right of citizenship to four millions of American people and their posterity? Jack replied that he was in favor of liberty, but not in favor of negro suffrage.

Hereupon Mr. Thayer inquired if he had not voted against the Constitutional amendment abolishing slavery? Jack owned that he had.

A richer instance of a demagogue being driven into his hole has rarely occurred in the halls of Congress. The cry of no taxation without representation by a class of politicians who are seeking to deprive four millions of citizens of all political rights, is the height of hypocrisy, and deserves the scathing rebuke Judge Kelley has just administered to it.

The Senatorial Discussion of Suffrage for Women.

The discussion in the Senate upon Mr. Cowan's amendment to the District Suffrage bill, to strike out the word "male," was continued yesterday with unabated interest. Senator Brown, of Missouri, made a strong and elaborate speech, taking the broad and radical ground that the elective franchise is a natural right, which society may not limit on the ground of race, color, or sex. He should grieve to think, he said, that his own liberties were held by any such frail tenure as is implied in the doctrine that the elective franchise is a privilege, a gracious boon, which majorities may confer or withhold. Such a doctrine, established and crystallized in the public mind, would ring the death-knell of American liberty. As to women, he held that the argument against their participating in the turmoils of political campaigns, was an argument against the hustings, and not against female suffrage; and, as to the argument that they ought not to vote because they could not serve in the militia, that was a ground, in fact, as men were now engaged, including physical inability, and were yet allowed the right of suffrage.

Garrett Davis, of Kentucky, followed in one of his old, stereotyped harangues about the inferiority of the negro, including his skull and his shins. Davis is the "Rip Van Winkle" of the Senate, only he will probably never wake up to the fact that he has been asleep during the great revolution that has passed over this country.

Mr. Buckalew, of this State, was opposed to extending the suffrage, but should vote for Cowan's amendment, on the ground that the argument in favor of conferring suffrage upon negroes applied with greater force to women.

Mr. Doolittle advanced the luminous theory, as the result of laborious reflection, that the true foundation upon which to rest the suffrage in any republican community is the family; and said that if the question were a new one, and left to him to determine, he would allow a man who was the head and supporter of a family to vote, and no others.

Several Senators, in the course of the discussion, avowed their willingness to vote for extending the suffrage to women, as a separate and independent proposition, but they did not want the pending measure embarrassed by it. The yeas and nays were then called on Mr. Cowan's amendment to strike out the word "male" before the word person: Yeas—Messrs. Anthony, Brown, Buckalew, Cowan, Foster, Nesmith, Patterson, Kiddle, and Wade—9. Nays—Messrs. Castell, Chandler, Conness, Croswell, Davis, D. Don, Doolittle, Edmunds, Fessenden, Ford, Fremont, Grimes, Harris, Henderson, Leach, Lincoln, Howard, Howe, Kirkwood, Lane, Morgan, Morrill, Nelson, Poland, Pomeroi, Ramsey, Ross, Salisbury, Sherman, Sprague, Stewart, Sumner, Treadwell, Van Winkle, Wiley, Williams, Wilson, and Yeates—67.

So the amendment was not adopted.

The State of New York and the Central Railroad.

The Republican party has gained eight thousand votes in the State of New York by the success of its great combination yesterday to secure the control of the New York Central Railroad. Twenty millions of dollars' worth of stock voted, and for the first time in the history of the road a Republican was placed at its head. Henry Keep, Esq., was elected President, and Wells G. Fargo, Esq., Vice-President. Both of these gentlemen are self-made men, each having started a poor boy, Keep having been an errand-boy in a fifth-rate railroad office in Michigan, and Fargo having driven a stage. No better evidence of the character of our institutions can be adduced, than that those two poor lads have risen to the head of all the railroad interests in America. The death of Dean Richmond weakened the ring, the success of yesterday crushed it. Hereafter the eight thousand votes the Road controls will be given for the Republican party, and the State made sure for the radicals.

To Be Inquired Into.

THE following significant proceedings were had in the Senate yesterday:— "Mr. Trumbull (Illinois) offered the following:—"Resolved, That the President be requested to inform the Senate whether any person appointed to any office required by law to be filled by an act with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who was commissioned during the recess previous to the assembling of the present Congress, to fill a vacancy, has been continued in such office, and permitted to discharge its functions, either by the granting of a new commission or otherwise, since the end of the session of the Senate on the 24th day of July last, without the submission of the name of such person to the Senate for its confirmation; and particularly whether a Surgeon or Naval Officer of the Port of Philadelphia has thus been continued in office without the consent of the Senate."

"Mr. Edmunds (Vt.) would move to amend the resolution by adding 'whether, if any such officer has exercised any such functions, he has received any compensation in salary?'" "Mr. Trumbull accepted the above as an amendment, and as amended the resolution was adopted."

MEXICO.—Mexican affairs have taken a new turn. Maximilian has abandoned his intention of leaving the country, and now says he will stay and shed the last drop of his blood in its defense. The Bishops have raised \$25,000,000 for his immediate use, and pledge that amount to him yearly. The merchants of Mexico have also pledged \$10,000,000 annually. Ortega's partisans generally, it is said, are giving in adhesion to the Empire.

A RESOLUTION was introduced into the Senate yesterday by Mr. Morgan, returning the thanks of Congress to Cyrus W. Field for his services in connection with the Atlantic cable, and ordering a gold medal, in commemoration of that great event, to be presented to him.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

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