

Evening Telegraph

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1866.

The Nation's Life and Progress.

There is no fact which strikes the student of the political history of our country with more force than the constant and irresistible tendency of the people towards national unity.

During their entire colonial existence the people of this country were, in fact, a constituent and organic portion of the British Empire, but the necessities of their condition, their common dangers and wants, the contiguity of the territory they inhabited, their mutual commerce, the intermarriage of their children, their common language, and their common sufferings from British tyranny, had already developed the germ of a separate and vigorous national life.

The development of our country since the adoption of the Constitution has augmented the power of the national life. All our great physical enterprises have served to bind us together more firmly as one people.

At last, the great war of the Rebellion came upon us—a direct attack upon the national integrity and life. It was repelled and subdued by the nation—the true national life revealing and vindicating itself in the most sublime and inspiring manner.

There is in this growth of national feeling a tendency to conform all our institutions to the true germ of our national life. That germ is to be found in the doctrine of liberty and equality enunciated in the Declaration of Independence.

Slavery was the deadly foe of all true nationality in our country. It was a sectional institution, founded upon principles openly at war with our republican system.

The overthrow of slavery demands that all its adjuncts and accessories—its unequal and disfranchising laws—its system of taxation without representation—its iniquitous plan of representation in Congress—in a word, its whole system—shall be overthrown also.

It is the effort to prevent the realization of the true national ideal that now agitates the country. The remnants of the old slave system still encumber the track of progress.

The debris of the Rebellion is in the way. All these things must and will be removed. The nation will not be thwarted in its sublime and holy purpose.

Political Thimble-rigging.

MR. COWAN made a long speech in the Senate on Tuesday, in regard to the condition of the Rebel States.

"He denied the doctrine that the State Governments were destroyed by the act of secession and asserted that it was subversive of the principles upon which the Constitution was formed. A State was a corporation, limited by the charter which created it.

The above is a pretty fair specimen of what passes for "statesmanship" and a knowledge of constitutional law in conservative quarters.

The assumption that lies at the bottom of all these fallacies is that a State cannot really do what it cannot legally do. A State cannot legally secede, rebel, make war upon the Union, or commit any other crime; therefore, it cannot do it at all.

A railroad corporation is bound by law to keep a good life-preserver for each passenger it may carry; therefore, it does keep them. A bank is bound by its charter not to issue more than three dollars in currency for every dollar in specie in its vaults; therefore, it never does, as a fact, issue more than three to one.

When one State makes unjust war upon another, overruns its territory and kills its citizens, is the crime merely that of the blind instruments by which it is done? There was never a doctrine more corrupting in morals, or more false in law, than this one put forth by our repudiated Pennsylvania Senator.

The late Rebel States could not legally "secede," but they did as a matter of fact. They could not legally wage war against the Union, yet their armies were not, on that account, a mere myth.

Mr. Cowan brings forward his theory for a certain object. That object is to preserve the Rebel State Governments. Hence, he asserts that the Rebel States could not rebel, commit treason, or perpetrate any other crime.

"Citizens of the Southern States could not be punished for treason, because they yielded obedience to their State Government when the general Government afforded them no protection or means of resistance."

In answer to a question from a Democratic Senator—

"Whether a citizen of South Carolina, which State had seceded, and had long protected him against the compulsion of the Federal Government, could even, though he had been willing to rebel, be punished for treason, Mr. Cowan said, 'Certainly not.'"

Here we have the condition of things exactly reversed. The State is now the authoritative party, and not the citizen. The citizen, even though he wages war against the Union, cannot be guilty of treason, because he commits it in obedience to the State! When the State Government is to be shielded, then it is the citizen that does everything; when the citizen is to be shielded, then it is the State that does everything.

The great masses of the people turn away in disgust from all this conservative jugglery and thimble-rigging. The Rebellion was too serious a matter to be thus easily disposed of.

The 4th of March next, the State of Pennsylvania will no longer be misrepresented by one whose treachery to principle is only equalled by his quackery in statesmanship.

The Nebraska Case.

THE bill for the admission of Nebraska was further discussed in the Senate yesterday. There is a division of sentiment among the Republicans in regard to insisting upon the elimination of the word "white" from the Constitution of the proposed State as a prerequisite to her admission.

Our own view is that it is best to make a clean record on this matter. It will be better for Nebraska herself to have that question rightfully settled now. Disfranchisement on account of color is unjust, anti-republican, and demoralizing. Congress should lend it no sanction, even by implication.

The precedent may as well be established now, that no State can hereafter obtain admission to the Union with any despotic or anti-republican features in its Constitution.

A Neglect at Once to be Remedied.

We desire to call the attention of the Mayor, or probably the Fire Marshal, to the fact that no steps have been taken to prevent the various fire-plugs freezing up during the coming cold weather. None of the ordinary precautions have been taken to render them secure.

RISTORI AS "LADY MACBETH."

The attempted rendition into Italian, by Giulio Cascano, of Shakespeare's sublime tragedy of Macbeth is a complete abortion, resulting only in a mutilated semblance of one of the grandest efforts of the immortal bard.

In the sleep-walking scene alone, Ristori reaches to a subtle interpretation of the darkly working heart, which, keeping ever its blood-stained record, with wary, resolute hand, from the prying eyes of friend or foe, let out in sleep the terrible tale of guilt, eating, vulture-like, into the soul, that unassuming offers its Moloch tribute, "death without outcry."

Ristori's fine conception and perfect rendition of this most difficult scene redeemed the entire play. Here she was again the great artist, and with this "well kept picture in the brain," we can afford to forget the shortcomings and mutilated text that made us almost marvel that the buried bard could sleep so quietly and know his handiwork so marvellous!

The Italian translation of this tragedy can convey no idea to the mind of any artist of a single character worth mentioning. Hence, the result is a most lamentable failure; the more to be regretted, as the repertoire of Ristori offers sufficient scope and variety to enable her to leave Shakespeare at peace in his verbiage.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

NEWS-PAPER ADVERTISING.—JOY, COE & CO., N. E. corner of FIFTH and CHESTNUT Streets, Philadelphia, and TRIBUNE BUILDING, New York, are agents for the "TELEGRAPH," and for the News-papers of the whole country.

THE UNDERSIGNED, TREASURER of the Organized Company of persons interested in and opposed to selling the GERMAN LETTER-PRESS, has received a large number of orders to carry out the above object. Prompt attention requested.

PHILADELPHIA AND READING RAILROAD HOLIDAY EXCURSION TICKETS. Good from December 23, 1866, to January 2, 1867, will be issued at reduced rates between all stations on the main road and branches.

PRESS CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA.—THIRD ANNUAL BANQUET, December 22, 1866. Active and Contributing Members desiring tickets can procure them of the Committee, at the Club Rooms, No. 615 CHESTNUT Street. Hours from 10 A. M. to 2 P. M.

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