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

Nullification in Alexandria.

From the Tribune. The Reconstruction bill is disregarded by the President. March 5, three days after it was made a law by Congress, a municipal election was held in Alexandria, Virginia, at which legal voters were excluded on account of color. Nothing could be plainer than the terms of the law, nothing more absolute than the right of colored men to vote in Alexandria on Tuesday. The refusal of the judges of elections to receive their ballots was an insolent defiance of the law, the desperate act of men who knew themselves to be a minority, and who elected a Rebel Mayor by denying colored men their rights. In Alexandria 900 men voted for the Rebel candidates; there were 56 radical white and more than 1000 colored voters. The latter, excluded from the polls, voted at polls of their own, but when the result is a clear radical majority, the Rebel candidate for Mayor, Hugh Latham, declared elected.

But this defiance of the law is not as important as the disobedience of the President to its commands. He was directed to enforce it, yet without one step of his to prevent, 1000 legal voters of the United States are banished from the polls. By General Canby's order—not Mr. Johnson's—a police force of five hundred soldiers was sent to Alexandria to preserve order; but the President, with an army at his orders, did not send one man to execute the laws. The act of the Alexandria Rebels was even worse than a riot—it was a deliberate contempt of the Government, and we can see no excuse for Mr. Johnson's failure to meet disobedience with authority. There could have been no doubt of his duty to interfere in the Alexandria election. The law declares that its provisions shall apply to "all elections to any office." It makes no exceptions, fixes no distant day for its provisions to go into operation; it took effect from the moment of its passage, and Mr. Johnson was as much bound to obey it last Tuesday as he would be near home.

We are told, but can scarcely believe, that the Attorney-General of the United States is of the opinion that the President was not required to prevent this outrage, because a military commander has not been appointed in the district of which Virginia is a part. But where is the law in any case which obliges the President to act through the District commander or that gives any discretion to a commander or to the President himself, in the matter of the elective franchise? The right to vote is absolute; the language of the law is unmistakable; the same laws exist independently of the Legislature. Yet even if the opinion had any value, it would be no excuse, for if military commanders are necessary to the execution of this portion of the law, why did not the President appoint them? The law declares that certain things shall be done, and they are not done; that he shall appoint certain officers, and they are not appointed.

In the Alexandria election the authority of the Government has been insulted and defied, and as the first election held under the law, it is the very case in which that authority should have been upheld. When we consider that Alexandria is but an hour's ride from the Capitol, almost under the eyes of the President, and that there he permitted the law of which he is the Executive to be trampled under foot, his apologies for the massacre at New Orleans, his indifference to the disorganization of the Civil Rights bill, cease to surprise. No do we so much care that the Rebel voters of Alexandria disobeyed the law, for that is an offense which injures but one thousand citizens; we look at the disregard of the law by Andrew Johnson as a matter which affects the nation.

The press of the South is divided in opinion respecting the course most proper to be pursued in this grave conjuncture. The following article from the Charlottesville Chronicle presents a view that will more and more prevail, because it is founded on a correct estimate of the situation:— There are three courses for the Legislature to take:—The first is to fight. The second is to fold arms and do nothing. The third is to call a State convention. There would be an unanimous vote in favor of the first if we had any power to make a decent resistance. The second is between the second and third. The third leads to an acceptance of the cruel and mercenary terms imposed upon us. The second leads to the same thing—and to much more.

The question now is, Who shall get the control of the State under the new dispensation of universal suffrage?—the white or the black? The provisional government, with universal black and qualified white suffrage, is already upon us. The court house bells in all the counties will soon summon the white and black alike to the polls. In addition to this, while the provisional government lasts, we shall have martial law in Virginia—the liberty of every man in the hands of Federal officers. It has been said that we had better have military law than submit to such degradation as is involved in the acceptance of the terms. This is true ten times over. But military law is not the alternative. It is military law and negro suffrage and the proscription of our leading men. These three things come upon us without our lifting a finger. This is not all; there will be a Convention to ratify the terms proposed. We stand off, while the South and the Union are divided, and five hundred thousand negroes? They will have a Convention, and they will put the State back in the Union, and they will give us State constitution. That constitution will be like the constitution of Tennessee; it will perpetuate the power in their own hands.

A State Convention can be framed in literal compliance with the act of Congress, which will take all minor elections from the people—leaving only the Governor, the members of the General Assembly, and members of Congress to be elected by the popular vote. And it may be that a property and educational qualification can be secured as a condition of holding office of any kind. We are, therefore, for a convention—at once. It is not worth while to resist the deluge; the man who trusts in God will build an ark that shall float upon the tempestuous waters. It is only the weak that are assailed by the blows of fate. Christians and Anglo-Saxons, stand up in a sea of troubles may have been a Roman, but it is not a Christian or an English virtue. To do nothing now is social suicide—it is death.

We are very far from despair, black as the prospect is. The immediate aim of our State should be to get back into the Union as quickly as possible. There we shall be, measurably, at least, shielded from the radical storm. If we stay out much longer, we shall be in a position to add to negro suffrage. There we have at least reached a resting-place; there we can control our State affairs; there we can make another State Constitution. If standing still would keep matters in their present posture, the true policy would be to stand still. But, as the Charlottesville paper forcibly shows, politics will not stand still in the State, even if the conservative part of the people do. Those who, in the South and elsewhere, advocate the do-nothing policy, reason precisely as they would if the suffrage had not, by the new law, been conferred upon the negroes. Whether there shall be political action no longer depends upon the majority of the old voters; that question is taken out of their hands by the infamous enactment of Congress. There is now a power of political movement quite independent of the white majority. The only choice left them is, whether they will be horse or rider.

If the white majority merely act the part of indignant spectators, the States will be reor-

ganized without them; State Constitutions will be framed after the Missouri and Tennessee pattern, disfranchising all who cannot take an odious oath; and voluntary abstention will be exchanged for permanent disfranchisement. If Conventions are held and Constitutions formed without their participation, those Constitutions will be promptly accepted by this bigoted radical Congress, and the States admitted under them. Military rule might be tolerable; but inaction will not secure the continuance even of this hideous blessing. The real choice lies between negro-radical control, and reorganization by the white majority under the Sherman bill. A policy of inaction is not in conformity with the restless, impatient American character, and the people cannot, for any length of time, be held to it. But if the Southern States are reorganized by the negro-radical element, the work will never be undone; for, in that case, the Southern States themselves will send radical Representatives to swell the Republican majority in Congress.

We feel no sort of squeamishness in resting recommendations on party grounds. We would never consent to belong to a party that did not honestly aim at the public good, and why should we hesitate to advise what will conduce to its success? The sixty or seventy Southern electoral votes are worth trying for, and the election of a conservative President concerns the South more nearly than it does the North. If, by the aid of the South, we can elect the next President, the presence of the Southern members of Congress will render his votes efficient, and the radical domination under which the South groans will be broken. There is time enough for this if the South will act with reasonable promptness.

Each party will use it against the other whenever the occasion shall serve. General Butler maintains that a President may be impeached for offenses that are not crimes; that witnesses of his guilt are not necessary, but that he may be tried upon common rumor; that Senators are not disqualified from trying him by having expressed opinions of his guilt; and that he may be removed from office before trial and without conviction. Let this be established as American constitutional law and practice, and how long would any President hold his place when the House of Representatives should be controlled by a majority made up of his political opponents? If Andrew Johnson has been guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanors" in the discharge of his official duties, the people will not only justify, but they will demand his impeachment. Their regard for the honor as well as the safety of the nation will require it. If a preliminary inquiry by the House of Representatives discloses facts which show that he has been thus guilty, that House will not only be justified in impeaching and sending him to the bar of the Senate for trial, but it will be held inexcusable if it fails to do so. It is quite just and proper that the inquiry already commenced should be continued. But it must be judicial in its temper and just in its forms and modes of procedure. It must aim at truth, and not at party victory—it must seek the vindication of right, and not the consummation of a party scheme. We believe the country will accept the action of Congress in continuing the investigation in the hands of the Judiciary Committee, as an indication that it will be conducted in this spirit and for the attainment of these ends.

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committee of the late House shows plainly that it deemed the evidence to be of importance, and the revelations concerning Collector Smythe's operations have a very disagreeable bearing upon the President's character. That the Fortieth Congress will pursue the same line of policy as its predecessor is beyond doubt. It will be charged with the duty of seeing that this policy is fully carried out, and this duty it will perform to the utmost. It is relieved from the doubts and difficulties which so grievously embarrassed Congress just one year ago. Its supremacy is practically unquestioned; its hold upon the people's confidence is assured. Its latest enemies confess that its decrees are final, and advise submission to all its demands. A vast change has occurred since its predecessor was openly denounced as hanging on the verge of the Government, as illegally organized, despotic, and treasonable. No Congress ever sat before that was so trusted by its friends, so terrible to its foes, so irresistible in its will. The Fortieth Congress is entrusted with gigantic power; let it remember that it must bear an equal weight of responsibility.

It is obvious that such unprecedented supremacy in Congress is attended with serious danger to itself. It is only natural that a certain degree of intoxication should be caused by such a wonderful victory as that of last fall. We do not counsel conservatism in the common but perverted meaning of the phrase, but we do urge most earnestly the necessity of patience and forbearance towards the minority, of full latitude in debate, of more circumspect and deliberate legislation. The new Congress has plenty of time in which to frame and pass its measures, after listening to all that can be said upon them. It is, of course, very trying to have to deal with a minority which rarely attempts to improve a measure, or to bear a debate in which nobody really expects to convince any of the auditors. But such faults in the minority are best cured by patience with those who are to blame, and a kindly encouragement of those who pursue a wiser course. In any case, the party which aspires and may reasonably expect to control the Government for years to come, is bound, for its own sake, and for the example of future ruling parties, to act with dignity and generosity towards opponents, and to legislate with the deliberation of wise and prudent men.

It is true, they run the risk of a breach of faith on the part of Congress; but even if Congress is faithless, their labor will not be in vain. Their action will prevent the Bottapierpont party getting the start of them, and taking the reorganization out of their hands. If this party present themselves to Congress with a new constitution, it will of course be accepted, and the State promptly admitted. The white majority should take events by the forelock. If for other purposes than heading off this movement, in order to keep their military rule to re-admission under the Sherman bill, their only chance of retaining this melancholy boon is by taking charge of the reorganization movement, and so managing it as to insure rejection. But we think it would be better to manage it with a view to success.

The Fortieth Congress. From the Nation. Thanks to the firmness of the Northern people and the folly of Andrew Johnson, the new Congress which has just assembled is substantially the same as its predecessor. There are some new members in both Houses who will add to their strength—such as Messrs. Conkling, Drake, Morrill, and Morton in the Senate, and Generals Butler and Logan in the House. The Democrats are also fortunate in having got rid of Mr. Jack Rogers, and having secured the services of Messrs. Brooks, of New York, and Holman, of Indiana, whose long experience and wide acquaintance give them an influence much beyond what the strength of their party alone would warrant.

The decisive action of the Thirty-ninth Congress upon the great question of re-constitution has relieved the new Congress from the consideration of that subject for the present, while the new law regulating the tenure of office has put an end to the system of prescription, the danger of which was one of the inducements to the early assembling of Congress. There does not seem, indeed, to be any positive necessity for its remaining in session, unless Mr. Johnson refuses to carry out the laws just passed over his veto, or unless, irrespective of that question, his impeachment has been determined upon.

These two questions are probably closely related, and must be carefully considered in forming any estimate of what Congress is likely to do. If Mr. Johnson is satisfied, he is in any event to be removed, he is likely to initiate the example of the unjust steward in making friends where alone he can find them. In short, if he cannot escape impeachment, he may reasonably conclude that his best policy is boldly to renounce obedience to the laws just passed over his veto, believing them, as he does, to be unconstitutional. Why should he destroy all the hopes of his Southern friends by enforcing an obnoxious law, if he cannot gain any credit with Congress by so doing? It seems, however, to be settled that he will obey and enforce these laws after some fashion, though undoubtedly with no great zeal; and we therefore infer that he considers himself safe against impeachment for his past actions.

Nevertheless, we think we perceive signs that he is mistaken in this assumption. The election of Benjamin F. Wade to the Presidency of the Senate is no slight indication that a vacancy is anticipated in a higher office. Mr. Wade is probably the last man who would be chosen by the Senate to preside permanently over its deliberations. It has always heretofore selected gentlemen of suave manners, whose ambition was not suspected of higher aims. Senators Foote and Foster, who have occupied the position of President pro tem for the last five years, were men of amiable character, whom no one ever named for the Presidency of the United States. Mr. Wade is not noted for his knowledge of Parliamentary law. His manners are not particularly gracious, nor his education such as to adapt him to the office of presiding over an assembly of calm and self-possessed gentlemen. Undoubtedly it is the last office which he would himself desire. To remain silent during a hot debate will be intolerable to him; and, indeed, we can scarcely believe that he will be able to keep off the floor on such occasions. But if the present Executive is removed, the choice of Mr. Wade is a very appropriate one; for he has the energy and courage necessary to face the possible difficulties of the transition, and ability to discharge successfully all the duties of the office to which he would thus be called. We do not mean to say, however, that immediate action upon the subject of impeachment is probable; for it is not. The Judiciary Committee will resume the inquiry commenced by the last Congress, and must occupy many weeks in the investigation. The report of the

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C. RUSSELL & CO., No. 22 NORTH SIXTH STREET. Have just received an Invoice of FRENCH MANTEL CLOCKS, Manufactured to their order in Paris. Also, a few INFERNAL ORCHESTRA CLOCKS, with side pieces, which they offer lower than the same goods can be purchased in the city.

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HOOP SKIRTS. INVISIBLE EMPRESS TRAIL SKIRT, THE NEW SHAPE FOR SPRING, 1867.

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WESTS, BRADLEY & CARY, No. 97 CHAMBERS ST. NEW YORK. 628 LATEST HOOP SKIRTS, JUST OUT. 628 THE PETIT TRAIL, for the Frobenius, 2 1/2 yards round, the CHAMPION TRAIL, for the Drawing-room, 3 yards round. These Skirts in every way the most desirable that we have heretofore offered to the public; also, complete lines of Ladies', Misses', and Children's Plain and Trail Hoop Skirts from 2 1/2 to 4 yards in circumference, of every length, all of our own make, wholesale and retail, and warranted to give satisfaction.

FURNITURE, BEDDING, ETC. TO HOUSEKEEPERS. I have a large stock of every variety of FURNITURE, Which I will sell at reduced prices, consisting of—PLAIN AND MARBLE TOP COFFEE TABLES, WALNUT CHAIRS, SOFAS, PARLOR SUITS IN VALVET PLUSH, PARLOR SUITS IN HAIR CLOTH, PARLOR SUITS IN REPS, Sideboards, Extension Tables, Wardrobes, Bookcases, Mattresses, Lounges, etc., etc. P. P. GUSTINE, 811 N. E. corner SECOND and RACE Streets.

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LOST. I OBTAINED OR DISMISSED A MEMORANDUM BOOK containing a check of Adams & Foster, to the order of T. H. Welden, No. 54, for \$25, dated March 7, 1867, the Seventh National Bank. The same has been stopped. The finder will please leave it at STEELES' Office, No. 10 and 12 S. THIRD Street.

LOST OR STOLEN, AT THE CHESTNUT Street Theatre, on Saturday night, January 29, 1867, a POCKET BOOK, containing between thirty and forty dollars in money, a number of receipts, in favor of Jonathan Caldwell. Payment has been stopped on the warrant. A liberal reward will be paid for return of the money, and return to JONATHAN CALDWELL, No. 117 MOYAMENING Avenue.

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