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EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—CONTINUED FROM SATURDAY MORNING.

Our System of Taxation—Necessity of Reform.

Mr. Secretary McCulloch, in his report of last December, submitted an inquiry which will by-and-by acquire paramount importance. How shall the necessary revenue be raised under a system of internal and external taxes, without sustaining monopolies, without repressing industry, without discouraging enterprise, without oppressing labor?

Mr. McCulloch made no attempt to discuss the question he had raised, or to suggest the answer of which it is susceptible. That task he resigned to Mr. Wells, whose report as Special Commissioner of the Revenue forms the only official notice of the subject which has yet appeared.

Its author seems to have labored under a sense of the necessity of adapting his proposed changes to the predetermined will of Congress, and hence, while its exposure of the disease is conclusive, its prescription of remedies is weak and unsatisfactory.

The burden of national taxation is bad enough when stated in its simplest form, free from the local loads, which vary according to circumstances, but in the aggregate render it intolerable.

A sound fiscal system confines itself within the narrowest limits, and works through agencies which neither oppress the laborer nor lessen production.

Thus, while England raises her enormous revenue, amounting to \$10-92, gold, per head of its population, from about three-score articles, all told, this country, to raise \$11-46, gold, per head, extends its taxation over sixteen thousand articles!

For this system our law-makers have no excuse. It is the worst possible system, viewed exclusively in relation to the net revenue of the Government.

It is understood that Mr. Wells' visit to Europe is mainly for the purpose of studying the revenue systems in operation there, preliminary to answering the question propounded by his official chief.

Revenue, consisting of at least five competent men, secure in their tenure of office, well paid, and selected because of their fitness and ability.

One of the principal difficulties with which the friends of fiscal reform have to contend, is the general want of information on the subject.

Mr. Atkinson maintains that reforms are feasible by which the national taxation may be reduced from \$11-46, gold, per head, to \$8-00 per head, without diminishing the ability of the Government to provide for the discharge of the debt.

We mention Mr. Atkinson's suggestions incidentally as apropos of our general argument, without supposing that they will suffice to accomplish the reform they are intended to promote.

The interest in the Ritualistic developments in the Church of England continues unabated. Letters from abroad inform us that it constitutes the topic of conversation and discussion upon the highways of travel, in drawing-rooms, literary circles, and that it is absorbing the minds of leading men in Parliament and Convocation.

It does not excite our surprise. To a superficial observer this new movement may appear as did the charge against Paul to Gallo (when he was accused of "preaching men to worship God contrary to the law"), to be a question of words and names.

Let these apostles of Papal mummeries cast off their disguises, and go out from us to their own places, into the Church which countenances these practices—but let them not suppose that English Churchmen and Protestant Christians will suffer their temples to be turned into mass-houses; their sacraments into sacrifices and charms; their worship into dumb shows; their ministers into drawing ceremonies; and the standards of Scriptural faith and Apostolic practice abandoned to Anti-Christ, without a struggle worthy the memory of those brave and good and true men who counted not their lives dear unto them, so that they might keep the faith and testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

The remedy plainly is, to keep the whole subject before the people; to weigh the arguments and sift the evidence upon which such numerous perversions of the Church's teaching are set up. The pulpit, the press, and the agencies of an enlightened Protestantism must be employed, that these dreadful errors in doctrine and practice may be exposed and abandoned.

Reconstruction Out of Court. The Supreme Court has dismissed the bill of complaint brought in the name of the State of Georgia to prevent the Reconstruction act from being carried out.

VI, until other order shall be taken by the authority of the Queen's Majesty." The "other order" took place in 1564, which was in these words:—"In the ministrations of the Holy Communion in cathedral and collegiate churches, the principal minister shall use a cope, with Gos-peller and Epistoler agreeably; and with all other prayers to be said at that communion table, to use no copes but surplices."

On the accession of James, nothing was done to rescind the previous legislation under Elizabeth. In 1604 the canons were passed which are almost a verbal transcript of the advertisements. The twenty-fourth Canon reads: "In all Catholic and collegiate churches the Holy Communion shall be administered upon principal feast days, sometimes by the Bishop, if he be present, and sometimes by the Dean, and sometimes by a Canon or Prebendary, the principal minister using a decent cope, and being assisted with the Gos-peller and Epistoler, agreeably according to the advertisements published Anno 7, Elizabeth."

Canon 58 says: "Every minister saying the public prayers, or ministering the sacraments, or other rites of the Church, shall wear a decent and comely surplice, with sleeves, to be provided at the charge of the parish. And if any question arise touching the decency or comeliness thereof, the same shall be decided by the discretion of the Ordinary. Furthermore, such ministers as are graduates shall wear upon their surplices, at such times, such hoods as by the orders of the Universities are agreeable to their degrees, which no minister shall wear (being no graduate), under pain of suspension. Notwithstanding, it shall be lawful for such ministers as are not graduates to wear upon their surplices, instead of hoods, some decent tippets of black, so it be not silk."

The second rubric at the beginning of morning prayer, in the second Prayer Book of Edward, in 1552, expressly forbids those vestments which were authorized by the first Prayer Book of Edward in 1549. The language is:—"And here it is to be noted, that the minister, at the time of this communion, and at all other times in his ministrations, shall use neither alb, vestment, nor cope, but being Archbishop or Bishop, he shall have and wear a surplice only." (See "Liturgy Britannica," by Keeling, p. 3.) The advertisements of Elizabeth, as quoted above, and referred to in Canon 24; the language of Canon 58, quoted above, and the practice of the English Church for a hundred years, are sufficient to show that the rubric before morning prayer, in the English Prayer Book, was subject to these clear and distinct limitations.

In the revision by the Savoy Conference, we do not discover that any exception was taken to the existing practice as to church vestments, which renders it highly probable that these objectionable vestments now pleaded for under the rubric were not then worn—and it should be remembered that the same rubric was in the Prayer Book of Elizabeth, which formed the basis of the revision. The Ritualists retained it in 1662, because, as we must believe, the advertisements and canons sufficiently qualified the rubric. It is plain that the subsequent legislature of the Church must govern the construction to be put upon the existing rubric, otherwise we cannot reconcile them.

We rejoice that the whole subject will be brought before Parliament. Bishops and archbishops have remonstrated in vain. The Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed the fear that the intervention of the Parliament is necessary to the security of the establishment. The English people are fast becoming disaffected towards the Church of their fathers; dissenters are rapidly multiplying; the Romish Church is offering Glorias and Ave Marias to Heaven, and rewards to those on earth to consummate the "possession" of the clergy, and the whole nation is threatened with the ominous words, "the stripes of the papal yoke, and the enslaving power of the Papal hierarchy." We do not wonder that excitement and agitation stir the currents of English thought and sentiment to their profoundest depths.

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The remedy plainly is, to keep the whole subject before the people; to weigh the arguments and sift the evidence upon which such numerous perversions of the Church's teaching are set up. The pulpit, the press, and the agencies of an enlightened Protestantism must be employed, that these dreadful errors in doctrine and practice may be exposed and abandoned. The laity must be challenged to see what is the inevitable result of such innovations, and that if they would not have their daughters subjected to the demoralizing ordeal of the Confessional, and the Church of their fathers shrouded in the grave clothes of Romish corruption, and buried in the darkness of medieval superstition and ignorance, they must protest and cry out against this movement.

Reconstruction Out of Court. The Supreme Court has dismissed the bill of complaint brought in the name of the State of Georgia to prevent the Reconstruction act from being carried out. The grounds of the decision are not yet made public, any further than that the Court deemed the cases to be out of its jurisdiction. The Attorney-General did not raise the objection, as he might have been able to do so by the pre-arranged plan of the case, and we may assume that the important question has not been passed upon by the Court. The main argument of Mr. Stantley was directed to prove that the controversy was not over the possession of prop-

erty, but over the control of political power; and that with such a controversy a court of equity had nothing to do. This argument will, we believe, be found to have decided the judgment of the Court. If so, the whole scheme of resistance to the act of Congress must fail; for there is no possible method by which judicial intervention can be obtained in time to save the de facto Governments of the Southern States. The work of reorganization must go on; and when it is completed, the decision of Congress will make valid whatever may have been irregular, leaving no choice for the courts but to recognize the governments which Congress has approved.

And yet, notwithstanding all the perils of such a decision, it is clear that it is justified by reason and experience. There is a point in all controversies beyond which no court can safely go. Political economy has demonstrated that human legislation has its sphere, in attempting to transcend which, no matter how worthy the motive may be, it only works the mischief as it strives to attain an ideal. And so the sphere of judicial action is limited by natural laws, and the judge who goes beyond his proper jurisdiction for the sake of doing perfect justice, really injures the cause which he aims to serve. He may be able to do justice in the particular case in hand, but he cannot help creating a precedent full of evil.

Purely political controversies are, of all things, the least amenable to the jurisdiction of the courts. The existence of a State, the existence and justice of a war, or the validity of a revolutionary change in the form of Government, are all of them questions which no nation ever allowed its courts to determine. The highest court of republican France met in December, 1851, and regularly deposed Louis Napoleon, declaring all his acts to be void; but this decision, although unexceptionable in theory, has never been followed by any other court in the world.

The Supreme Court of New York believed the Convention of 1846 to be unconstitutional; and nothing, but if it had attempted to enforce its views, it would have made itself ridiculous. The Supreme Court of Missouri recently tried the experiment, and was simply crushed out of existence. Even where the courts have achieved a temporary success in such a course of action, their degradation has been eventually brought about by it. Thus, the Superior Court of New York city, some years ago, interposed for the protection of the public against the plundering schemes of the Common Council, but the plunder has gone on in different forms, while the court has been changed from the ablest to the weakest tribunal in the State. Politicians found that the court might prejudice their interests if left to the control of able and honest men, and they speedily found an excuse for turning such men out.

All devices for protection against the will of a decided majority of the governing class are, in fact, and nothing is more, a waste of time and money. The only way to thrust a few justices across the path which such a majority have resolved to pursue. As the Attorney-General pointed out in his argument, two-thirds of Congress, united in the pursuit of any object, can crush everything which stands in their way. As a practical question, it is useless to oppose them; and, as a question of principle, it is more in accordance with the republican idea to trust a large body, formed from the people, with the decision of political questions, than to trust a small body of men not governed by the views nor familiar with the wishes of the people. Congress, as well as the Supreme Court, is sworn to obey the Constitution; why should the one be trusted to keep it other than the other?

The immediate results of the decision just rendered by the Court are unqualifiedly beneficial. Even if the suit had been merely entertained, without a decision upon the merits, the effect upon the South must have been very injurious, while it is difficult to estimate the mischief that might have been wrought by the entire success of the complainant. It could not have saved the State from the ultimate control of Congress, and it would have introduced new elements of evil into the conflict. We think that every intelligent Southerner—certainly every shrewd lawyer or politician—feels relieved by the decision. Certainly it is a cause for gratulation among all friends of regulated liberty.

The speedy reorganization of the South under the Reconstruction act is now made all but certain; and this done, it is the duty of all friends of peace, prosperity, and reform to press for the adoption of a constitutional amendment prohibiting disfranchisement or other political distinctions on account of color. We need this at once to settle the negro question forever, or, in other words, to ensure justice and tranquillity, and to enable us to give a reasonable amount of attention to the removal of other abuses. Time spent in trying to get Congress to force negro suffrage on the States by act, we regard, even if it can be shown that Congress has the power, to be time wasted.

Our Political Difficulties—The Solution. From the Herald. We begin to realize what a legacy of troubles our civil war has left us in the South. The New Orleans riot, the Memphis riot, the Mobile riot, the Richmond riot, and the disturbed elements of society in most of the cities, as well as in some parts of the country, all show a very disordered state of things and point to danger in the future. The only exception is found in the rural and plantation districts away from the towns, where political agitators have not reached. The cause of all this is found in the struggle for political power. The question at bottom is, what party shall gain the ascendancy, or who shall govern the country? The negro vote, therefore, is the object in view; for that is regarded as the important element of power. That is what led Wilson, Kelley, and other radical orators from the North to the South. The peace and harmony of the South, its restoration, the industrial and commercial interests of both North and South, are as nothing in the estimation of politicians before this all-absorbing object. To obtain that they would foment a war of races, inaugurate a reign of terror, and destroy the peaceful commerce of the South, and burden the loyal States with an additional debt through the necessity of keeping a large standing army.

From our correspondence and other sources of information from all parts of the South, it is evident the political agitators are sowing the discord through which we are likely to reap a

whirlwind. The negro would have been quiet, rejoicing in their new-born freedom, and would have gone to work cultivating the soil and improving their condition, had they been left alone. Now that their passions and enmity have been aroused, they are looking for confiscation and a distribution of the lands among them, exemption from labor and elevation to positions they are totally unprepared to occupy. Hostility between the blacks and whites is the natural consequence; hence we see the former congregating in the towns, making violent and armed demonstrations, and the latter alarmed and excited. Can we wonder, then, that such riots as we have referred to occur? Or should we be surprised if worse were to follow? We saw in the case of Kansas what trouble the rivalry for political ascendancy created; but the bloody drama there, with all its disturbing consequences throughout the rest of the country, was a small affair compared with what we may expect to see in the South if a solution be not found for the difficulties of that section.

What should be done to neutralize or stop this agitation for political power, which is fraught with so much disaster? Settle the question of the next Presidential election at once. That is the first and most important step. Let the people of the loyal States—yes, of the Southern States, too—take up the question in earnest and without delay. In eighteen months the election will take place; in a year the nominating conventions of the different parties and factions will be held; and next winter Congress will be more occupied with that subject than any other. We call upon the people, then, to head off the rival parties, to nominate candidates, with all their plots and schemes, in and out of Congress, and take up General Grant. He is the man for the times—a head and shoulders above all others, both in popularity and ability. If the voice of the people could be heard to-day, it would be overwhelmingly in favor of him. Competitors in the race with him, if any should be so presumptuous as to run, would be left behind far out of sight. Why, then, should the people wait for the election of a juggling, irresponsible convention of politicians? The convention system is corrupt, unknown to the laws and constitution, and ought to be abolished. The way to abolish it effectually and to inaugurate a new and the only proper mode of nomination agreeable to our republican institutions, is for the people primarily to put forward their candidate. Let them do so now, and let that candidate be the man who saved the country in the war, and who, of all others, is the man to save it again from the difficulties that surround it.

The extreme factions, the radical faction, of which Wendell Phillips is the avant courier, and the Copperhead faction are already alarmed at the name of Grant. They are denouncing and plotting against him in advance. But that is only kicking against the pricks—that will serve him. The million of soldiers whom he led to conquest and glory, and the millions with whom they are connected, will make the greatest General and hero of modern times the President. A grateful country will delight in so rewarding him for his great services. The conservative masses will see in him a safe leader out of our sectional difficulties. With his name early taken up in every town, village, and hamlet, the politicians would succumb, the conventions may be dispensed with, a Congress would be elected on the Grant platform, the executive and legislative branches of the Government would work harmoniously, full and complete restoration would be accomplished, peace between the North and the South would be established, and an era of unexampled prosperity would lie before us. By all means, then, let the people take the initiative and nominate General Grant for the next President, independent of political parties, factions, caucuses, or conventions; for that would be the solution of our political and sectional difficulties.

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