

THE NEW YORK PRESS.

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

The Blackness of Darkness.

From the Independent. Greatly to our astonishment, we found ourselves quoted a few days ago in favor of "licensing prostitution." No! We have never discussed the ghastly subject, and have never expressed any opinion one way or another. A few weeks ago, in a brief narrative of a tour which we made through the haunts of infamy in New York, we incidentally alluded to the hideous magnitude of the evil in this city, and to the practical difficulties in the way of suppressing or restraining it. Let us express our views unambiguously to-day.

If the subject is only half as disagreeable to our readers as to ourselves, we hereby beg their pardon for asking their attention to it a third time within three weeks.

"Licensing prostitution" is one thing, and enforcing upon it a "sanitary regulation" is a totally different thing. When we lately spoke of such "sanitary regulation," of course our city readers knew that our allusion was to the praiseworthy efforts of the gentlemen composing the Board of Health, who, together with the Police Commissioners, constitute the Excise Commission. As to "licensing prostitution," the clergy and the police, instead of holding opposite views, as we have been quoted as having, hold the same views—that is, both the clergy and the police are equally opposed to licensing. During our investigations, we did not meet a single policeman among the many with whom we conversed, who expressed himself in favor of "licensing prostitution." On the other hand, we met with only a solitary policeman who was not heartily in favor of the "sanitary regulation" which Mr. Schultz, Mr. Acton, and the other gentlemen who have been referred to have wisely imposed on prostitution. As an illustration, thanks to these men, no house of prostitution in this city is now allowed to sell liquor. If, therefore, the police hear that in any dance-house in Water street a glass of liquor has been sold, the very fact that it was sold in such a house is, of itself, evidence that it was sold without a license. Now, until Mr. Acton and his collaborators made this outrageous and wholesome regulation, every dance-house was not only a grog-shop, but also a grog-shop. The objection by the solitary policeman to whom we have referred was that if, for instance, a drunken sailor, after purchasing his liquor at one place and his debauchery at another, should at last find himself robbed, it would be almost impossible for the police to track the theft to the place of commission. Accordingly, the officer was of opinion that a crime could be better detected if there were but one place, instead of two, at which the police were to look for the criminal. But we do not agree with the objection of this officer. On the contrary, we approve the counter-practice of the Commissioners. It seems to us eminently expedient—in fact, absolutely necessary—to cut off the liquor by which the dance-houses are set on fire of hell. But, if this view be correct, then it is as plain as a pike-staff that except for the Excise law—a measure which, in our judgment, is one of the most salutary ever devised in the interest of public order—no such prohibition of grog-selling could be accomplished. And yet several well-known clergymen, and other rational temperance men, severely condemn this same beneficent Excise law, feeling themselves compromised by it on the ground that it "licenses" the sale of liquors. Now we think that such clergymen, if they would take the trouble to make such a trip as we lately made, would be convinced by the police that the Excise law, and the regulations of the Commissioners as to houses of prostitution, are needful and indispensable public measures.

The Rev. Bacon lately wrote at considerable length in these columns to show that a prohibitory liquor-law could not be made, even in Connecticut, to accomplish the purposes for which temperance men designed it. Still less, in our opinion, can such a law be made a success in this city. But the Excise law—thanks to its inherent common sense, and also to its magnificent enforcement—is a daily victory. Now the chief and most important instrumentality of this victory is this very regulation against houses of prostitution. Let us give another illustration—not of a "sanitary regulation," but of a "sanitary regulation." We quote from the Board of Health's report to the Legislature—"All keepers of houses of prostitution and assignation shall be registered; so shall all prostitutes who live in these houses." These names, accordingly, are kept in alphabetical order, in a ledger of shame—not open to public inspection, but for the use of the police. Now, violent objections are made by certain moralists to this registration, on the ground that it favors the licensing, or "legitimating," of the police know; a few clergymen do not, that to blot out this book and to destroy this list would be to endanger the good government of the city. Moreover, if the Board of Health keeps, as a "sanitary regulation," a record of births, deaths, and marriages, why shall it not also keep, as a "sanitary regulation," a record of houses of prostitution?

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and the license system is, therefore, maintained as a sentinel over the public health. Undoubtedly the license system, if suddenly applied where it has not heretofore existed, would produce a check for the time being. But not only is it a more potent check, but, in such a remedy worse than the disease, but, in a practical point of view, the remedy itself speedily proves to be no remedy at all; for in the long run it only magnifies the evil which it seeks to diminish. To make prostitution physically safe is not the way to destroy, but only to promote it.

Let us add a single word more—to repeat what we have heretofore solemnly urged. The true remedy for "the social evil" is not in a license system, not in the Board of Health, not in the Excise law, not in anything under heaven except in a multiplication of honorable and profitable employments for dependent women. If the thousands of prostitutes of this city had originally had a fair chance of earning a livelihood by a decent trade, not five hundred of the whole number would have set their feet in the path of shame. Awful, horrible, tragic is the responsibility which justly rests on those respectable men and women—clergymen and church members—who create and maintain a public opinion that denies to women nearly all the opportunities which it accords to men for earning one's daily bread! Flung open the doors to a thousand new employments for women, and the prostitutes of this city would, by hundreds, retrace their steps and endeavor to re-enter a virtuous life. But employments for women, like employments for men, swing on the hinge of elective franchise. It is for us to attempt to work a reform in the industrial and social status of dependent women through any less thorough and effective agency than the ballot in woman's own hand. If we refer to this subject so repeatedly, it is only because it is so important. We cry aloud and spare not, Christian men and women everywhere!—if you seek to uplift the degraded and tainted daughters of a cruel social order, tear off the bandages which blind your eyes to the greatest of all American questions—the beautiful, beneficent, and sacred question of Impartial Suffrage without distinction of color or sex. May God advance the cause to a speedy victory!

What to Do With the South.

From the Tribune. The election in Washington, City is the first gun of the campaign. The negro vote has enabled us to carry that city by a very decided majority. If our friends had managed the canvass with a little more prudence, we might have increased the vote. The leading Republican papers had a kind of incoherent way of appealing to the prejudices of the negroes, endeavoring to array a class against class, and bring to the ballot box a spirit of vengeance. This was deplorable, and was only neutralized by the ridiculous stupidity of the Copperheads, who began the canvass by calling the negroes gophers, and ended it by fraternal demonstrations of attachment. In Washington, the negro vote is a power, and we entreat our friends not to excite and degrade it by insisting upon anger and revenge.

We have carried Washington, and we can carry the South. These military times must end, and the speedier the better. They are doing their work well, but it is like surgery, or a severe course of medicine—the sooner it is over the better. We want to have the South fully aroused and educated, and made to feel the sublime dignity of the suffrage. Especially must this be done with the negro. The very fact that the negro comes from slavery, that he has been down-trodden, that he walks as one in darkness, because the light so long hidden bursts freshly upon him, should make us prudent. We should feel well satisfied to-morrow if fifty thousand negroes were to go up to the polls and vote with the opposition, provided they voted conscientiously. We should deplore any course that arrayed class against class, that made sex, color, or nationality a rallying cry. Voters should not accept the ballot as an instrument of vengeance, and the means of gratifying hatred. Our friends, in dealing with the negro, should ignore every argument of bitterness. The policy of vengeance skirts the Rocky Mountains, and has a few followers, we believe, in beleaguered sections of the country where the mails do not run regularly; but no sincere Republican believes that any good can come from blood-dabbling or rooting among the graves of the gallant dead. We wish no more howling or gnashing of teeth. It will only bring discomfort, unrest, endless toil, and trouble. We want peace, confidence, and industry.

This can be done with the South, and in doing it we can carry many of the Southern States. We want to meet the conservative men of the South in a fair and square contest. Let any issue be made—tariff, revenues, internal improvements—any issue of legislation and politics, and we shall strive with them to lead them into the true path. The use of political discussion is to convince, and the negro needs conviction as well as his white fellow-citizen. He must be made to see that it is for the glory of the Republic that the Republican party should be charged with the national administration. Wise men must teach them this. Wilson and Kelley did well, and others follow them competent to instruct. The sentiment of Chief Justice Chase, telegraphed the 5th instant to the Tribune by our special correspondent in Raleigh, is one that we endorse. He spoke to the negro, and with the wisdom and dignity befitting the Chief Justice of the United States.

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a very appropriate term to designate those stupid little politicians. They are a concealed set of fellows, without brains, who think they are a mighty power and should control the affairs of the country as well as the opinions and personal conduct of men. But they are not the only narrow-minded blockheads, by a long way. The term may be applied to Greeley himself for his vagaries about specie payments, the currency, a high tariff, socialist theories, and misplaced philanthropy. Looking at the management of our public affairs, this expression, unfortunately, is applicable to most of those in official positions. How fits the term narrow-minded blockheads may be applied, for example, to the Judiciary Committee of Congress! This Committee was appointed ostensibly to investigate serious charges against the President and grave matters affecting the administration of the Government. The people were led to believe that there was evidence enough before Congress and in the hands of those who proposed the Committee to justify investigation. The Committee has virtually concluded its labors, and voted upon a report. What is the result? What, after many months of searching inquiry and after the expenditure of large sums of money, has it discovered? A man's nest; nothing more. A majority of the members have agreed to censure the President, finding no ground for impeachment. Of course they must do something to endeavor to save themselves, Congress, and the Republican party from ridicule; and they could do nothing less than make up a case for censure. And what is the nature of the investigations of this Committee of narrow-minded blockheads? Great questions of public policy? No; they were chiefly confined to matters of a private nature—of miserable gossip and hearsay twaddle of Tom, Dick, and Harry. These sapient committee-men were anxious to know what the President drank and how much he drank; whether he drank Bourbon whisky or wine; how much water he mixed with it; if he used sugar, and how many times a day he took his toddy. They wanted to know who went in the front door and who in the back door of the White House, with a great deal more of such contemptible and impertinent stuff. Such has been the work in which they were engaged for months, and such is the result.

But the greater part by far of the members of Congress have shown themselves to be in other respects narrow-minded blockheads. Look, for example, at their policy in keeping the wounds of the war open so long for mere partisan purposes, when the country needs peace, restoration, and harmony, in order to stimulate the productions of the soil, to relieve us of the immense expenses of a large military establishment and the Freedmen's Bureau, and to enable us to meet the enormous demands of the Treasury Department. Look at the acts passed for bounties, for jobs of every description, and to protect certain local interests by burdening and restraining the industry of the country generally. The most rigid economy is needed, if the country is to be saved from an addition to the debt, or if either the interest or principal of the present stupendous debt is to be paid. The utmost frugality should have been given to industry and trade, and production should have been stimulated by removing as far as possible the burdens upon it. But instead of that the most lavish and reckless expenditures have been made, and industry has been burdened and paralyzed to the utmost limit of forbearance. Look at the stupidity of Congress in giving to the national banks, a monstrous and dangerous institution, the profits of a national circulation worth over twenty millions a year, a currency of five hundred millions, the profits of which rightly belong to the Government and the people, and which should be saved and applied to the extinguishment of the debt. Look, too, at the insane attempts to contract the currency, and thereby to reduce the means and increase the burdens at a time when money should be abundant, in order to increase production and to bear the weight of debt and taxation. Never were there such blockheads composing a great legislative body. Never was a country so much in need of statesmen.

What shall we say of the Secretary of the Treasury? Mr. McCulloch, through his recommendations to Congress and through his imbecile management of his department, has been greatly instrumental in bringing us to a condition verging upon bankruptcy. We say verging upon bankruptcy, because the Treasury is being emptied faster than it is supplied. The expenditures are greater than the income, and the national debt, instead of being reduced, hereafter is likely to be increased. He, of course, is a national bank man; for he cannot create a currency, and though he may be capable of managing a small country bank, he has no conception of national finances. He recommended a contraction of the currency, and proceeded to contract it as far as Congress stupidly gave the power, until he found danger staring him in the face. Instead of letting the volume of currency remain as it was, particularly as the country was prospering and the debt being paid, until a large portion of the whole of the debt could be liquidated in the same depreciated money in which it was contracted, he wanted to force specie payments, and thus compel the people to pay, with less means, thirty to forty per cent. more than they ever received or ought to pay. The term "narrow-minded blockhead," which Horace Greeley used to the Loyal League Club, may be very fitly applied to him. He should leave the Treasury Department to abler hands, and go back to his small brokerage business in the country. We want no other currency than what we have, except that greenbacks should be substituted for the national bank circulation. We want the debt to be paid in this currency, and the country to grow up gradually and naturally to specie payments.

The consequence will be that, if the country and the Treasury Department continue to be governed by narrow-minded blockheads, the people will soon get uneasy under the weight of debt and taxation. They will not be willing to pay for the misgovernment and extravagance of partisans and imbeciles. We shall soon hear the word repudiation uttered, such as bondholders dread it. This country is not without examples. Great national debts created enormous debts in struggles for national existence, and afterwards repudiated them. Where is the debt of France, created before and during the great Revolution? The sponge was used there mercilessly. England, even, virtually repudiated her debt in part by reducing the interest. Other striking examples could be adduced to show the danger of repudiation when a people are goaded by misgovernment, or the weight of debt becomes insupportable. The danger is greater when the law-making power is in the hands of the whole people—the tax-payers, who would have little sympathy with the bondholders or capitalists, should they find themselves deceived or oppressed. We say, then, to Congress, to the administration, and to all interested in the payment of the debt, beware what you do, or you will hear that terrible word, repudiation, uttered sooner and louder than you may believe.

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Fruit and Grain Prospects.

From the Tribune. The prospects for fruit through the whole country never were more flattering. It is quite late for frosts to do any damage, and only the cucumber and some other insects can diminish the yield; but whatever they may do will be insignificant.

Strawberries have been received from Virginia, and now are arriving from Delaware and Maryland. In a very few days we shall have them from New Jersey. The amount planted and to be marketed is larger than in any other year, not only in the vicinity of New York, but of all other cities and towns in the country. Whether they will sell at a reduced price remains to be seen. To the grower this is an important question. He is expecting that prices will keep up, because a taste for fruit has been cultivated, and has only kept pace with increased planting. Peaches will be in full supply. Scarcely a peach orchard will fail to bear. In localities where this fruit has been abandoned, the fruit trees that here and there remain are soon loaded with fruit, and even old and apparently withered branches bear their toothsome burdens. As everybody likes peaches, so that a cultivation of a taste for them was impossible, prices will not exceed those of ordinary years, though it must be considered that large supplies will be needed for canning, as only a very small stock was put up last season. The first arrivals are expected from Virginia, and the orchards there during the winter went to decay. Raspberries and other small fruits will be abundant. Doolittle's Black Cap is growing in favor, and this year will first appear in many markets. A few of the new varieties of blackberries will be offered, and those interested will be enabled to compare them with the Lawton, which is not only late, but so sour that a substitute is greatly needed. The prospect for wheat and other small grain still is good, and this not only through the Eastern, Middle, and Western States, but also through the whole South. In some of the Cotton States where wheat seldom was sown they have many nice fields, which form a rare and beautiful sight. Regarding corn, the prospect at present, particularly in the West, is not very bright. In the Eastern and Middle States all the uplands intended for corn, and all the valleys, if sufficiently dry, have been planted within the last ten days, and as the weather is warm, the shoots are rapidly appearing above ground. The weather is still wet. In the West large crops are anticipated because they lay low. In other sections where planting was done early, so much cold weather followed that a great deal of seed rotted, and replanting is unavoidable. Where ground was ploughed in the fall and ridged up the seed is sound, and these few days of warm weather are bringing it up. Still, a large breadth remains unplanted, and only dry weather will permit the farmer to work. As the days now are long, and the sun very hot, ground will dry rapidly, and if corn is planted any time within two weeks, and an average season follow, we can have a good crop yet; for in the great corn region the variety planted will mature in from ninety to a hundred days.

Under Which Greeley, Republicans? From the World. When the Constitutional Convention returns from burying Mr. Hiscock and praising him to its task of framing a constitution for the State of New York, its members, the majority at any rate, will have to consider whether they will follow, in the discharge of their duties to their party and their State, the example of the author of a recent letter to the Union League Club, or that of a somewhat obstreperous and forth-putting member from Westchester by the name of Greeley. The vigorous epistolarian who rated his duty to his country, to the laws, and to himself as a magnanimous patriot so much more highly than his duty as a member of the Republican party and of the Loyal League Club, sets up one standard of action. The member at large from Westchester, who admits with reluctance that half the people of New York are Democrats, but is quite sure that the Republicans have a majority in the Constitutional Convention, wants them to "assume the job," and proposes himself to be it, sets up quite another standard of duty. It is for the Republican members to make their choice. They cannot serve these two masters. They must either be partisans or they must be patriots. Under which Greeley, Republicans? Greeley of Westchester, or Greeley of Union Square?

If they prefer to be patriots they will refuse again to go into a party caucus. They will bring to the debates of the Convention and of the committee rooms their best attention and intelligence, not a surrendered, transferred, concluded judgment. They will seek to make the supreme law under which we must all live the best law for all; and since they themselves are no more citizens than their bitter political opponents, they will seek to frame a law as acceptable to those opponents as to themselves. They will not confound the struggles of the stump with the debates of a law-making convention, nor imagine that party platforms are to be the substructure of a constitution. 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