

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

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

Internal Revenue Law—Tax on Spirits' From the N. Y. Times.

In an article a few days since upon the whisky tax, we spoke of Commissioner Rollins' recent decision, that the true intent of the law was not to forfeit spirits which were still in bond, and we dissented from that construction of the law. It will be seen by our law reports that Judge Blatchford, in the United States Court in this city, has decided differently from the Commissioner on this point, and that some spirits in bond were forfeited by that Court on Monday. We presume that the Commissioner will accept the construction which the Courts adopt as being the real intent of the law. Its policy is quite a different affair.

In the same article we took occasion to say that, in our opinion, the law as it stands is sweeping and comprehensive enough to embrace all the cases in which proceedings have been commenced. We call attention, in this connection, to a decision made in the United States Circuit Court, in Brooklyn. The forty-fifth section of the act of 1866 provides that all spirits found outside of a bonded warehouse, not removed from it according to law, shall be forfeited, and that the "burden of proof shall be on the claimant of such spirits to show that the requirements of law in regard to the same have been complied with."

Last June, a case was heard before Judge Nelson and Benedict, in which a quantity of spirits had been removed from Chicago to the Third Collection District, and were found there outside of a bonded warehouse, and in an action to forfeit them, the Court held that it was not enough for the claimant to "prove his permit to transport them, but that he must go further and prove that he had complied with all the provisions of the law. It was, we thought, very plain, that if this was the law the Government had in its provisions the power of preventing fraud, if forfeiture would do it. The case to which we now refer carries out the same principle, but applies it in another direction, viz., to the rectifying business. Spirits that were seized in the hands of a rectifier were sought to be forfeited. The rectifier proved that he had bought spirits which purported to have paid tax, and mixing it with other rectified spirits, rectified the whole. But he was selling his goods at a price less than the cost of manufacture and the tax. And the Court has held that the burden of proof was on the rectifier, who must show that the tax had actually been paid on the spirits, and that in the absence of such proof they must be condemned.

This decision, as will be easily seen, is of the utmost importance to rectifiers. Every one who reads it will ask himself if he is prepared to prove that the tax has been paid upon the spirits which he has rectified. If not—and we fancy that most of them will find themselves in that predicament—every one will feel as if the clutches of the law were upon him. We can readily imagine their consternation and the outcries with which they will exclaim against the injustice of requiring them to warrant the honesty of the men with whom they deal. But, after all, why should they not? If they are not disposed to aid in the frauds upon the law, why should they not refuse to deal with any except those whose honesty they are willing to warrant? They will say that their trade will suffer. Is not trade suffering now? Does any one suppose that such frauds can continue to run riot in the community as have prevailed in the traffic in spirits, without trade being injured vitally? Or, do they admit that honesty has no place in commerce, and that trade and fraud are synonymous?

This forty-fifth section of the law puts into the hands of the Government enormous powers. When they are thoroughly employed and are found to be useless, it will be time enough to declare the law a failure, and to adopt a new system of collecting the tax.

The Southern Elections.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

The results of the registrations and elections in the Southern States have demonstrated that the colored race is not disappearing as rapidly as Governor Sharkey and other conservatives predicted it would; that it is not so intensely ignorant as not to know on which side it ought to vote for the protection of its own interests; that there is a white loyal party at the South which, when backed by the colored vote, is willing and able to control nearly or quite every Southern State; that while negro-killing was an active occupation so long as the negroes had no political rights, it suddenly and universally ceases when blacks and whites are placed on the same level; and that all the Freedmen's Bureaus, imaginably backed by a hundred thousand bayonets, are not so effective to protect the rights of all classes of Southern society as the ballot has proven to be.

These demonstrations are all-important, for they vindicate the creed of the Republican party on the question of reconstruction as fully as their previous principles relative to the wrong of slavery, and the practicability of sustaining the Union by force of arms, were vindicated. During the past two years the Republican party has made a forward movement towards an advanced position, viz.: the realization in practical statesmanship of the vital truth asserted by the Declaration of Independence, that all men have a natural, inalienable right to participate in the Government under which they live, and that all just government is based on this participation or consent of the governed. In taking this advanced position, a portion of our line was necessarily thrown far forward, and sustained some momentary repulses and some casualties, but, as a result of these critical occasions, a regiment of the rear, under pressure and stragglers struck for bravely fighting the battle in front were bringing disaster on the cause. But the advanced position has been reached, captured, held. As the result, the ten reconstructing States, where for half a century no man could advocate political equality and live, now vote for political equality by large majorities. The ten States which elected every President, from Jackson to Buchanan, by their solid vote for slavery, will vote at the next Presidential election, in equally solid phalanx, for a free ballot, free schools, free speech, free labor, and indissoluble union with the free States.

The conservative policy of white suffrage only has been allowed to prevail in Maryland and Kentucky, and those States are irrevocably consigned to democracy and disorder, disintegration and decay. Had the same policy been permitted to prevail in the other Southern States, the work of extermination and massacre begun at Memphis and New Orleans would have swept like a besom of de-

struction over the whole South, and all the Bureaus and armies of the Union could not have stopped its course. The ballot, which, it was charged, would bring on a war of races, has ended that war. As soon as the constitutions of the reconstructing States shall have firmly secured the country against the disfranchisement of the blacks, it remains for the Republican party to remove all disabilities from the class of Rebels now under ban, and thus in universal suffrage to find universal peace, with equal and exact justice to all men.

The Impeachment Question.

From the N. Y. Times.

Unless the evidence gathered by the Judiciary Committee embraces facts altogether new to the country, the report recommending impeachment will amount to nothing. The allegations on which Mr. Boutwell, as the mouthpiece of the majority, relies to justify the measure and insure its success, are merely a relash of charges again and again preferred during the progress of the reconstruction controversy, and always for political effect. No striking accusation appears—no terse statement of fact that can arouse popular feeling and reconcile it to a formal arraignment of the Executive. "An unconstitutional usurpation of power" in the organization of State governments—a denial of the right of Congress to control reconstruction—this of omission and commission in connection with these positions—such are the leading counts in the indictment presented by Mr. Boutwell, and a sorry exhibit they form as a groundwork of impeachment. If partisan ingenuity can discover no offense more tangible than those here imputed, we may be quite sure that Mr. Johnson has little to fear from the recommendation which has been reported.

Our opinion has always been that something more convincing than the imputations of partisanship would be needed to warrant the extreme measure proposed. An excuse for it might have been found had Mr. Johnson's denial of Congressional control over reconstruction assumed a practical shape, or had he interposed his authority to prevent the application of enacted plans. But though he has unquestionably said and done many foolish things, we have yet to learn that he has in any instance overridden the Reconstruction law, or materially interfered with its operation. His proclamation of amnesty and his removal of District Commanders are among the most notable of his offenses, but that neither these or other of his acts "suspended the operations of the acts of Congress," or in any manner impeded the execution of the laws, is proved by the present condition of the Southern work. It has gone forward without any serious hindrance; and though Mr. Johnson is entitled to no credit for the results of laws passed in spite of his opposition, at least the fact that the laws are in smooth and peaceful operation is proof that on his part there has been no gross usurpation since Congress asserted its exclusive jurisdiction.

For what, then, is he to be impeached? Is dissent from the views of the Congressional majority an offense that must be punished? If obstinacy, or bad taste, or unsound judgment, or concurrence with reckless advisers were criminal, we could understand an indictment derived from Mr. Johnson's course. The impolicy of the proceeding would be great as now; its mischievousness would be the same; its partisan origin would be none the less; its discredit would be of good, or even of great, value; and its effect, if not its purpose, would be to vindicate the policy, but they cannot be decently or prudently made pretexts for the removal of a President.

And if Congress has, as at present, absolute control over reconstruction, what is to be feared from Mr. Johnson's action during the remainder of his term? It is competent to Congress before the close of the approaching session to remove the question from the arena, by perfecting the work and admitting the States on conditions that will be guarantees of harmony and peace. Except for reasons that are not avowed, then, why is the country to be disturbed by impeachment? The removal of Mr. Johnson may be essential to the success of a certain Presidential game, but we apprehend that the country is not prepared to submit to a sacrifice of the vital interests which demand Congressional attention, simply to promote the ends of faction. For, say what they may, the advocates of impeachment cannot efface the impression that they are actuated by motives having no direct reference to the public weal. Their whole movement is partisan; partisan in its conception, in its conduct of the investigation, and in the recommendation which the majority of the committee submit for the adoption of the House.

The phase which the question has now assumed would indeed be deplorable if there were any probability of its success. The prevailing hope is that the moderation and good sense of the majority of the House will triumph over the intemperate counsels of the extremists, and so bring to naught an agitation which menaces with ruin every financial and commercial interest. The public are evidently unwilling to assume the responsibility of a party will be mad enough to precipitate the crisis which impeachment involves. Upon this point the Wall street barometer is conclusive. Gold rose a fraction or two under the momentary excitement of the news but quickly subsided to the figure at which it opened. The same skepticism exists everywhere. The country has not much faith in the judgment of the leading spirits of the House, but it is not prepared to believe that the dominant party is intent upon committing suicide.

General Grant.

From the N. Y. Tribune.

We hope that we do not greatly annoy our contemporaries who see fit to descend on the "Tribune's hostility to General Grant," "hatred of Grant," etc., when we say that the General's testimony before the Impeachment Committee proves him an able, sagacious, thoughtful patriot, who can hardly fail to serve his country with usefulness and honor in any trust which she may devolve on him. His early, resolute, persistent opposition to President Johnson's efforts to have General Lee and other Rebel chiefs whom he (Grant) had paroled, arrested and tried for treason, with the general humanity and moderation of his views as to the treatment of the defeated Rebels, prove him far more than a successful general—show that his character embodies some of the higher elements of a broad and generous statesmanship. These views, we know, are substantially identical with those of President Lincoln, Chief Justice Chase, and nearly all our really great men (Mr. Thaddeus Stevens forming the only conspicuous exception); but he is now seen to have not only entertained but expressed them at a time when Executive power and popular clamor were fiercely hostile, and when we were

enduring and defying proscription and fierce denunciation for frankly avowing them. The storm has since spent its fury; so that we trust General Grant will stand higher with the great mass of his countrymen for the evidence now given to the public than he was, even when Johnson was goading the public mind to frenzy by daily harangues importing that treason was a crime, traitors must be punished, etc., etc. The questions of the Committee constrained him to say that

"I frequently had to intercede for General Lee and other paroled officers on the ground that their parole, so long as they observed the laws of the United States, protected them from arrest and trial. The President at that time occupied exactly the same grounds (as at Grant, viz.:—That they should be tried and punished. He wanted to know when the time would come that they could be punished. I told him not so long as they obeyed the laws and complied with the conditions of their parole."

We do not advocate the nomination of General Grant for next President, believing that this office can be better filled by one of our eminent civilians, while the General retains—as we trust he will retain till death—the command in chief of the military forces of the republic. We protest against the false and cowardly outcry that the Republicans must run General Grant for next President or be beaten. If we are indeed so desperately out of favor with the people that our principles will be rejected by them unless set off and commended by a cockade, let us make a manful struggle and be beaten. But those who are so easily affected our defeat in certain States this fall, on purpose to give them a chance to say, "Take Grant or be defeated!" ought not to be gratified by the success of their base machinations.

There are those who support General Grant for President because he is their first choice. With these we can have no controversy. They have a perfect right to their preference, as we have to ours. If the Republican National Convention shall decide in their favor, we shall give their candidate a cordial, hearty support; for we know they will so support our favorite if he should be the nominee. We concede—nay, we insist on, we rejoice in—the merits and services of the man of their choice, as they do of ours. But we have a very different feeling for the guerillas who did their utmost to divide and defeat the Republicans last year, and (by resorting to more insidious, underhand strategy) accomplished their end this year, and now point to their achievement, and say, "You see what we can do! Follow our lead next year, or be beaten!" And we can't help thinking General Grant must regard them much as we do.

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

THREE ENGLISH STATESMEN—Pym, Pitt, & Rowley. By Goldwin Smith. Harper & Brothers, Philadelphia Agents: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

Professor Goldwin Smith is probably the best historical lecturer we have, and his works are all of them written with the care of a student and all the liberal sympathy of a man of a republican age. His latest effort is the little work before us, which is composed of three lectures on the statesmen named, and consists rather of a running commentary on the influence they exerted than an attempt to sketch their biographies. His lecture on Pym calls forth considerable information which is new to the general reader. That great leader of the Commons in the trying days of revolution, is, except in name, almost entirely unknown to our public. The essay on this subject is written with all that care which characterizes all that Professor Smith does. That portion devoted to Pitt and Cromwell develops nothing new, but shows in a yet stronger light the bias of the author for the great principles of free government.

WATSON'S ANNALS OF PHILADELPHIA. By John P. Watson. J. B. Lippincott & Co.

We welcome with cordial pleasure a new edition of the rambling, entertaining work of Mr. Watson. Of its contents it would, indeed, be idle to speak at this late day. Every Philadelphian is familiar with its quaint anecdotes, curious odds and ends of fact, and all that illy put together miscellany which makes it such pleasant reading. The first edition was exhausted years ago, and was printed in that old-fashioned style which is so disagreeable to the eyes—on poor paper, with poor illustrations. Lippincott now satisfies the public with an edition fully up to the highest point of the art. To the original work is added an appendix of original data, never before collected, and the whole work, enriched with valuable steel engravings, will have a yet larger sale. It has sadly merited a new dress to make it popular and secure for it that host of readers which it deserves.

SLAVE SONGS OF THE UNITED STATES. A Selection. By G. W. Pitchee. New York: Philadelphia Agents: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

This first attempt to present in permanent form the melodies of the Southern blacks is a success, so far as success is possible. The melodies, as given by the music of the work, are many of them soft and tender. Of the sense of the songs, the less said the better. They are an idle jumble of words, without reason. The work is prefaced with an admirable essay on slave songs and music, and is entirely original in its conception and execution.

LOVE IN LETTERS. By Allan Grant. New York: G. W. Carleton. Philadelphia Agent: G. W. Pitchee, No. 308 Chestnut street.

Mr. Grant has with care compiled all the love-letters that have been written by distinguished men, and gives us in his volume epistles from Napoleon, Dr. Johnson, Webster, Mirabeau, Sir Walter Scott, and many others. It shows one curious fact—that whether the lover be English, French, or American—whether he lived in the days of Heloise or those of Webster—whether he was a statesman, a king, or a peasant—he wrote the same style of love-letters. It seems, indeed, as though the passion reduced all to an equality. The work is of interest. It reveals to us the workings of the hearts of great men. But it is only a compilation; there is nothing original in it. It is handsomely bound and well printed.

EXCELLENCE OF DIALOGUES. By Phineas Garrett. P. Garrett & Co., No. 702 Chestnut street.

A number of attempts have been frequently made to produce a good book of dialogues for the use of schools, and as so many failures

have been met, we had made up our minds that such a thing, although desirable, was not within reach. Mr. Garrett has undeceived us. He has compiled a number of most excellent conversations, simple and singularly well written, every one of which conveys instruction in a useful and agreeable form.

MISTAKES OF EDUCATED MEN. By Professor John S. Hart, J. P. Shelly & Co., Philadelphia.

Professor Hart, by long experience and devotion to the subject, is eminently qualified to give advice to young men who are starting in life. Having had thousands under his care, and having seen who have succeeded and who have failed, he now lays before the public, in a little work of a few pages, his advice. He writes kindly, sensibly, and with that caution that proves that he has well weighed each word. We commend this work with the warmest commendation at our command. We would have every educated young man just commencing life read it with care. The faults and mistakes most common are depicted by the hand of one who has noticed them with regret and earnest attention. It cannot fail to do good; and if any gentleman desires to have his money well expended, let him make a donation to have each graduate of our colleges provided with this little work, to guide and advise him in his choice of a profession.

POETRY OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. By Florence Carey, Hurd & Houghton, Philadelphia Agent: Duffield Ashmead.

Many of the poems laid before the reader in the pretty volume just issued by Miss Carey will give general satisfaction. They none of them attempt to rise above the beautiful simplicity of the "most unaffected narrative; and by contenting herself with a field which is eminently a lady's, the authoress has given us some really charming little verses. Many of them contain a depth of feeling which is touching, and all of them have that pleasing rhythm which proves a well-practised pen. Some of her devotional poems have acquired a wide popularity. Foremost among them all is that well-known hymn commencing "One sweetly solemn thought comes to me o'er and o'er." The work is published in that elegant style for which Messrs. Hurd & Houghton have acquired so wide a fame, and is of a class to merit a very general perusal.

WOMEN'S STRATEGY. A Novel. G. W. Carleton. Philadelphia Agents: T. B. Peterson & Brothers.

If an immense number of pictures, with printing in large type on thick paper, could secure popularity for a work, "Woman's Strategy" would rival Sir Walter's happiest productions. But we fear that something more is required, and that it does not possess. The story is a sensational one of social life, and although not bad in its plot, possesses so many crudities as to mar all enthusiasm. It is of the stereotyped style of fiction.

MRS. PUTNAM'S NEW RECEIPT BOOK. Boston: Sheldon & Co. Philadelphia Agents: T. B. Peterson & Brothers.

This work merits the high eulogiums bestowed on it. Although we are not judges of what constitutes excellence in a cook book, yet we hear the present volume spoken of so highly as to warrant it as an excellent guide to the culinary art. It is bound for daily service.

JUDGE NOT; OR, HESTER POWERS' GIRLHOOD. By Mrs. Edwin Shepard. New York: Loring. Philadelphia: G. W. Pitchee, No. 303 Chestnut street.

A singularly effective tale, founded on fact. It is told with great power and pathos, and is one of the best novels we have seen for a long time. It is singularly simple and touching, and merits all the commendation which it has already received.

—We have received from Messrs. Hurd & Houghton another volume of the Globe Edition of Dickens. It is "Pickwick Papers." It is admirably illustrated and neatly printed. J. B. Lippincott & Co. are the Philadelphia agents.

—Duffield Ashmead sends us that excellent weekly, "Littell's Living Age." It is filled with its usual choice collection.

—Also, from T. B. Peterson & Brothers, the second volume of the "Illustrated Octavo Cloth" Edition of Dickens, which contains the "Pickwick Papers." It is filled with steel engravings.

—G. W. Pitchee, No. 308 Chestnut street, sends us two more of the delightful stories of Miss Thackeray, "The Sleeping Beauty" and "Cinderella." They are characterized by the same pretty style as "Beauty and the Beast," which is so deservedly popular.

—M. Doolady publishes and Duffield Ashmead sends us a copy of "Lucas Dare," a novel, by "Silva." It is of great length, and is well told and interesting. Its characters are all strongly delineated, but the length of the story makes it drag.

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