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MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1868.

After a Fair Trial!
Andrew Johnson's recent message is asserted that "after a fair trial they (the Reconstruction acts) have substantially failed and proved pernicious in their results," wherefore his Excellency, embracing the last opportunity, again advises that they be expunged from the statute-book. This recommendation is certainly a logical one, and would be deserving of the earnest consideration of Congress were it not for two stubborn facts which Mr. Johnson willfully and characteristically ignores.

Wherever and whenever it has been possible, the President has, from the outset, studiously labored to defeat the Congressional policy. As soon as he discovered that the illustrious soldiers assigned to the command of the five military divisions created by the Reconstruction acts were intent upon discharging the duties imposed upon them in a manner consistent with the letter and spirit of these acts, he commenced their removal, and only failed to replace them by subservient tools of "my policy" because the army did not contain enough material of that sort to meet all the demands. By characterizing the policy of Congress as unconstitutional, and therefore null and void, he encouraged the unrepentant leaders of the Rebellion to array themselves systematically against the Reconstruction acts, to proscribe all the loyal whites, and to persecute to the death all the loyal blacks in the Southern States. In Georgia and Louisiana this treasonable conspiracy between the President and the Rebel leaders has resulted in the most disastrous manner. In the former State, men who were legally elected to seats in the Legislature were ousted by the dozen, for the simple reason that there was a "visible admixture" of negro blood in their veins. The horrible slaughter at Camilla was a legitimate result of this action; and throughout the South outrages of a similar, but less extended character, have been perpetrated with the most unblinking effrontery, in defiance of Congress and all the power of the Government, which was not, through Presidential agency, arrayed on the side of the Rebel element of the population. At the election of November 3, the result of this course was manifested by a majority of 45,688 for Seymour, although at an election held but a few months previously the Republican candidate for Governor had a majority of 7047—a change which could only be brought about by a reign of absolute terror.

In Louisiana, also, a system of proscription and persecution was inaugurated under Presidential auspices which resulted in swamping the Republican majority of 23,287 of last spring, in a majority of 13,447 for Seymour and Blair, excluding the entire vote of twelve parishes where the reign of terror was so paramount and the manner of voting so irregular that the State canvassers threw it out in a lump.

So much for the "fair trial" which Reconstruction upon the Congressional basis has received. But despite all the agencies of terror, despite all the appliances of torture, despite innumerable wholesale butcheries and cowardly assassinations, despite proscription and persecution, the great work has completely triumphed in several of the lately rebellious States, North and South Carolina, especially, being fully restored to their former relations with the Union, and the mass of their people, of all colors and political creeds, are quiescent in the happy reign.

To the passage from Mr. Johnson's message which we have quoted are to be applied, more than to any other, the words of Senator Conness, characterizing it as "a disrespectful and offensive document." It will, as a matter of course, have no weight whatever with Congress, except, perhaps, to inspire that body with redoubled vigilance throughout the short period during which the peace and prosperity of the nation will be hindered and embarrassed by Mr. Johnson's Presidential antics.

The Transfer of the Indian Bureau to the War Department.
The prompt action of the House of Representatives in passing a bill to transfer the Indian Bureau from the Interior to the War Department cannot be too highly commended. This reform has been agitated for some years, but the hostility of those interested in perpetuating the present system has hitherto prevented its adoption. The unanimous testimony of the leading military officers engaged in frontier service, endorsed as it has been in the most emphatic terms by General Grant, can scarcely fail to secure the concurrence of the Senate in the action of the House, and henceforth we may expect that short work will be made of troubles with the Indians. The agents who are appointed from civil life, and responsible only to civil authorities, have in many cases shamefully neglected their duties and cheated the Indians under their charge. At numerous councils the aborigines have complained of the frauds practised by the men who should have been their protectors, and some of the

most destructive frontier wars are directly attributable to knavery of this description. The character of the Government has been belittled in the eyes of the savages by the contemptible action of its agents. Their predominant motive being greed, they have not scrupled to display injustice on the one hand and cowardice on the other. While they have plundered the Indians, they have sought to conciliate them by shielding their murderous associates from deserved punishment, and by interposing obstacles to the success of the aggressive expeditions organized by the War Department. It is very desirable that in peaceful times and peaceful places the military power should be subordinate to civil authority, and the application of this rule to the frontier is manifestly applicable. Neither enduring peace nor effective while the power of provoking hostilities and of preventing active operations is lodged in the hands of civil agents appointed from the ranks of the plundering politicians of the country. General Sheridan's success in his recent campaign is largely due to the fact that, under a temporary arrangement, he was endowed with authority to consummate his plans without civil interference; and if he is permitted to finish up the task he has commenced, permanent peace and the rapid progress of settlement on the old Indian hunting grounds may be confidently anticipated. The policy he is enforcing with reference to the hostile Indians was devised by General Sherman, and it is succinctly stated in the report of the Secretary of War to be "peace without the reservations and war without," and as soon as the savages practically realize that the Government is in earnest they will peacefully submit to their inevitable destiny.

The reduction in the tax on distilled spirits will apparently secure increased revenues from this source. The receipts of July, August, and September, 1868, amounted to \$5,465,443, or at the rate of more than \$33,000,000 annually, while the receipts during the same period in 1867, when the high tax was imposed, were only \$5,293,920, or at the rate of less than \$21,000,000 per annum. The new system is not yet fully in operation, and its results cannot be ascertained until it has been completely tested. A significant indication of the extent of the production of spirits in this country is furnished by the statement of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue that the number of distilleries registered and reported is 1990, and although of these only 204 are in operation, their aggregate daily producing capacity is 227,758 gallons.

The dangers attendant upon the transportation of petroleum are so frequently illustrated, that the propriety of Congressional action upon this subject, for the protection of passengers, can scarcely be seriously questioned. It is especially desirable that steamboats and ships carrying petroleum as freight should be prohibited from carrying passengers, unless a notice warning all who wish to engage passage is conspicuously placed upon every vessel on which this danger is to be encountered. Discoveries have been made which materially lessen the risks involved in the transportation of petroleum, but well-known safeguards are not infrequently neglected, and efforts should at once be made to protect travellers from this insidious peril.

"THE WHITE BANNER" is the rather high-flying title of a new semi-monthly "literary journal of progressive philosophy," the publication of which has just been commenced in this city. This sheet professes to be intended as the organ of the "Friends, Spiritualists, Liberalists, and Christians—without reference to creed, caste, or color," but we find on examining it that Spiritualism is administered in such heavy doses that all else, especially Christianity, is crowded out. The first page is devoted to certain quaint specimens of doggerel poetry and ham-strung prose, entitled "Harmonies." A harmonious article on Spirituality takes a very cheerful view of the new religion, declaring that "the modern development of spiritual power is rapidly pulverizing the creeds and fossilized errors of the ages. Its humanizing hand, like a magic wand, waves aside the veil which has been cast over all people, and sternly exposes the fallacies of all dogmas, irrespective of age, name, color, or creed." In the hope of annihilating all "the creeds and fossilized errors of the ages," in this spiritualistic process of pulverization, these errors are kindly tolerated as "the highest conception of their mentality." If any but a disembodied spirit can divine what that means. The prevailing notion that the ranting harangues of the so-called "mediums" are to be credited to a post-natal condition of things within is confirmed by the White Banner, which further says:—"Mediums and all needing sympathy shall find in the White Banner a media through which to express their spiritual strength." Among the promised attractions in subsequent numbers of "The White Banner" will be a local serial romance of "fact, spiritual phenomena and mystery," in which the public may expect to be treated to something of a very startling character. Still, we imagine that it will take a few centuries, at the shortest, for the White Banner and its collaborators utterly to "pulverize" all the creeds and fossilized errors of the ages.

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