MEMPHIS APPEAL

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CITY.

MONDAY MORNING, : : : : DEC. 25, 1871.

FOR MAYOR,

JOHN JOHNSON

NO PAPER TO-MORROW.

In observance of a time-honored custom, and to afford the attaches and employes of the APPEAL an opportunity of enjoying the festivities and sharing in the gladness of Christmas, this office, in all its departments, will be closed to-day, consequently our next issue will appear on Wednesday, that of Tuesday being omitted. The WEEKLY APPEAL will be ready, as usual, on Tuesday morning.

CHRISTMAS.

Everywhere throughout the city this morning the greetings and good wishes of the people are undergoing cordial reciprocation; and the APPEAL wishes each and every one of its readers a brilliant and joyous Christmas.

Many of those who engage in celebrating the anniversary of the Saviour of the world do not know how changed are the Christmas customs. In former times the occasion was observed by penance and fastings, and all sorts of joyless and melancholy rites. But now the day is universally celebrated by the utmost freedom in every mirthful indulgence. There is more wisdom and appropriateness in this latter custom, for surely all should celebrate with gladness and joy the anniversary of Him who died to reclaim a lost world.

The origin of many of our Christmas customs may be traced far back in time, long before the mighty Cæsar made the conquest of Britain, or Saint Augustine preached Christianity to Kentish men. Many of the popular practices present evident resemblance to the rites and ceremonies of pagan worship. This similarity is accounted for by the fact of the retention extensively of ancient forms as a matter of expediency, it being difficult for the pioneers of Christianity, after the conversion of Britain, to wean their converts from cherished observances and deep-rooted superstitions, and believing that the sacred cause for which they labored would, by thus making it acceptable to the rude Islanders, be effectually promoted. A greater portion of the Christmas festivities are derived from practices of the Roman saturnalia, afterwards intermingled with the ceremonies peculiar to the British Druids, at the period of the winter solstice, and subsequently became incorporated with the grim mythology of the Pagans. In England, two popular observances, belonging to Christmas, are more especially derived from the worship of our Pagan ancestors—the burning of the Yule-log, and the hanging of the mistletoe-bough. The burning of the Yule-log is an ancient Christmas ceremony transmitted from the Scandinavians who at the feast of Jole—the period of the winter-solstice—kindle huge fires in honor of their chief divinity, the potent Thor. This custom, though shorn of much of its pomp, glitter and pageantry, is still a favorite one in various parts of England.

In the olden times—the feudal times—the bringing in and placing of the ponderous log on the spacious hearth, inseparable from the association with the roaring, rollicking, old-fashioned fire, was the occasion for making the old baronial hall echo and re-echo with the joyous shouts and the unbounded hilarity of the assembled revelry. The venerable wood was drawn in triumph from its native forest, the wayfarer reverently saluting it with uncovered head, and its appearance hailed by old and young as a harbinger of better feeling—for was it not to crackle welcome, burn out old feuds and bitterness, and make the liquor bubble in the wassail-bowls that were quaffed to the confusion of animosity? It was a custom to preserve the half-burnt log, after having served its purpose on Christmas eve, until the next anniversary, when it was used to "light the new block." Its preservation was popularly supposed to be an effectual security to the house against fire. If, while the log was burning, a squinting or a barefooted person put in an appearance, it was considered a very bad omen, and the presence of a flat-footed woman was enough to fill the breasts of the merry-makers with apprehensive fear for a twelvemonth! A very essential accompaniment of the yule-log was the yule or Christmas candle, of monstrous size, lighted nightly during the festive season, to illume the happy board.

Mention is made of another custom in Devonshire, and still may be in practice in some quarters on Christmas eve. The farmer, his family, and his friends, after having first partaken of hot cakes and cider (dipping the cakes in the liquor before eating), proceed to the orchard, one of the party bearing a hot cake and cider as an offering to the principal apple tree. *Chamber's Book of Days* says: "The cake is formally deposited on the fork of the tree, and the cider is thrown over the latter, the men firing off guns and pistols, and the women and girls shouting—

"Bear blue, apples and pears enow,
Hats full, bag full, a full stow
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

A similar custom was once prevalent in Norfolk, where a libation of spiced ale was used for sprinkling the orchards and medows.

The Druids held in great veneration the mistletoe as a sacred parasite, particularly when found growing on the oak, the favorite tree of their divinity. Tutane, a god corresponding to the Phenician Baal, or the sun. The growth of the oak tree is now extremely rare, but in orchards of the west-midland counties of England—such as the shires of Gloucester and Worcester—this mystic vegetation flourishes luxuriantly and in great frequency on apple trees. Large quantities are gathered annually and sent to London and other places where, with the holly, ivy, bays, laurel and rosemary, it is esteemed a favorite trimming.

In some portions of England the servants formerly engaged with their employers from New Year's eve to Christmas day. Thus, when the annual holidays appear, they emancipate themselves and leave their masters to perform the several labors pertaining to the farm and the household in the best manner possible. During Christmas week they resort to the towns to spend their idle hours, and having the wages of an entire year to dispose of unchecked, they attire themselves in the most gorgeous colors, pass their nights in dancing at the public houses, and thoroughly enjoy their shortlived liberty till, satiated with revel, they re-enter their servitude and store up energies for the next annual *toul*.

The Mummers ever occupied a prominent place among the Christmas amusements, years agone, and though rapidly "going out" is still observed in several sections of England. In this branch of revels, everything serious is parodied, masters find exaggerated counterfeits of themselves in the make-up of servants, dignity lays aside its tunic and assumes the garb of ridicule, and the order and decorum of society are purposely reversed. This is another practice adopted from the Roman Saturnalia.

Germany, the mother of the reformation, and the nursery of atheism, despite her sophistry, still clings to the cherished practices peculiar to herself, in commemoration of the birth of Christ. With her, originated the now common and acceptable mode of exhibiting the gifts and the illuminated branches of the Christmas tree. There the eve is for the little ones, the happiest night in the entire year, for they feast their senses on the magnificence of the Christmas tree, and rejoice in anticipation of the possession of presents, fruits, candies, trinkets so profusely displayed. The tree is arranged by the elder members of the household in one of the principal rooms, and the children are huddled in breathless expectation, in an adjoining room. When all is ready, a signal is given, the door is opened, and the eager little ones, their bright eyes radiant, their little mouths opened, and smiles dotting their pretty faces with dimples, rush in delighted. After the gifts and the ornaments have hung a proper time, they are distributed to the happy juveniles and the entertainment progresses, and concludes much in the same manner as with us. In America, where many of the settlers are Germans, or of German origin, the customs and ceremonials of the *Faterland* are generally followed. Among the Germans a scene of much solemness usually follows the merriment. The mothers take aside the daughters, and the fathers gather the sons by themselves, and then the respective heads of the family privately rebuke the young ones for aught in their conduct they may have discovered amiss, or commend what has been observed worthy of praise.

The custom of ushering in the day, in Roman Catholic countries, and wherever that ancient creed obtains, by the celebration of three masses, one at midnight, one at dawn and the third in the morning, dates back to the sixth century. The day is considered in the dual character of a holy commemoration and a joyous festival, and is consequently celebrated by religious exercises, cessation of business and enjoyment.

Here in the United States, made up as we are of elements from all parts of the globe, the customs, games, tricks, and merry-makings are, for the most part, but the reflex of the practices common to the old world. In New England, where Puritan intolerance in religion is giving way to intolerance in politics, the day is more generally observed than formerly. The middle and southern States have usually invested the day with the importance it should ever merit, and there is little fear that, as practical as we are, we shall ever degenerate from a healthy, happy, glorious appreciation of the merriest day in the year. The interchange of presents, the bestowal of "marks of esteem," of affection and of gratitude, is a universal practice among us, and is generally popular—to the recipient, at least.

PARTIES OF THE FUTURE.

The Chicago *Times*, thoroughly Democratic, says "that the real line of division between political parties in this country is not indicated by the terms 'republican' or 'democrat.' These words have nearly ceased to have any political significance, beyond the mere fact that they are names conventionally employed in speaking of certain organized societies—just as the Odd Fellows, the Free Masons, the Tammany society, etc., are names used for a similar purpose. They do not indicate the line which really separates public sentiment in this country into two general and opposite parts, as all the facts now apparent combine to show. In every part of the country, with respect to general as well as local and special affairs, the contest now proceeding is a contest between the desire for better and purer and more upright administration on the one hand, and satisfaction with the prevailing administration of affairs on the other. It is the struggle between an earnest and daily increasing desire for reform, and a selfish ambition to keep things as they are. It is the world-old battle between virtue and vice, honesty and dishonesty. Persons calling themselves "Republicans" are found battling on either side, and so also are persons calling themselves "Democrats." The Tammany ring of governing thieves in New York includes persons from both these organizations. The opponents of Tammanyism in that city comprehend both. The remarkable struggle in the Senate at Washington which has been proceeding for weeks is essentially a struggle between the two great divisions of public sentiment; between the reformers and the anti-reformers, and not between Democrats and Republicans; names which seem to have wholly disappeared from the controversy. Carl Schurz, Lyman Trumbull, Charles Sumner, Reuben E. Fenton, styled "Republicans," standing side by side with Judge Thurman, Mr. Bayard, Mr. Blair, Mr. Stockton, styled "Democrats," contend against O. P. Morton, John Sherman, Roscoe Conkling, and others, representing the anti-reform party. So, too, in Illinois; a governor, calling himself a member of the "Republican" party, boldly takes ground against the political vice of military aggression upon civil authority; boldly proclaims the tenets of the great party of reform; and is supported in his attitude by persons calling themselves "Democrats," as well as by persons calling themselves "Republicans:" men of different party names, but of common political sentiments and convictions. In Chicago, again, the same phenomena are exhibited. The real political division among the people is the division between men who desire better government and men who desire government as it is." The APPEAL saw, months ago, when the Democratic platform of 1868 was bereft of its vital force in partizan conflicts in nearly all the northern States, that the contest between Democrats and Republicans had assumed the shape defined above by the Chicago *Times*, and especially was this true, of necessity, in municipal elections involving no question of State or federal policy. That parties will be in active existence and compactly organized within a few weeks or months there can be no doubt. The presidential election will crystalize crude organizations, and one of them will be distinguished by its adhesion to theories of constitutional law ever enunciated by the Democratic party. The Reform or Democratic party will be consolidated against Grantism.

GOVERNOR PALMER, of Illinois, has evinced a greater degree of respect for his oath of office, binding him to adhere to constitutional law, and better moral courage in inveighing against infractions of local rights by the central government, which seeks, in accordance with the philosophy of Morton, to absorb supreme power, than any leader of the Republican party. He dares do this in a State in which the Radical party boasts of an overwhelming majority, and while it is commonly asserted that the Republicans will have two candidates for the presidency in 1872, we do not understand why the most fearless of those who have revolted against the central despotism is not the peer of Trumbull in popular estimation. Moreover, Governor Palmer has been consistent. When a candidate for the office he now holds, he promulgated the principles since reduced to practice. If the election of a straight Democrat be impossible, as was commonly asserted some time ago, the sincerity of Governor Palmer's devotion to the constitutional freedom of States cannot be questioned, and Democrats would not hesitate in preferring him to Grant.

SOUTH CAROLINA.

Grant's Reign of Terror—The Ku-klux Cases.

Letter from the Rev. E. T. Winkler, D.D., to the Editor of the Examiner and Chronicle.

My Dear Brother—The admission of the reporters, the lawyers, the judges, the whole community, that in the ku-klux cases, now on trial in South Carolina, the lowest class of our population furnishes the informers, ought to awaken grave doubts in regard to the truth of the charges now urged against the most respectable, wealthy and influential citizens of the State. The people who have made these astounding revelations in regard to the social state of the up-country, are familiarly known as "crackers," "clay-eaters," and natives of "dark corners." Most of them can neither read nor write. Many of them are the offspring of illicit connections. Some of them affirm that they have been led to expect better remuneration in their present line of business than they had ever had before—comfortable lodgings in the jail, and three dollars a day during the time of their incarceration. Now, just suppose that such an inducement had been offered to the citizens of Five-Points, to testify against the most respectable citizens of New York; suppose that the informers had been backed by the ward politicians, and the wealth and power of the national government—and then judge for yourself what, after all, may be the real condition of South Carolina.

TERRORS OF RADICAL MISRULE.

I am not in sympathy with the ku-klux klan. I do not know any of its members; there are none in the section of the State where I reside. Yet I must confess that I have long felt the need of some sort of legislation and some justice, such as we have not had in our State for many years. Just look at "the situation." The best citizens of the State are constantly despoiled. Their cotton is plundered at night, and sold in the seed to "corner shops." Their stock is butchered in the woods. Their property is assessed above its market value, and is sometimes taxed beyond what it produces, or would sell for. Many persons have evaded taxation by offering their plantations to the tax-gatherer. This has been frequently done in Barnwell county.

SHAMELESS VILLIANS.

And crime goes unpunished. It is not easy to arrest a criminal; it is harder to keep him in jail; harder still to secure his conviction, and impossible to keep the governor from pardoning him. A voter is rarely allowed to serve out his time in the penitentiary. It matters not what he has done—whether he has broken into a house or burned it down—whether he has committed a rape or a murder—in any event, his right to vote at the next election must be secured by the exercise of executive clemency. Nay more—as all Wall street knows by this time—our State is largely under the control of criminals. Many of our highest offices are filled by men once of broken fortunes and broken characters, but now invested with authority, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day. Our governor is a seedy doctor from Ohio—now become a millionaire. Our leading lobbyist is a jockey-rider from Jerome Park. The leader of the senate is a convicted bribe-taker. The leader of the house is a pardoned bigamist. On my way to the late St. Louis convention I, with other delegates, saw a Judge of the State embracing a prostitute in the public cars, and near him was a legislator engaged in like obscene and shameless dalliance. We were all thankful when these wretched creatures left the cars, with their women, at Graniteville. During the last year our corrupt State government has robbed an impoverished people of more than $22,000 per day, and the estimate must be too low, for it is founded on Governor Scott's message to the legislature.

You will, I hope, pardon me for suggesting that such a state of society requires some relief quite different from that afforded by the penal laws of congress. When a vigilant committee has inflicted summary justice, the court ought to consider the whole case. It should number not only the scars, but the crimes of the victim. It should be invested with a certain supreme power. It should be armed with statesmanship. In a state of society where there is no law, and where men must form temporary organizations for the redress of intolerable grievances and the maintenance of social order, justice itself is perverted by an attack upon these organizations. Here, for example, is "John Doe," whose daughter has been ruined by "Richard Roe"; whose crop has been stolen or purchased in the seed by "Richard Roe"; whose gin-house has been burned down with the whole crop of the year by "Richard Roe"; whose life has been ambuscaded by "Richard Roe"; but who has at last turned upon his enemy, as even a worm will turn against a crushing foot, and who has scourged his oppressor with forty lashes save one. Does it become a great goverment, in such an instance, to chastise "John Doe," who looked in vain to it for protection, and to let "Richard Roe" go free? Yet this is precisely what the United States government are now doing in South Carolina? The national officials are hunting down and imprisoning the best citizens of the northern counties at the instance of malefactors and "sand-hillers," whose lives defy the laws, and who would not be believed, on their oaths, in any other case.

SOLDIERS' BLUSH.

We, who have had no connection with ku-kluxism, look with wonder and consternation upon a sharp *dragonnade*, such as once decimated France for the enrichment of South Carolina, and is now wasting South Carolina for the enrichment of neighboring, and even foreign States. We encounter among the United States soldiers scarred, triumphant veterans of war, who feel as keenly as we do, that they have now been assigned to service painful and degrading now, when the clash of arms has ceased, and they feel their hearts melting with pity. They are required to deal with an association of neighbors, who are pledged to mutual protection against the burners of their houses and the plunderers of their crops, as if these were an armed and foreign foe. These soldiers, under whatever pretext sent, are actually drive from fields ripe for the harvest young and old, planter and laborer; do suspend the industries of whole counties; and do immure the proprietors of the soil and the taxpayers of the country in crowded and filthy jails. In a time of profound peace, they are called upon to deprive free citizens of the immunities of the common law; and in regions all astir with barbarous ferocity and licentiousness, they are compelled to tear away from helpless wives and virgins their natural protectors.

BENEFICENT KU-KLUX ACT.

A few days ago, I had an interview with one of the most eminent citizens of Spartanburg. He told me that his sons had fled the county because an order for their apprehension had been issued. Just before they went he asked them "whether they indeed belonged to the ku-klux klan, or any other secret organization?" They replied that they had been informed some time before, that the negroes of the county intended to rise against the whites. [The apprehension, I may remark, was excited in the up-country, by the fact that the governor had been organizing and arming the negroes, while he refused to arm any companies composed of white men.] The youths further said, that they had then joined an association of mutual defense. Among other applicants, they had received into their membership many "poor whites!" who had now, by some means, been led to denounce them. And so, although they themselves had done nothing against the peace of the country, or the laws of the State, they were compelled to flee to escape incarceration. In short, these worthy young men were driven out of the State, just because they had pledged themselves to fight if the negroes should undertake to burn the houses, kill the men and ravish the women of Spartanburg. Rev. Dr. William Curtis informs me that this unhappy county has been decimated.

THE PALISADES.

In Richland, Mr. John Scott, *claran et venerbile women!* guards his mules and hogs within a stockade fence at least fifteen feet high, and overlooked by a window where two double barreled guns are always leaning. He told me that he was the only planter on the Fork (a settlement of wealthy and cultivated persons, below Columbia) who had been able to preserve his stock; and this he had done by the aid of his palisades and by the maintenance of ceaseless vigilance. For weeks he and his sons-in-law had been obliged to keep alternate watch every night.

ANOTHER LOAGUE'S TEA-PARTY.

Let such facts illustrate the chaotic state of society, out of which ku-klux-ism springs. I might add corroborative notes from a city pastor's experiences. I have buried a peaceable young man who had been beaten to death by a mob organized for the purpose of "clearing the whites out of the streets of Charleston." I have seen our citizens, black and white, going armed to the polls, that they might not be prevented from casting their ballots for municipal officers; and the bayonets of the United States army invoked and arrayed to guard the sacred right of suffrage. I have seen a tumultuous rabble traversing our streets with flaring torches and barbarous yells and execrations, and as they went, breaking windows, plundering shops, and stoning bystanders, along their line of march. I have seen an official of the State discharge six or seven shots at a press reporter; and although the crime was committed just by the guardhouse, the criminal was not arrested until his revolver was empty, nor has he up to this moment been dismissed from the office of trying offenders against the laws of the State. But let me add that I have never seen the white people interfere with a negro at the ballot-box, or endeavor to forbid or trammel, in any way, his lawful right to vote. On the contrary, it is a well established fact, universally conceded, that the negroes have interfered with such of their own race as were not in favor of our oppressors. Some they kept away by menaces, and some they drove away by violence from the polls. Never, until our late city election, were the blacks of Charleston at liberty to vote as they pleased—a privilege then, for the first time, secured to them by the presence of United States soldiers, who had been summoned there at the request of the white citizens.

DELIGHTS OF RADICAL RULE.

I give you these particulars for what they are worth. I do not pretend to say that there may not have been outrages on the other side, which have come to my knowledge; for when men's blood is up, they are prone to exceed the bounds of wisdom and justice. But it does seem to me that a great government, possessed of unrestricted and unquestioned power, ought not to take one side—and that the part of the aggressor—in a case like this. Nay, more, I cannot but express my amazement that the use of the United States forces, marshals and courts, by the notorious corrupt officials of the State government; that the extension of the rigors of martial law solely to the counties opposed to their administration; that midnight intrusions into chambers inhabited by trembling women, and Sabbath investments of churches—a common custom in Spartanburg; that captures of youths scarce in their teens, and of old men far advanced into decrepitude, as midnight marauders; that the despair of whole counties who see their lawyers, doctors, ministers—their best and purest men swept into jails upon the most preposterous charges, and these urged by the most venal and depraved of the people—I am amazed, I say, that all this should not awaken the grief and indignation of every generous heart at the north. O ye that dwell in celled houses, is it nothing to you that our homes are desolate; that criminals make laws for your brethren here; that character, culture and piety are suffering here; that one of the old, immortal "thirteen" emblazoned upon your starry flag, is sucked to death by vampyres? Surely, this ought not to be, in a land of liberty and justice, under the egis of that great republic with whose fortunes the providence of God has linked us heretofore, and henceforth and forever!

A SOLID FACT.

If it be urged that many of these prisoners sympathized with the klan, and some of them confessedly belonged to it, I reply that such a specification ought only to increase the doubts and misgivings of all thoughtful men. For there must be very well that character and property are conservative; no slight cause would lead these vested interests to favor any movement inclining to anarchy.

The persons who are now in bonds are not conspirators against the national government; on the contrary, they have always, heretofore, welcomed the United States soldier as the conservator of the public order. Nor are they organized to prevent the colored citizen from exercising his political franchise; on the contrary, his political equality is conceded, and they have even offered to divide with him the offices of the State. But they contend that under the present system of misrule and lawlessness, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" were left in certain parts of the country without any protection; and that the communities thus imperiled were thrown back upon the inalienable right of self-protection.

APPLICABLE TO THE WHOLE SOUTH.

The facts which they appeal to are notorious. Nobody can deny that their cattle and hogs were shot down in the fields; that their opening cotton bolls were picked by nightly depredators; that their gin-houses were burned; that "the corner shops" where cotton in the seed (stolen cotton) was bought grew rich, while the heavily-taxed and plundered planter scarcely knew where to get his bread; (I know one of this class who expended $10,000 on his plantation, and at the end of the season harvested just three bales of cotton, and just corn enough to feed his horses for half a year;) that laborers were influenced by incendiary speeches, and were also encouraged to break their contracts; that colored men were armed by the governor in larger and larger numbers, until at length they undertook the rôle of the militia men; and that the public debt was increasing, until at length it has been increased by $8,500,000 in a single year; that there has been no money to repair the roads, or even to pay the meritorious teachers of the public schools, although taxes had been levied and collected, and the public officials were revelling in ill-gotten riches; in short, that the good people of this State had found themselves well-nigh engulphed in a whirling, bottomless vortex of ruin. The sufferers insist that, under these circumstances, a vigilance committee—and such the ku-klux professed to be—has been the usual American resort, and that sympathy with it was not wholly unnatural.

KU-KLUXISM AND LOYAL LEAGUES—CHIEF AND FATHER.

Notwithstanding these powerful pleas I must confess that my part, I am opposed to the ku-klux organization, and that for various reasons. In the first place, I do not believe that a secret, oath-bound society of any sort corresponds to the spirit of American institutions. We have freedom of speech and freedom of the press. In this country a just cause can appear without disguise, and can make its direct appeal to public opinion. In particular, I do not believe in vigilance committees of any sort. They may, at least, claim to be by the institution of summary justice. But they may even do more evil. For they encourage the redress of wrongs by violence, and not by law; they give scope to reckless men, who are apt to pervert them to their own partisan and revengeful uses; and they tend to depress the moral tone of the community in which their stern work is done. But when I strive to apply my principles to the case before me, I am at a loss what to conclude. The ku-klux of the northern counties punished crimes which were subversive of society, and which, but for their undertaking, the office would have remained unpunished—would have passed, so to speak, scot free. Their victims ought to have been punished; but, I think, in some other way.

VILLAINY ARMED AND TRUTH HELPLESS.

And now the case stands thus: Their prosecutor is Governor Scott—a man notorious for his imbecility to his word, to his official oaths, and to the financial and other public trusts committed to his charge—a man now threatened with impeachment on these accounts by a Republican legislature—a man who may not unjustly be called the first criminal in South Carolina. The informers against them are the very dregs of the communities in which they live, and have been already rewarded for their testimony by release from imprisonment—as the president naively admits in his message. The captives are, many of them, incapable of committing the crimes laid to their charge. Some of them are boys; some decrepid old men; and not a few are among the most virtuous, law-abiding and God-fearing citizens we have in the whole country. Some of them have been arrested without any charge; some while ministering to poverty and sickness, many while worshipping God in the sanctuary on the Sabbath day. The circumstances are unutterably distressing and humiliating. The case is without a precedent. I am confounded when I see Vice grasping the fasces, and Virtue wearing the chain. I do not see how any Christian, who knows the facts, can be true to his people, or his God, when he encourages these so-called ku-klux prosecutions. E. T. W.

Charleston, December 7, 1871.

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