

Staunton Spectator.

Tuesday, October 31, 1871.

Conservative and Republican Parties. Strength is Weakness and Weakness is Strength.

However paradoxical it may appear, yet of political parties it is true, that their strength may be weakness, and their weakness strength. The Conservative and Republican parties of this State at this time furnish illustrations of the truth of the propositions just enunciated.

The superiority of the Conservative over that of the Republican party in numbers, intelligence and interest in no present of State, constitutes its weakness in the present canvass, and the inferiority, in the respects mentioned, of the Republican party constitutes its strength.

The fact that the Conservative party is composed almost wholly of white men who have a direct interest in questions of public policy, and who have sufficient intelligence to form decided opinions in reference to them, makes it impossible for it to have unanimity of opinion; for persons who think for themselves will necessarily differ in opinion, particularly when their interests are not the same, and the fact that it possesses numerical superiority, causes many to delude themselves with the idea that it can afford to divide, and thus contentedly repose in a false and delusive security—wholly unconscious of the fallacy of such a view and the danger it involves.

On the contrary, as the Republican party of this State is composed chiefly of colored people who have but little interest in the property of the State, and who have not sufficient knowledge of questions of public policy to form independent opinions concerning them, they can be influenced, by the few whites who act as their guides, to vote as a unit upon one side or the other of any question as temporary party expediency may dictate; and as that party is in the minority in this State, it will not tolerate divisions, and will not consent that any of its members shall fail to go to the polls, and vote for the nominees of their party.

The very nature of the composition of the Republican party in this State, it is enabled to cast its whole vote for or against any question, as its leaders, governed by the dictates of temporary expediency, may determine, and thus avail itself of any division which may exist in the Conservative party upon any question affecting to any considerable degree the interests of the people.

This marked difference in the composition of the two parties, and the facility with which the one can be welded at will, and cast as a unit, should be borne in mind, and Conservatives should sedulously guard against allowing any differences of opinions, on questions subordinate to the vital issue between Conservatism and Radicalism, to divide them at the polls.

The action of the Republican party in reference to the Funding Bill, shows that they possess the power, and have no scruples about its using it, to cast the whole strength of their party for or against a question as party expediency may seem to dictate. In the Legislature they voted for a man—with a single exception—in favor of that bill, and in State Convention unanimously condemned it.

The State Convention of the Conservative party acted wisely when it exhorted the members of the party to agree to disagree upon all minor questions, and to make in this canvass the single issue of "Conservatism or Radicalism,"—for that issue, like Aaron's rod, shall grow up every other. To succeed on minor issues and to fall on that which would be like the saving of fingers or toes at the expense of the heart or vital organ.

Those who have used their influence to demoralize the Conservative party by urging objections to, and exciting prejudices against, its organization, and those who have exerted their secondary into primary issues, have incurred a heavy responsibility.

The party should be thoroughly organized, and all questions and personal preferences should be held subordinate to the triumph of Conservatism over Radicalism. If the Republicans should elect a majority of the House of Delegates, and there is danger of it—it will be due to the causes we have indicated. The people of the State generally have not properly appreciated the importance of this election. The result has been that the Conservatives of the State have exhibited a degree of apathy and seeming indifference to the consequences which is as remarkable as it is lamentable. The Republicans, on the contrary, are wide awake, and are working with the industry of beavers to secure the success of their party in the State.

We have endeavored to do our duty by warning the Conservatives of the danger, and by exhorting them to perfect their organization in accordance with the plan adopted by the Conservative State Convention—to hold Conventions, to make nominations, and then to vote for the nominees of the party, irrespective of personal preferences, and without regard to differences of opinion on questions not properly in issue in this canvass.

If this course has been pursued by Conservatives throughout the State, as it should have been, there would now be no cause to apprehend the result of next Tuesday's election, for the success of the Conservatives would have been assured beyond a peradventure. We deem it the duty of Conservatives to stand faithfully by the organization of the party and to vote for its nominees.

City of Richmond.

It is no uncommon thing to hear merchants say, "we believe we can do quite as well by making our purchases—especially of groceries—in Richmond as anywhere else, but we have gotten into the habit of going to Baltimore to buy and hence we continue to lay in our supplies there." This is a grave mistake. Throwing out of view all feelings of State pride in the prosperity of our own metropolis, which is "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh," our people should recollect that they have a substantial pecuniary interest in advancing the prosperity of Richmond.

Every dollar added to the tax on the property in Richmond tends to diminish the burthen of taxation on ourselves. The real property of Richmond is now assessed at about twenty-five millions of dollars. Now suppose that by increasing the volume of trade in Richmond, and adding to its general business, we could double the value of her real estate, it is evident we thereby double the value of its taxable property, and by distributing the burthen of taxation over a larger surface we proportionally lessen the weight of taxation on ourselves.

Supposing the real estate of Richmond to be doubled in value, by the concentration of our trade there, at the present rate of taxation, there would be an increase of the State revenue, from that city, of \$112,500. This would tend to relieve the residue of the State from that amount of taxation, and would cause a sensible diminution of the weight of our own burthens. On looking at it in its relations to our public debt, the addition above suggested, to the value of Richmond property, would be equivalent to wiping out near two millions of dollars, because it would afford the means of paying the interest on near that amount.

But this is not all. The revenue from personal property, licenses, incomes, and capitation taxes, would be correspondingly increased, and probably make the additional State revenue \$200,000, which would pay the interest on three and a third millions of our debt.

We hope our people will bear these striking facts in mind. State pride—local patriotism—and strong personal interests concur in prompting us to build up our own beautiful Richmond.

We venture to say that Baltimore pays almost half of the revenues of Maryland. And what a striking instance of the tax-paying capacities of cities is furnished by poor afflicted Chicago. It appears from statements published since the terrible conflagration in that city, that the real estate in that city alone was assessed at 273 millions of dollars! We can form some estimate of the immensity of this aggregate, when we repeat that the whole real estate of the State of Virginia, including all her cities and towns, is assessed at only 279 millions of dollars, or but six millions more than the real estate of Chicago.

If, then, we could make Richmond equal to Chicago (and when our Railroads are completed and she is brought into direct relations with the trade of the West, why should she not rival Chicago in wealth and a splendor?) it is obvious that from her real estate alone, she would draw a revenue as great as that yielded by all the lands of the Commonwealth. Our public debt would then be but a bagatelle. We might provide for the interest—set apart a sinking fund for the annual reduction, and yet be able to diminish our taxes one-half.

This is certainly a pleasing prospect. And though we may not be able to accomplish it in full, we earnestly recommend our citizens to do what they can to build up Richmond.

The same train of reasoning applies to building up Staunton. Every addition to the value of property in Staunton tends to lessen the amount of tax to be levied on the people of our country. Let the country people then see that it is their interest to lighten their own burthens by building up their county town.

Keep it before the people that the County Taxation (exclusive of the State taxes) in Louisiana are only 449,976 per annum—having been in 1861 only 440,138; while the assessed value of the property is but little over one-half of what is formerly amounted to.

Keep it before the people that in ten Southern States, which have been under the rule of the Republican party since 1865, the debts of these States have been increased in the aggregate (up to 1870) from 61,000,000 to 276,000,000!!!

Rev. Doctor Sears, agent of the Peabody educational fund, has agreed to aid the public schools of Alexandria, Va., to the extent of fifteen hundred dollars for the year 1871-72, to enable the school board to erect school-houses.

Mississippi had \$600,000,000 of property under citizen's rule, and the tax was \$400,000, and it cost \$20,000 to assess it. Now her property, under Radical rule, is \$180,000,000, and the tax is \$1,300,000, assessed at a cost of \$175,000.

Keep it before the people that the Republican officials of Florida, as in Mississippi, have concealed their operations, but that the lowest estimate of the indebtedness of the State is 5,000,000.

In the case of the application of Mrs. Francis, before the Supreme Court at San Francisco, for a new trial, the hearing has been postponed until November 11th.

Which party in the State has the least motive to increase the taxes? Is it not those who own the property? Who are the property holders? The Conservatives.

Keep it before the people that the Republican party in Louisiana have run up the State debt, which in 1861 was 10,099,074, to 76,473,091. Seventy-six millions of dollars!

The latest accounts from Persia confirm all that has been published with regard to the ravages of famine, pestilence, and hostile invasions in that country.

Hon. Joshua Vansant, Democrat, has been elected Mayor of Baltimore by upwards of 7,000 majority over the radical reform candidate.

The Governor of New York has appointed Thursday, the 23d November, as a day for general thanksgiving and prayer in that State.

Keep it before the people that the Republican party in Texas have run up the State debt from nothing in 1861 to 13,000,000 in 1870.

Keep it before the people that the county taxation of North Carolina has been increased to 924,504 from 235,417 in 1861.

A Sinking Fund—True Economy.

The certificates issued by the State of Virginia, for the one-third of the old debt which has not been funded, but left for West Virginia to settle, are now selling, in the market, for 25 cents in the dollar.

An addition of ten cents per \$100, on the present rate of taxation would raise \$495,000, or, with the increased value in personal property, and new licenses, for the current year—in round numbers, \$500,000.

This sum of \$500,000, if raised and applied to the purchase of those certificates, would extinguish TWO MILLIONS of the debt of the old State. This process continued for five years, would wipe out TEN MILLIONS of the indebtedness of the old State, as it existed before the war, and would leave West Virginia responsible for one-third of the funded debt.

Would it not then be, in the people of the present State of Virginia, to submit, for a few years, to this small increase of taxation to effect so great a good in the end?

When we once get rid of the incubus of the old debt, the tax on real estate could be reduced to ten cents on the \$100.

Every dollar added to the proposed sinking fund, by extinguishing \$4 of interest-bearing debt, will save interest at the rate of 24 per cent per annum. This would certainly be a wise investment, and it would be strange if the people do not approve it. It is our true policy to get out of debt as soon as we can, and on the best terms we can. The United States is buying up its bonds every week, with its surplus resources, and why should not Virginia pursue the same policy?

What individual would not be glad of an opportunity to get rid of his debts at 25 cents in the dollar, when he could do so honorably, and with the consent of his creditors?

Such an opportunity is now offered to Virginia, and it will show a great want of foresight if she does not embrace it. What say our candidates? and what say the people?

THE CONFLAGRATION SUMMED UP—It is estimated, upon what may be regarded as good authority, that the fire in Chicago covered over 2,000 acres in the heart of the city; over 20,000 buildings were destroyed, and 93,000 persons dispossessed of their homes; 90,000 buildings are left standing, 50,000 people have left the city, and 280,000 remain. Five grain elevators were burned, with 1,600,000 bushels of grain; eleven elevators remain unburned, containing 5,000,000 bushels of grain. One-half the entire pork product was burned, with the same proportion of flour. Eighty thousand tons of coal were consumed, and about the same amount is on hand. Fifty million feet of lumber were burned, and two hundred and forty million feet remain unburned—nearly one-quarter enough to rebuild the waste places.

The stock of leather was reduced to about one-quarter, the value of that burned being about \$95,000. The greater portion of the stocks of groceries, dry goods, and boots and shoes were burned, with more than one-half the ready-made clothing, but the quantities destroyed were scarcely equal to three weeks' supply, and are being rapidly replaced. About ten per cent of the currency was burned. A careful average of these larger items with smaller ones shows that the city has suffered a loss of not less than twenty nor more than twenty-five per cent, on her total assets, real and personal.

A perfect reign of terror is reported to exist in the counties of South Carolina lately placed under martial law by order of President Grant. Bands of soldiers traverse the country at night, taking persons from their beds and hurrying them to jail without explaining the cause of their arrest. Any negro can have as many white men arrested as he desires, by simply swearing that he saw them with the Ku Klux. Great numbers are leaving the country, deserted families are suffering and business of all kinds is suspended.

OUR CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS.—A fact that, we believe, has been overlooked thus far by the Conservative Press of the State, is, that it will devolve upon the next Legislature to re-district the State under the new apportionment of representatives to Congress. Unless, therefore, we would have the State gerrymandered in the shameful manner that the Radical Congressionary framed the Constitution, did the senatorial and legislative districts, we must have a Conservative majority in the General Assembly.

The Norfolk Journal speaking of the coming election, says:—There are too many true men who are disposed to despond—too many good men who are tired of elections. It will not do non-conservative who has a vote has a moral or social right to withhold it. Every man is under obligations to society, his State, his country, and his kind. Individual objects, individual prejudices, individual desires or designs are trifles light as air in comparison with the welfare of a people, and a Commonwealth.

The "terror" imposed upon a large portion of the people of South Carolina, innocent women and children, and men who have committed no offence, by the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, the bands of soldiers traversing the country, the arrests and imprisonments, &c., is most distressing. It is a prolongation of the war in its worst form. The white people are gradually leaving the State.

Let no man in any portion of the Commonwealth, who holds to Conservative principles, and desires to prevent the State from coming under Radical rule, talk, for an instant, about not voting at the coming election. It is his duty to vote. He owes the performance of that duty, to himself, to his family, to his friends, to the community in which he lives, and to the interests of the State.

In the recent election in West Virginia for members of the Convention to amend the Constitution of that State, the Democrats carried the State by a handsome majority. The negroes there, as in this State, voted for the Republican candidates. The telegram stating that the negroes of Greenbrier county voted for the Democrats, was erroneous.

It is gratifying to see that there are very few candidates, even, for the Virginia Legislature, avowing themselves as in favor of "republicanism," and of these, we hope none will be elected. "Republicanism" is one thing which will not be recognized in Virginia.—Alexandria Gazette.

To the Voters of Augusta County: A communication signed "Many Voters" having been published in the Virginian and Visitor of last week announcing me as a candidate for the Legislature, I avail myself of the first opportunity to make known the fact that I am not a candidate, and do not desire any of my friends to vote for me.

I am thankful to "Many Voters" for the compliment implied in their call, and it may suit me some other time to put my services at their command. JOHN J. CURR. Town papers copy.

FOR RENT.—A small, comfortable dwelling house, conveniently and pleasantly located. Inquire at the Spectator office. 031-2

FOR RENT OR SALE.—That very desirable building situated about one-fourth of a mile from town, in Staunton, containing about 13 acres—the late residence of Col. W. P. Tate, deceased. This is one of the most attractive homes in the Valley of Virginia, and its convenient proximity to the churches, schools, and society of Staunton, should commend it favorably to a person of my views. Apply to SMITH & ELDER, Staunton, Va. 031-1

GEORGE M. HARRISON, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, STAUNTON. Will practice in all the Courts holden in Augusta county, and in the Circuit Courts of the adjoining counties. Strict attention given to the collection of Claims.—East of Court-house, over Clerk's office of Court of Appeals. 031-1

SPLENDID WINTER OPENING.—Mrs. M. E. Fagan and sister will open, on Saturday, Nov. 4th, a beautiful assortment of Pattern Bonnets, Ladies and Children's, with other novelties of the season, and respectfully invite all to give them a call. 031-1

FOR RENT.—A small, comfortable dwelling house, conveniently and pleasantly located. Inquire at the Spectator office. 031-2

For the Spectator.

The undersigned being a laboring man and stranger by profession, begs leave to address a few words to his fellow-laborers and Conservative voters of Augusta county, through the medium of your most excellent paper.

There seems to be some whispering of a political crisis at this time, and who are not equally true and regular candidates for the Legislature, and who are most deserving of our votes at the November election. It is not true that our distinguished townsman, Col. Salmon, and others spent their time and money in attending Conventions in the city of Richmond, and thereby secured the triumphant election of our excellent Governor, in 1859? It is not equally true and probable, that without said Conventions and Conservative organization, we would have been overrun and oppressed by taxes and woe-unnubered, as some of our sister Southern States are now? To avert the same calamities our representative and leading Conservative men in the State, again met in the city of Richmond some six weeks ago, and wisely provided a Conservative county organization, in order that we might have a Conservative Legislature next winter. In pursuance of their plan and the usages of the Conservative party, a Conservative county organization was recently nominated for the State Senate and M. Hanger, A. B. Lightner and C. S. Roller, were regularly nominated for the House of Delegates, as the choice of the wisdom of said States are now? To avert the same calamities our representative and leading Conservative men in the State, again met in the city of Richmond some six weeks ago, and wisely provided a Conservative county organization, in order that we might have a Conservative Legislature next winter. In pursuance of their plan and the usages of the Conservative party, a Conservative county organization was recently nominated for the State Senate and M. Hanger, A. B. Lightner and C. S. Roller, were regularly nominated for the House of Delegates, as the choice of the wisdom of said States are now? 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