

Spain and the United States.

RECEPTION OF THE AMERICAN MINISTER. On Saturday, the 30th ultimo, the Queen of Spain received in private audience at the Palace of San Ildefonso, Mr. John P. Hale, our newly-appointed Minister to that country. On being presented to the Queen, Mr. Hale addressed Her Majesty as follows:

MADAM: In presenting the letter which accredits me to your Majesty's court in the quality of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, I fulfil the mission with which I am entrusted, of assuring your Majesty of the sincere desire of the Government and people of the United States to confirm, establish and perpetuate the friendly relations which have so long and happily subsisted between the two nations, and that I shall discharge my duties to the best of my ability, by devoting all my energies to the realization of so desirable an object. If it be permitted for me in my humble individuality to introduce a personal matter among the lofty considerations affecting the progress and welfare of nations, I would add that it is personally agreeable to me to have been chosen as the representative of my Government in the court of a power which was our sincere and constant friend in the first great struggle undertaken by us to establish our nationality. These relations, cemented under such favorable auspices, have continued up to the present day, through the great struggle in which we were recently engaged on behalf of constitutional government against treason, anarchy and revolt.

Other nations have sometimes considered it necessary to have recourse to war in order to settle their international differences, but with regard to Spain and the United States, reason, justice and public right have sufficed for the pacific arrangement of the questions that may have arisen between them.

Let me finally be permitted to express a hope that, by fulfilling with zeal and solicitude every act of courtesy that a nation expects from the representatives of a friendly power, I shall succeed in rendering myself sufficiently agreeable to your Majesty to be able, in all humility, to contribute personally to maintain the peace, honor and welfare of the two nations.

I place in your Majesty's hands the letter of the President, with the expression of my sincere wishes for the continued health, felicity and prosperity of your Majesty and all the royal family.

The Queen replied as follows:

SEÑOR MINISTRO: I receive with satisfaction the letter you have just presented to me, by which the President of the United States informs me of having appointed you his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary near my person.

I am sincerely grateful for the desires of the American Government and people to strengthen and perpetuate the bonds of amity which have always existed between the two nations.

These desires are equally shared by me, and considering that our relations of mutual friendship and goodwill are already as old as the Republic itself, and that during this long period reason, justice and law have sufficed to effect the pacific settlement of all international questions, I cannot but entertain the flattering hope that the two nations are destined by Providence to remain perpetually friends and allies.

I request you, Señor Ministro, to be the interpreter of these sentiments to the President of the Republic, assuring him of the real satisfaction with which I saw the termination of the disastrous struggle gloriously sustained by the American people, as also of the sincerity of my desire that peace, happily re-established, may completely remove the traces of past strife.

With respect to yourself, Señor Ministro, be assured that the choice made by the President in you to reside at my court is very agreeable to me. The declaration you have just made, and the expressions you have addressed to me, inspire me with the confident hope that during your mission, and with the loyal support of my Government, the bonds of friendship uniting the two peoples will be still more strengthened.

The Episcopal Convention, before adjournment, passed a resolution recommending that the pay of clergymen should be increased at least half.

The Maintenance of High Prices.

The causes of the continued maintenance of high prices of all articles of consumption display themselves just now in various aspects. An active speculation is going on, based not only upon the immense paper currency system, but upon combinations in various articles of prime necessity, and also as regards one most important commodity, that is, cotton, upon the indications of a short supply in the near future. There has been an advance of ten to twenty cents per pound in cotton since July, and all articles of cotton manufacture have risen accordingly within that period. The disadvantage to the community, resulting from this, is seriously felt. Much cotton has been coming forward from the South, but it is said to have been rendered evident to those whose interest it is to be informed in the matter, and who have sent agents to explore the Southern country, that the bulk of the present supply is already in the market, and that the prospect for a future crop is not at all encouraging. An intelligent gentleman, entirely disconnected with cotton purchases, who has lately returned from an extensive tour in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama, was struck with the fact, in the disorganized condition of labor, that there was as yet little or no resumption of industry upon the landed estates, and the next year's crop must therefore be, comparatively, very meagre. The cotton on hand in the farther South, like the tobacco in Virginia, in whatever quantity the inhabitants possessed it, has been their main, and in most instances, their only resource for relieving their pinching necessities, growing out of the late war. It has, consequently, been sold as rapidly as possible for gold, the heavy cost of transportation often leaving but a small return to the owner. The operators at the central points have generally, however, made much money, selling only at a large advance, or holding for a future rise. The Government of the United States pursued this latter policy, and only last week sold in New York 8,000 bales, which had been kept back, middling bringing 44 3/4 cents, at gold rates, and realizing an aggregate of \$1,200,000. The whole amount realized from cotton sales by the Government, it is stated, during the past year, is six or seven millions in coin. Very large amounts of cotton at high rates, being now in private hands, of course absorb much capital to carry it. The same is the case with breadstuffs, the heavy speculative holding of which, in the West, to control the market, it is indicated must now soon give way. It is earnestly to be hoped that this expectation will be realized, some declines being already felt.

Under these great speculations money is growing tight at all the great centres, and the banks at New York and in other Atlantic cities are, it is said, now forced to require payments of Western advances to meet calls from their depositors. This may force into the market the stocks piled away on bank loans. This diversion of bank accommodations from the legitimate purpose of aiding useful enterprise, is one of the evils of banking, though it is a nice point to determine where useful enterprise leaves off, and injurious speculation begins. To whatever degree the prices of two leading staples, as cotton and breadstuffs, are supported, by this policy, do injurious effects result to the community. Not only are they felt in these articles, but in others, as prices of all other commodities are more or less regulated thereby. Another sale of 1,300 bales of Government cotton was made at New York at the close of the week, and some decline has taken place, the rates being 55@57 in currency for strict middling. The banks and money lenders have suddenly become cautious. —Baltimore Sun.

England and the United States.

The cabinet meeting of to-day was of protracted duration, and was attended by all the secretaries for the first time in several months. It is reported that the recent correspondence between Minister Adams and Earl Russell was generally discussed, without reference to any action on the subject. —Special Despatch to New York Times.

This information from the Department of State confirms what we before knew from another and more authoritative source, and we publish it only as evidence, from a Republican quarter, that President Johnson has not yet, himself, taken up for consideration and determination, the matter of our demands upon England.

The country will, therefore, understand, that no line of action has been matured by the Executive.

The things which Mr. Seward may

say, or omit to say, in verbose dispatches, "windy and wordy," while they may instruct, gratify, or alarm the uninformed, will not, to those acquainted with his intellectual and moral peculiarities, and aware of the relation he bears to the Executive, be considered very strong evidence of what Mr. Johnson will, in the end, decide shall be done.

The imperative pre-occupations of the President in carrying out his plans for restoring the Union, doubtless prevent him, just now, from taking up for final action our pending difficulties with the British Government. There is no necessity for instant decision in relation thereto, and he prefers to unite the States of the Union, and secure their representation in Congress, before submitting to that body his recommendations in respect to foreign affairs.

The country is at present, therefore, compelled to discuss our English complications—if discussed at all—upon an imperfect basis of facts; but upon the information we have, the Democratic party unite in taking very high ground. Indeed, a large portion of that organization, the foreign element, reinforced by the Fenian organization, will demand that England be visited with the extreme penalty of violated international law.

But prompt and successful settlement of our foreign difficulties depends upon prompt and satisfactory settlement of our domestic affairs. If Mr. Johnson can, within the next three months, firmly re-establish the Union of all the States in Congress, he will then be in a condition to make very short work with England. Her arrogant will, without basis of international law, will then be speedily brought into subjection, despite the opposition of the radical Republicans of the Sumner and Beecher school, whose sympathies are with Exeter Hall. With the Union restored, whatever things the United States are entitled to, and demand, those things England must do. She has no path open to her but submission to our rightful ultimatum. She cannot fail to have reflected what will happen to her dominions whenever President Johnson but speaks the word to the Irish population of America. She must foresee what an army directed against her can accomplish when recruited from every section of the re-united republic, organized and commanded by Grant and Lee, Sherman and Johnston, Slocum and Dick Taylor, and their associates, on both sides, in the late rebellion!

There is no denying that the Democratic party, North and South, would rather relish than otherwise a war with England. Its never-failing sympathies with the aspirations and hopes of the adopted citizens of the republic, tend powerfully, if not irresistibly, to action in that direction. But we wait for the word from President Johnson. Mr. Seward's record in his Trent collapse, and in the Mexican humiliation, warns all men who value persistency in the right, not to put themselves under his infirm lead, nor to act upon his vapid generalities. We want the signal from a captain whose moral courage is guarantee that we shall not be forsaken in the dark hour! Such a man is Andrew Johnson, and the Democracy need but a hint from him! But, first of all, let us restore the Union!

[New York World, 27th.

A story is told of a man who insured in London one thousand cigars, valued at £200, against fire and water. After the lapse of six months he made his appearance at the insurance office and demanded his money, as the cigars had been all burned. "But not on board the vessel, sir," said the secretary, "for she is in dock now." "Yes, on board the vessel; I smoked them, and, therefore, burned them all myself, and the insurance says against fire." The secretary seemed taken aback, but told the smoker to call again next day. He called at the appointed time, but was met by the solicitor of the company, who told him if he did not relinquish his claim he would be prosecuted as one who had knowingly and wilfully set fire to goods assured by the company.

An orator, in appealing to the "bone and sinew," said:

"My friends, I am proud to see around me to-night the hardy yeomanry of the land, for I love the agricultural interests of the country, and well may I love them, fellow-citizens, for I was born a farmer—the happiest days of my youth were spent in the peaceful avocation of a son of the soil. If I may be allowed to use a figurative expression, my friends, I was raised between two rows of corn."

"A pumpkin, by thunder!" exclaimed an inebriated chap, just in front of the stage.

Old Hickory.

All Americans are familiar with this soubriquet of General Andrew Jackson, yet very few know how it was earned by the old hero. I happen to be able to inform your readers.

In 1836, I was intimately acquainted with Colonel John Allen, United States Agent of the Chickasaw Indians, residing in Pontotoc, and with his brother, Captain William Allen, then a merchant in the town. I learned from Captain William Allen that his father was a near neighbor and devoted friend of General Jackson, and that he and his brother John served as soldiers in his escort, in all his campaigns, and camped at the same fire, and messed with him during the Creek war. They were certainly great favorites with him; and he rewarded them for their friendship by giving them lucrative appointments in the Chickasaw nation while he was President. In conversation with Captain Allen about General Jackson, on one occasion, I asked him how he acquired the name of "Old Hickory?" I give his reply, as well as I can remember, in his own words:

"During the campaign which included the battle of Emucklaw Creek, the army was moving rapidly to surprise the Indians, and we were without tents. In the month of March, a cold equinoctial rain fell on us, mingled with sleet, which lasted several days. The General was exposed to the weather, and was suffering severely with a bad cold and sore throat. At night we bivouacked in a muddy bottom, while it was pouring down rain, which froze as it fell. My brother John and I, finding that he was very unwell, became uneasy about him, although he did not complain, and laid down upon his blanket by the camp-fire with his soldiers. Seeing him wet to the skin, stretched in the mud and water in his suffering condition, we determined to try and make him more comfortable.

"We cut down a stout hickory tree, in which the sap was rising, and peeled the bark from it in large flakes; cut two forks and a pole, laid down a floor of bark and dead leaves, and roofed it, and closed one side, or rather one end of the structure against the wind with bark, and left the other end open. We then dried our blankets, and made him a pallet in the tent we had constructed. We woke up the old General, and with some difficulty persuaded him to crawl in. With his saddle for a pillow, wrapped in our dry blankets, and his feet to the fire, he slept snugly and soundly all night, well cased in hickory bark.

"The next morning, an old man from the neighborhood came into camp with a jug of whiskey, with which, after imbibing quite freely himself, he gave us all 'a treat,' as far as the liquor would go. He seemed to be a kind-hearted, jovial and patriotic old fellow; a sort of 'privileged character' in his county. While staggering about among the camp fires, full of fun and whiskey, he blundered upon our little hickory bark tent, which immediately arrested his attention. After eyeing it for a moment, he exclaimed, 'What sort of an outlandish 'Indian fixin' is this?' and gave it a kick which tumbled down the queer looking structure, and completely buried the old hero in bark. As he struggled out of the ruins, and looked fiercely around for the author of the mischief, the old toper recognized him, and exclaimed, 'Hello, old Hickory! come out of your bark, and join us in a drink.'

There was something so ludicrous in the whole scene that respect for his presence and rank could not restrain our merriment. He very good humoredly joined us in laughing at the mishap. As he rose up, and shook the bark from him, he looked so tough and stern we all gave him a viva 'Hurrah for old Hickory.' This was the first time he ever heard these words, which were afterwards shouted by the millions of his countrymen whenever he appeared among them."

I will only add that Captain William Allen, of Davidson Co., Tenn., who died at Pontotoc in 1837, was distinguished for courage, integrity and strict veracity; and the above may be regarded as a true account of the origin of the nick-name of General Andrew Jackson.

[Jackson (Miss.) News.

Wines and Liquors.

The celebrated "comet year," 1811, is renowned among connoisseurs in wines as a season of great abundance in France. Not only was the crop of grapes immensely large, but the quality of the wine was much superior to the ordinary production of former years, so that in the Vintners' catalogue a wine of 1811 took precedence, and the opinion prevailed that such a season of fruitfulness was scarcely ever to be hoped for again. But we

are told from France that all the remarkable features of the season of 1811 have been repeated in 1865 in the French vineyards. The grapes have been so plentiful, and the juice so spontaneous, that large quantities of wines have been wasted in consequence of the want of casks in which to store it, and of people to gather the grapes and make the wine. In parts of Burgundy it is said that new wine is selling at from four to nine cents per gallon to those who furnish their own barrels. Prices like these are so very low that it will follow that there will be an immense production of brandy, and that the best quality of this liquor, wanting age only, can be sold in France at considerably less than a dollar a gallon. The price in this country may be somewhat affected thereby; but when it is recollected that gold rates must be paid for the purchase of the article, and just as much as the article is worth be paid in duty at the United States custom house, also in gold, added to which will be freight and profits, any great reduction in the price of brandy in this country cannot be looked for. As an article of consumption in the United States, brandy is now of small account, except for medicinal purposes and among the wealthy. The price has driven it out of ordinary use, and whiskey is king. The taste for the latter among drinking men has increased so much that even if brandy were so reduced in price as to be able to come in competition with whiskey, the latter would hold its own against the foreigner.

A very curious history might be made out of the changes in drinking usages in this country. Before the Revolution, the gentlemanly drinks were Madeira or Port wine, and for ordinary purposes the rum or spirits of Jamaica or the West India Islands, which was then sold cheaply. At social gatherings punch was the great beverage. The breaking up of our dependence on England rendered foreign spirits dear; some reliance was placed upon New England rum, but the popular mind gradually settled down upon gin. Fifty years ago gin was drunk in the United States as commonly and generally as whiskey is now. Low tariffs then brought in French brandies and their imitations, which, from cheapness, became exceedingly popular. The light French wines, particularly champagne, became objects of commerce, and grew rapidly in popularity. But revenue regulations produced new changes, and brandy becoming too dear for the means of ordinary drinkers, whiskey was forced into service. "Old rye" was at the time in Pennsylvania the only indigenous fluid, but success in the West in the distillation of whiskey from corn has made "old Bourbon" somewhat celebrated. The lager beer interest, which has grown steadily since about the year 1850, has now become immense. It has acted beneficially in keeping down the consumption of spirituous liquors, which, but for such means of relief, would now be frightful in extent and excess. Probably the next great beverage universal in popularity among us will be American wine. The facilities for the production of light wines in this country are very great, and we must expect that our domestic wine product will advance with astonishing rapidity. —Philadelphia Inquirer.

APPRENTICES AND JOURNEYMEN.—

The subject of regulating the law of apprenticeship is being considered by the New York Convention of Trades Societies, now in session at Albany. This is one of the most important matters that could occupy the attention of such a body, and might be made to result far more beneficially to mechanics and the people generally than wrangling over questions of strikes and other matters which the laws of demand and supply will settle. Coming to the faulty system of apprenticeship in this country, it is well nigh a general complaint that the number of good workmen in nearly every branch of industry is growing less every year. It is too often the case that young lads go to an establishment for a year or so, and having acquired merely the rudiments of a trade or employment, leave for another city and set up for journeymen or, what is quite as bad, arbitrarily leave their unlearned trades half-dozen times before arriving at a respectable proficiency or a proper age, and turn out incompetent, of course, at last. This is not only detrimental to themselves, but to the community, and discredits the trades for unskillfulness. The remedy for this great evil is in the legal establishment of a liberal system of apprenticeship, and we are glad to see at least some signs of steps being taken in the right quarter to bring about reform.

[Baltimore Sun.