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OUR NEW YORK LETTER.

Democratic Idols Broken in the New York Temple—Downfall of Cleveland and Edson—Lionizing British Murderers—Mrs. Blake vs. Dr. Dix—A Question for Debate—Comparisons are Odious.

NEW YORK, March 17, 1883.

EDITOR CHIEF:

Nothing in our New York life is more instructive than the manner in which popular idols are put up and pulled down. A little over a year ago and Grover Cleveland was almost an unknown quantity in our American politics; his name was scarcely known outside of the county of Erie. A political scratch made him Mayor of a provincial city, where an exceedingly bad government made any change a change for the better. In State politics the man was entirely unknown; his face had never been seen inside of a State convention; outside of his own county his name had never been heard, and yet, pitted against two of the most popular Democrats in the State—one a man whose eminent services entitled him to the highest political consideration, and the other a distinguished General, who had marched with Sheridan from Atlanta to the sea—this unknown country lawyer carried the convention after a desperate fight, and swept the State by such a majority as had never been seen in New York in the memory of living men. Shakespeare has said—

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at its flood leads on to fortune,"

and Grover Cleveland struck the flood tide. Like Lord Byron, "he awoke one morning and found himself suddenly famous;" his fame began to spread, and the unknown lawyer became a possible factor for the Presidency in the struggle of 1884. New York was the keystone of the arch, the pivot on which turned prospective political success, and the man who had rolled up two hundred thousand majority in a contest with New York's most honored son, and one of the greatest living Republicans, was the man of men to bear the Democratic standard to victory in the contest of 1884. His entry into Albany was a shock to the leaders which, however, they determined to swallow; then came a batch of nominations, in which all the traditions of the party were completely ignored, and now comes the veto of the Five Cent Fare Bill, on which New York city had set its heart, and he who a few weeks ago was deemed worthy to stand by Cæsar and give direction, to-day finds "no man so poor as to do him reverence." Curses loud and deep resound on every side; this last ounce has broken the camel's back. It is yet rather early to say who will be the next Democratic President, but there is one thing tolerably certain, it won't be Grover Cleveland.

Another of the idols was Mr. Edson, the Mayor of New York city. Mr. Edson did what his predecessor, Major Grace, had failed to do—he united the warring factions of his party, and every one of his nominations was confirmed as soon as they were made; but unfortunately for Mr. Edson, there were not offices enough to go around, and the discontented outs were much more numerous than the contented ins. In making a division of the spoils one faction got much larger share than the other two factions; and if the man who tried to sit on two stools came to grief, what must be the fate of him who tried to sit on three? But Mayor Edson met his bete noir on Monday night, when a meeting was called in aid of the suffering Irish, but it transpired that the only Irish who were suffering at that time, in the estimation of the committee, were the Phœnix Park assassins. Mayor Edson was expected to preside, but he thought he smelt a remarkably large rodent, so he respectfully declined the honor. The announcement fell like a bombshell on the meeting; a howl went up that almost raised the roof. Terrence Feeney, of the Longshoremen's Protective Association, cried wildly out, "He's a Tory—he's bought with British goold." "He'll never be Mayor agin," shouted Mike Murphy, of the United Pile Drivers' Benevolent Society. "That's the lasht av him in New York," said Dennis Kelly, "we'll tache him to go agin the Oirish." It was fortunate for the Mayor that he did not appear in person, or the chances were about even that he might have ornamented one of the lamp-posts in front of the Cooper Institute. So down goes Mr. Edson. It is scarcely four weeks since a little conclave of astute politicians met in one of our splendid uptown cafés to arrange for Mr. Edson's translation to the Governorship, when Governor Cleveland should be elevated to the Presidency; but "the best laid plans of men and mice aft gang aglee;" and at the present writing there is but little doubt that both these gentlemen will be allowed to enjoy, without interruption, the sweets of private life when their present official terms have closed. Yet the offence of the Governor is that he did not feel that he could violate his official oath, at administered the law as he understood it; and the offense of Mayor Edson is that he would not allow himself to be made a puppet at the hands of a set of tricksters, disgracing his office and dishonoring the city over which he presides. All honor to the Governor, and all honor to the Mayor. They have lost in a good cause, and if relegated to private life, they will carry with them to their retirement that which Governors and Mayors do not always carry—a clear conscience and the sense of having done their duty to their country.

The anniversary of Emmet's birth was another tumultuous meeting; the doctrine was boldly announced that every effort should be made to create a war between Great Britain and the United States. The good it would do I am at a loss to perceive, for we all know that the British army is largely recruited in Ireland, and as the heroes at the Emmet meeting very generously offered to do all the fighting, the only result I can see would be that one band of Irish patriots would be killed by another band of Irish patriots, till at last, like the Kilkenny cats, not even the tips of the tails would be left. The grand secret appears to be that the Fenian funds are getting low; the wretched thieves who stole the earnings of poor servant girls and road carriers, and squandered them in debauchery and drunkenness, want more money—the poor deluded fools who supplied them for so many years can supply them no longer. And now the knaves who have made their bogus patriotism their capital are trying the old dodge of another attack on the British Lion. Mr. Ecclesine and all such political demagogues and tramps may howl and fume, but they know it is much safer to air their patriotism in the Cooper Institute in the New York than in Tipperary, Dublin or Sligo.

Friday closed the accounts of the murderers, McGloin and Majone. In neither of these cases was there the slightest grounds for mitigation—both the murders were brutal as brutal could be. Majone murdered his girl-wife, who was scarcely fifteen years of age, and McGloin butchered an innocent and unoffending man who was attempting to protect his property. He was in no jeopardy himself; he could have escaped with his plunder, but he murdered the man for the pure love of murder and the desire to do something that would make him stand well with his murderous companions. A more thorough brute never went to the gallows—and yet, as the day of his execution approached, there were dozens of fine ladies besieging the Tombs, anxious to have a parting interview with the assassin. Fruit, flowers, bonbons and photographs were sent him. It is usual to allow a prisoner sentenced to death considerable latitude—as much, in fact, as is compatible with his safe keeping—but it is a shocking phase of human character when women, calling themselves respectable, lavish such tenderness and luxury on a murderous brute, while hundreds of virtuous women and children are almost perishing of starvation around them.

The lively fight at present going on between Mrs. Blake and Dr. Dix is the talk of the town, and I am happy to be able to say that the sympathies of the more intelligent and respectable people are on the side of the weaker vessel; perhaps you think I allude to Dr. Dix, but I do not—not that I consider Lilly Blake a much weaker vessel than Dr. Dix—for intellectually and physically I think she is worth a dozen of him. Dr. Dix is one of those antiquated fossils who forgets, or never new that the world moves; what a crusty and disappointed old bachelor, one Saul of Tarsus, said some nineteen or twenty hundred years ago, has more weight with this clerical mummy than the accumulated wisdom of all the succeeding centuries. Dr. Dix is constantly harping upon the duty of women to take care of her home, her husband and her babies. Dr. Dix is in the receipt of a comfortable $20,000 a year, and is quite at a loss to know how people have such a struggle to live. He does not appear to know that there are thousands of worthy hard-working women in this city who have no home of their own; who have no husband and who have no baby, but who would be very glad to have the crumbs that fall from Dr. Dix's table. Dr. Dix is one of the Sanhedrims that guard the great treasures of Trinity Church's vast estate. How large that estate is none but the elect know, and they guard the secret with a jealousy that defies investigation; but Dr. Dix may have read somewhere "that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," and if Lilly Blake is stricken down in the fight there are others to take her place. President Barnard of Columbia College, and the respectable faculty of Harvard, may brace their feet and place their backs against the doors of their colleges, but sooner or later the women are bound to get in. One by one the barriers have been swept away and new avenues have been opened for women's advancement, and she will not be satisfied till she stands the equal of her brother in her race for life. Dr. Dix is endorsed by a set of old dummies who ought to have been in their graves years ago, but Mrs. Blake has the sympathy of the great body of people of heart and brain who think that the living present is of infinitely more consequence to us than the dead past.

If a country debating society wants a knotty question, allow me to suggest one: Which had a man better be, an honest man or a thief? If I had a chance in the argument I should say he had better be a thief, that is if we take the experience of poor Jerry Crowe as a criterion. Jerry Crowe was a salesman out of luck; one misfortune succeeded another, till at last poor Jerry Crowe found himself in the street peddling potato-peelers for a living. Now the laws of the city of New York says that a peddler shall pay a license, and Jerry Crowe had no money to pay; peddling from early morning till late at night he could barely earn enough for food; he could not beg; he would not steal, and New York says he must not sell, so the only thing that was left for Jerry Crowe was to commit suicide or starve. What kind of law is it that forbids a man, under penalty of imprisonment, to earn an honest living? There is a screw loose somewhere, when poor Jerry Crowe is thrown into jail for trying to earn a crust to keep his little ones from starving. Jay Gould or Vanderbilt can squeeze the market and make a barrel of flour or a pound of beef cost twice as much as it ought to do; they are smart, they go clothed in purple and fine linen; they are honored and respected, but Jerry Crowe is confined with murderers and thieves. Poor Jerry Crowe! Perhaps somewhere in the golden future he may be able to look down on Dives—there may be a place somewhere, who knows, where

The poor man's as great,
Though he hath no estate,
As if he'd a thousand a year.

Meanwhile here goes a dollar to pay Jerry Crowe's fine. Will some one give another to set him up in business?

A few wretched bigots are trying to get up another war between the pulpit and the stage. Comparisons are odious, at best; but people who live in glass houses should never throw stones. It is safe to say that for every actor that can be found in our State prisons, there are five clergymen or prominent professors of religion. Recrimination is useless; the church is not willing to be held responsible for its black sheep, no more is the stage. There are lessons to be learned from the stage from which any clergyman might profit, and it is equally certain that the sermons of the stage reach millions who could never be reached by the church.

The storm of Tuesday left the city in a miserable plight, and for a few days we thought that Wiggins had got us; we are not out of the woods yet, so we won't holler, but when we do it won't be for Wiggins.

Yours truly, BROADBRIM.

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