

DAILY DEMOCRAT.

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Official Journal of the City of New Orleans.

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NEW ORLEANS, MARCH 7, 1879.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE.

From this time until the close of the convention, the columns of the DEMOCRAT will be open for the discussion of all questions touching the proposed constitution. Indeed, we invite communications from the city and the country, and we will print them whether we agree with the views expressed or not, reserving, of course, the right to exclude such as we do not think of sufficient interest to insert. We wish it also distinctly understood that we will not return or undertake to preserve rejected manuscripts.

The "rebel brigadiers" in the new Senate will be confronted by those fiery warriors, John Logan and Zach Chandler. This is enough to make the average brigadier shake in his boots. It is understood that Logan and Chandler have served notice that they intend to do dreadful things in the way of fighting the war over again.

Nominations for delegates to the convention from the Nineteenth Senatorial District, composed of the parishes of Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine and DeSoto, were made in convention at Natchitoches on the sixth instant. The nominees are Hon. M. J. Cunningham, of Natchitoches, and R. B. Stille, of Sabine.

The emigration of negroes from Madison and other upper parishes continues. The emigrants seem to have been imposed upon by certain railroad and Kansas land agents, and led to believe that that State is the Mecca of their hopes; that land can be had for nothing; that they will be provided with everything needful in this land of plenty, and that none but negroes will be allowed to have a voice in the government of the State. These false promises not only delude the negro to his injury, but are rapidly depleting the labor supply of the parishes in the northern part of the State, and doing great damage to the planting interests. Thus far no effective check has been found to the Kansas movement. The emigrants refuse to believe the truth about their new found El Dorado, and crowd up river steamers on their way thither. A short experience as to the climate and people will bring them to their senses and cause such representations to be made to friends and relatives still in Louisiana as must put a stop to the exodus. This seems to be the only remedy for it.

That is a very neat suggestion the *Times* has procured from its Washington correspondent to the effect that "the power of the Democratic caucus will be invoked by the great Democratic bankers of New York to prevent any further scaling of the Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama and Louisiana State debts." Of course, any body the great Democratic bankers of New York could to invoke would have to come to the front and centre. The Democratic caucus would be sure to respond to the invocation with cheerful alacrity. It would not stop a moment to inquire what it had to do with the matter, and if the Louisiana convention, for example, were to tell it, in case of interference, to "go to the devil," of course it would peremptorily refuse to do so, and defy the convention to produce the statute making any such proceeding obligatory. Then things would be mixed for a fact. But, then, all parties could fall back upon a resolution "solemnly reiterating the sanctity of the national debt and declaring it to be inviolable."

Mr. Bernard Perez, who has been experimenting on the subject of babies and investigating their moral and mental development, has just furnished the *Revue Scientifique* with the results of his studies. Mr. Perez's idea is that the baby when first ushered into the world is wholly devoid of any sentiments, ideas or even feelings. He does not think that they are even aware of touch when first born. It is several days before they appreciated the sense of touch; next comes the sense of taste, then the sense of sight and last the sense of sound. The first sensations that the child appreciates are disagreeable ones, Mr. Perez declares; he feels and appreciates what is unpleasant to him much sooner than he does what is pleasant.

The first passions developed in the child, also, Mr. Perez finds to be the evil and unpleasant ones. A child learns to fear at two months old, and jealousy and anger are developed in it at the early age of three months. As for human sympathy, unselfish love for any one or any thing, Mr. Perez declares, is wholly undeveloped in a child until it has reached four or five, and even then is imperfectly developed except in a few phenomenal cases.

Crying is, of course, almost coincident with the birth of the baby, but the latter does not learn to shed tears, Mr. Perez declares, for several weeks, while sobbing is unknown until the child has reached the mature age of four months. Smiling also is a habit that a baby soon knows, and laughing comes when it is but a few weeks old, but, despite the assertions and protests of mothers, Mr. Perez declares that this laughing does not express anything, is not an indication of joy or pleasure on the part of the child, but simply a contraction of certain muscles and nerves of the face.

There are, no doubt, hundreds of mothers who will denounce Mr. Perez's theories, deny his discoveries and declare his doctrines heterodox, malicious and infidel; mothers believe a baby to be a sort of superior angel, pretend to find in every one of its movements and gestures some meaning

and significance, but it is greatly to be feared that their fond affection has misled them, and that the old gray-beard philosopher who stood for hours over the cradles to study their infant occupants, critically and psychologically, is far more right than they, and that the baby is devoid of feelings altogether, or possesses only the selfish and egotistic ones.

FIVE AND A HALF MILLS.

Can the people of Louisiana, with their real and personal property reduced from six hundred millions to one hundred and twenty millions, pay a debt, largely fraudulent, of over twelve millions and interest on the same at the rate of seven per cent? We believe that there is not a man, excluding the bondholders, who will answer in the affirmative. Even the bondholders, as a general thing, express a willingness to have the rate of taxation reduced. The enormity of seven per cent interest on a debt of over twelve millions is so flagrant that even the holders of the debt understand that it is an outrage.

But what is the relief proposed for the taxpayers? The more reasonable of the bondholders express a willingness to have the rate of interest reduced. But they denounce any proposition to reduce the volume of the debt, either by eliminating the fraudulent portion or by scaling the console as repudiation, and they aggressively declare that the five and a half mills interest tax shall not be impaired or touched. "Reduce the interest on this mass of fraud from 7 to 5 per cent," say our automatic creditors, "but touch not that sacred five and a half mills tax which Wells and Federal bayonets have decreed shall be wrong, year after year, for nearly half a century to come, from the people to pay the sacred bonds created by Warmoth and Kellogg."

And what relief does this proposition offer the taxpayers of Louisiana? Not one particle. The proposition is all in the interest of the bondholders. Reduce the interest from seven per cent to five per cent, and still extort from the taxpayers the five and a half mills interest tax and the result amounts simply to this: The same amount of money will be wrung from the people; the same system of governmental robbery will go on; the same proportion of the farmers' products, and of the property holders' rents, and of the laborers' wages will be extorted for the benefit of the bondholders, and the two per cent stricken from the rate of interest will go into the sinking fund to pay the mass of the debt, honest and fraudulent. Will any of our contemporaries; will any of the bondholders; will any of our noble patriots of the bar who are running for the convention in the interest of the bondholders, tell us where the relief under this proposition comes in for the taxpayers? The proposition is an insult to the people; it is simply contemptible. We are ready to concede that a man may honestly hold that the debt should be paid dollar for dollar, principal and interest. Such a man may be an interested party, or he may be half-witted; still he may be honest and patriotic. But it is simply absurd to talk of affording the people relief from the debt by proposing to reduce the interest from seven to five per cent, while holding at the same time that the five and a half mills tax is an inviolable contract which cannot be impaired.

What the people of Louisiana want is relief from the burden of debt and taxation. This is the issue the constitutional convention must meet and settle. When the convention adjourns they must leave us a State rate of taxation, for all purposes, of not more than five mills. If it be held that the special interest tax cannot be touched, there is no relief for the taxpayer, nor future for Louisiana, and it will be as well to do at once the revenues of the State to the bondholders. What we require is low taxation; protection for property and industry. If the convention has not the courage to oppose the money power and carry out a programme that will reduce the State rate of taxation to five mills at the highest, the convention will be a fraud and a disgrace to the State.

THE TIMES' ROLL CALL.

After calling names and fixing the responsibility of the defeat of the Senate amendment to the Postoffice appropriation bill subsidizing the Brazilian mail line upon the Democrats in Congress, the *Times* contents itself with the comment that "the Southern people are sending the wrong message to Congress." This comment is supplemented by a lot of miscellaneous abuse and vituperation, the sum and substance of which only goes to show that there is one thing the *Times* hates worse than a Northern Democrat, and that is a Southern Democrat.

Perhaps a word of explanation may be appropriate from us by way of preface, since the DEMOCRAT has advocated this particular measure with much more persistence than the *Times* or any other Southern paper. Since its defeat we have also attacked Mr. Randall and other agencies that contributed to its defeat, which we had just reason to believe were correct. We cannot, however, sympathize with or endorse the *argumentum ad hominem* to which the *Times* resorts, or the deduction to which the argument leads, that all the Democrats who voted against it are villains and malignant enemies of the South.

We candidly confess that in advocating the Brazilian mail subsidy we were actuated by purely local considerations. We knew that the amendment to the Postoffice appropriation bill granting the subsidy embodied all the most obnoxious features of the existing navigation laws, to which we were unalterably opposed; still we urged the measure because it was the best we could hope for from a Congress in one branch of which the Republicans had the ascendancy. So long as the odious navigation laws were left to disgrace our statute books, bring American intelligence into disrepute and cripple American enterprise and commerce, we saw no reason why New Orleans should be discriminated against because their provisions were applied to a measure specially designed for her advancement. This, however, was *caveat* for a Republican Senate.

Now the situation is entirely changed, that the Democratic party has come into control of both houses of Congress. Henceforward we stand on principle and have no word for expediency. In this spirit, we have no word of condemnation for any Democrat who voted against this measure on principle, though it will be a difficult task to convince us that a great many who contributed to its defeat were actuated by any such consideration. Certainly no Republican can set up a pretense to any such virtuous inspiration.

Now, we insist upon the amendment of the navigation laws and the repeal of those provisions which forbid Americans to purchase ships wherever they can get them cheapest, to sail them under American registries and to

claim the protection of their country's flag for their property. We shall strenuously and unqualifiedly oppose the perpetuation of these laws in any contract, subsidy or other measure of encouragement that Congress may propose to extend to our commerce. So long as these laws remained in force and the ascendancy of the Republicans in one branch of Congress forbid all hope of their repeal we could not afford to refuse a bounty, because it was granted under conditions imposed by a principle to which we were opposed, but which, none the less, applied universally to the whole commerce of the country. The objective point now is, not to do the best we can under bad laws, but to repeal those laws, and enfranchise our commerce from the shackles too long imposed upon it in the interests of New England shipbuilders. Destituted of this feature, and of all suspicion of jobbery, such as appertained to the Roach subsidy, and there will be no difficulty in securing from a Democratic Congress proper encouragement for the establishment of direct mail service with Brazil. Fix the maximum of the appropriation, permit competition, and allow competitors to purchase their ships wherever they can get them cheapest, and all honest Democratic opposition will be obviated, and we can then begin to designate as the enemies of the South the Democrats who, from local interest, or corrupt motive, refuse us the bounty to which we are justly entitled. Relieved of the Roach feature, and the proposition is altogether another thing.

It will be remembered that when this very measure was being discussed in the commercial convention which met here in December last, the DEMOCRAT alone, of all the city press, opposed that feature of it which incorporated the principle of the existing navigation laws. We said then, as we say now, that this recommendation of the convention did not meet the approval of the commercial masses of the country, and that it was utterly repugnant to the traditional doctrine of the Southern Democracy, "free trade and sailors' rights." We went further and showed that these laws originated in a concession to New England shipping interests and that their first purpose and application was the protection of "the truly benevolent and humane merchandise of importing negroes to christianize them," which negroes had been purchased on the west coast of Africa by the Puritan philanthropists with rum, distilled from molasses previously imported in their vessels from the West Indies. Laws originating as those did may aptly be termed a "relic of barbarism," and as such they deserve no place on our statute books, and the utmost that circumstances can do is to excuse the Democrat who aids in any way to perpetuate them.

The great obstacle in the way of Democratic support of legislation beneficial to the South has been that every measure looking to that end, every bill made for Southern support, has been identified with some stupendous scheme of jobbery and plunder connected in the interest of individuals and corporations. This was the case with the Brazil subsidy and with the Texas Pacific Railroad scheme, which was gotten up solely in the interests of Tom Scott and the Pennsylvania Central, while it was commended to Southern Democrats as a purely Southern measure. This fraud was exposed during the last session of Congress by the DEMOCRAT, which alone, of all the New Orleans press, advocated the bill proposed by Senator Johnson, of Virginia, to which Tom Scott could have had no possible objection had the professions he made to capture Southern votes been honest and sincere. The time has now come when Democrats can vote upon measures beneficial to the South on their merits, unprejudiced by jobs or suspicions of jobbery. Under these altered circumstances we do not apprehend that they will prove the relentless enemies of the South which the *Times* would have us believe them.

MORE ARTFUL DODGING.

[Yesterday Afternoon's *Picayune*.] Somebody sends the *Picayune* these two questions, with a request to answer them: Does the *Picayune* hold that the State debt, as it now stands, should be paid in full, dollar for dollar?

Does the *Picayune* believe that the people of Louisiana should continue to pay the present rate of interest (7 per cent) upon all the bonds validated by the funding act of 1873?

Our answer is that as soon as the *Picayune* considers it necessary to repeat its views on these two points—both of which have been already discussed in its columns—it will do so without waiting for questions or requests from anybody. If the person who sends us these questions had read the *Picayune* he would have known exactly what the *Picayune*'s views are on the topics referred to. If he wants more light on the subject, he will have to wait until we have time to attend to him.

The "person" who sent these questions has read the *Picayune* and fails to find "exactly what the *Picayune*'s views are on the topics referred to." There are some vague allusions to the debt running through its columns for the past month or two, but there is nothing which can even by implication be construed into a plain answer to the above questions which the DEMOCRAT propounded yesterday morning. The *Picayune* seems to be groping in the dark for a position upon the subject of the State debt, with a general leaning towards the bondholder's view. That it has expressed a positive opinion upon that subject, or that it has views, in any accepted meaning of that term, the DEMOCRAT denies and challenges it to produce such opinion or "view" from its columns.

We do not ask the *Picayune* to "repeat" anything. What we desire to know in the public interest, without any more dodging, equivocation or evasion, is a reply to the above questions, and to the following in addition: Does the *Picayune* believe that the five and a half mill interest tax should be maintained and continued as a charge upon the people of the State?

If, as is claimed, these questions have been answered heretofore, we challenge a reproduction of the articles, or at least the information as to the issue of the *Picayune* in which they can be found. As the matter now stands, the *Picayune* has retreated behind a weak subterfuge.

The attitude of the *Times* is far more manly. That paper has defined its position in a way which cannot be misunderstood. It holds to the bondholder's view, pure and simple, and has the independence to say so. Not so with the *Picayune*. It intimates and insinuates and in a weak way seeks to aid the *Times* in its fight for the bonds; but nowhere can we find a positive declaration of its position; anything tangible enough to be construed as an emphatic opinion.

The people have a right to know how every journal claiming to be able to create and lead public sentiment stands upon this question of the State debt, the most momentous issue now before the voters of the State. The DEMOCRAT claims to represent the people in this

matter, and once more urges the *Picayune* to let them know exactly where it stands. It is its duty as a public journal to do so, fully and candidly. Let there be no more evasions, no further references to opinions not to be found in its files. The whole ground can be covered in five lines. Surely the *Picayune* can afford to spare that space to a statement of its opinions on the questions at issue?

The DEMOCRAT, the "person" alluded to, repeats its questions, and asks for a conclusive reply, without further quibble:

Does the *Picayune* hold that the State debt, as it now stands, should be paid in full, dollar for dollar?

Does the *Picayune* believe that the people of Louisiana should continue to pay the present rate of interest (7 per cent) upon all the bonds validated by the funding act of 1873?

Is there any city in the country that can show as good a sanitary condition as New Orleans for the present month? Our health record for the first five days of March is really extraordinary. During that period there were seventy-three deaths in this city, in two cases twins, and only thirty-one deaths. This is a death rate of 9 per thousand for the year, a showing three times as good as that made by New York, Philadelphia and London. The birth rate, it will be seen, is 145 per cent higher than the death rate, and will, if it continues, in less than a year fill up the losses in our population made by the late epidemic. A still more remarkable showing is that of the ages of those who died. About half the deaths in New York are of children under five years of age, and one-third of children under one year; whereas, of these thirty-one deaths in this city, only six, or less than one-fifth, were infants, while seventeen, or considerably more than half, were over fifty years of age, and six over seventy years. In other words, there were as many persons over seventy years of age who died during this period as babies. The average age of those who died was forty-three, which is about eleven years higher than the general average of the civilized globe.

A CARD.

To the Commander and Officers of the Corvette Libertad, Messrs. A. Monasterio, E. Coria, V. N. Fuentes, Francisco A. Navarro and others:

Gentlemen—I desire thus publicly to express my acknowledgments of the marked favor received at your hands during your brief sojourn in this city, for the handsome testimonial of your regard, which it pleased you to bestow upon me. I feel truly grateful, and will ever bear in mind the generous motives and kindly feelings that prompted such an unexpected exhibit of your appreciation of a very slight favor. Tending upon my sincere thanks and wishing you all long life, happiness and prosperity, and trusting that the kindly relationship of the two American Republics may continue undisturbed, I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM FLEMING.

A CARD FROM THE REGISTRAR OF VOTERS.

OFFICE OF REGISTRAR OF VOTERS, New Orleans, March 5, 1879.

Application having been made to me, as Registrar of Voters, to appoint canvassers and to superintend the examining into cases of fraudulent registration, I have declined so to do, for the reason that under the law my duties are confined in this particular to the striking off of the names of persons fraudulently registered or of those who have died or removed from the parish since the last election or are otherwise disqualified, upon the proof being made as required by the statute. I shall at all times be ready, so far as the business of the office will admit, to furnish lists of voters, or other information, to citizens or parties, necessary to a proper canvass, when desired. Did the law authorize my undertaking this labor of canvassing, the means placed at my disposal are entirely inadequate to the proper performance of the work. Regarding the canvass contemplated as one which must in some measure assume the character of a partisan work, which I am glad to be relieved from the performance, if any such duties which might tend to affect the unbiased and unprejudiced position which my office imposes, I deem it only proper to convey at this time salutary cautions and instructions to any persons engaged in such canvass. My decisions in such cases I regard as in a sense, quasi judicial in determining whether sufficient proof under the law has been furnished and the statute properly complied with in order to secure the erasure of a name. The affidavits of two reputable citizens will be required as a condition precedent to striking off, and the deposition must clearly specify the cause for erasure. In cases complained of for non-residence it must be set forth that not only do the inhabitants of the residence given have been made, but the affidavits must also state that said residents were at that time of the registration complained of domiciliated at the place, or in default thereof there should be contained statements of those who were at the time residing in said house and since removed, or in default thereof there must be proof of non-residence of the alleged fraudulent voter by the landlord or the premises or persons at the time resident in the vicinage, or other conclusive proof.

In all cases, names, dates, numbers and streets must be as accurately specified as circumstances of the case will permit. In all other instances where, for other causes than non-residence, an erasure is sought to be made, affidavits must be clear, unqualified, and detail from whom the information was received.

The right of franchise being essentially a sacred one, guaranteed to every qualified voter, and a deprivation of his vote to any elector, however humble, being a grievous wrong, the utmost care must be observed in executing the summary methods devised by the Legislature to protect the purity of the ballot and guarantee the right of the citizen. In all doubtful cases, where the proof is not such as, in the opinion of the Registrar, is required by the strict letter of the law, he conceives it his duty to give the benefit of the doubt to the voter or person claiming registration.

These instructions are published for the benefit of canvassers, in order to save a vast amount of unnecessary labor which must inevitably result from a careless or negligent execution of the work and a disregard to these essentials.

CHARLES CAVANAC,

Registrar of Voters, Parish of Orleans.

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