

SECTIONAL AGITATION.

At a time like this, when business of all kinds is so dull, when money is so scarce, and our people are struggling for the very necessities of life, it is the most suicidal policy, fraught with portentous evil, to attempt to stir up the dying embers of sectional prejudices and passions, and array one portion of our common country against another.

The man who attempts to get up a political excitement in this country on the old sectional issues will find himself without a party and without support. The man who wants to serve his country must put himself in the lines of its leading thought, and that is the restoration of business, trade, commerce, industry, sound political economy, honest money and honest payment of all obligations, and the man who can add anything in the direction of the accomplishment of any of these purposes is a public benefactor.

Blaine's Speech.

Mr. Blaine has dealt in the most transparent and easily refuted sophistry. The substance of all his reasoning is that the republican representation in Congress from the Southern States is not in proportion to the colored population. He supports this position by elaborate statistics, three repeated with three different groups of States; but his attempt to substitute reasoning for the usual bloody shirt declamation, though commendable in intention, is an utter failure in logic.

the votes of the beaten minority are of no more account than if they had never been cast. It is a flagrant absurdity to reason as if, when votes prove to be inefficient, the voters are deprived of their rights. In the last Presidential election, Mr. Tilden had a majority of the popular vote; but will Mr. Blaine carry out his reasoning to its logical result and maintain that a majority of the citizens of the United States were disfranchised because a minority elected Mr. Hayes?

Christmas.

BY CHARLES DICKEYS.

Christmas time! That man must be a misanthrope indeed, in whose breast something like a jovial feeling is not roused—in whose mind some pleasant associations are not awakened—by the recurrence of Christmas. There are people who will tell you that Christmas is not to them what it used to be; that each succeeding Christmas has found some cherished hope or happy prospect of the year before, dimmed or passed away; that the present only serves to remind them of reduced circumstances and straightened incomes—of the feast they once bestowed on hollow friends, and of the cold looks that meet them now, in adversity and misfortune.

Who can be insensible to the outpourings of good feeling, and the honest interchange of affectionate attachment, which abound at this season of the year? A Christmas family party! We know nothing in nature more delightful! There seems a magic in the very word Christmas. Petty jealousies and discord are forgotten; social feelings are awakened in bosoms to which they have long been strangers; father and son, or brother and sister, who have met and parted with averted gaze, or a look of cold recognition, for months before, proffer and return the cordial embrace, and bury their past animosities in their present happiness.

The Electoral Count.

On the 13th inst., the Senate passed by a vote of 35 to 26 a bill in regard to the count of the electoral vote. The bill as passed provides that electors of President and Vice-President shall be appointed in each State on the 1st Tuesday in October in every fourth year, and on the same day in October whenever there shall be a vacancy in both the offices of President and Vice-President. The electors are to meet and give their votes for President and Vice-President on the second Monday in January next following at such place in each State as the Legislature of such State shall direct.

Correspondence.

FOR THE RECORD.

Mr. Editor—As the elections are over, and the time for Congressional action has come, the time seems favorable to discuss needed measures. The party and personal appeals as common in our country in the midst of campaigns do not unfortunately tend greatly to the elucidation of the real character of persons, parties or measures. And I must say, that according to my apprehension I have yet to see a speech, essay or editorial which fairly brings to view either briefly or in extenso the main elements and bearing of what is called the financial question and especially in regard to the Southern or former Confederate States. In nearly every financial aspect, their condition before the war was not only different, but in sharp contrast to what it has been since.

Most people recognize the contrast in the financial condition in the South before and since the war, but they seem to overlook the financial contrast between the Confederate and loyal States since the war. And I wish it to be understood that I use this classification of States only for the purpose of elucidation. They are terms of the past, never again to exist, it is to be hoped, except historically, or for the purpose of fair and clear argument. Unlike the Confederate States, the loyal States did not lose by the war their banks and circulating medium, their stocks, their private and public securities, and a moiety of their other property. On the contrary, they have had all the time a perennial abundance of money, while there has been, and still is a rimous dearth of it in the South. And yet we are not allowed State Banks for the local relief, and the same stringent banking system is applied to both sections.

a maxim, you know, among the Chinese, that if one person is idle during the year, then one person must perish from hunger. And we are told that if even a pebble be dropped into the ocean, its ripple will spread over its whole surface. And if these be not literal facts, yet they serve to illustrate the influence of one man, and will leave their legitimate effect, immediate and remote. I offer this outline of my views, with as much brevity as I can, to make them understood; and if it be agreeable to you and your readers, I may hereafter try to demonstrate different parts of them by facts, figures, and "night terrors," beginning with the National Bank system.

FOR THE RECORD.

BEAUMONT, N. C., Dec. 10, 1878.

Mr. Editor—I noticed your leader in THE CHATHAM RECORD of the 5th inst., in regard to the public roads, in our county. You state that at the last term of the Superior Court held for our county, near all of the overseers of the public roads were presented by the Grand Jury. I am very sorry that wilful negligence causes so many persons to suffer but then, men of good common sense are obliged to know, that if they continue to neglect such an important duty, and that is, to continue to neglect their roads, as overseers, if they do not take them they ought not to complain. It is a lamentable fact, so long that they are almost impassable with loaded vehicles. I do not think I have ever seen the public highways in such a wretched condition. Now, winter is upon us, and it will be almost an impossibility to put them in good condition at this season of the year, filling up the mud holes and washes with earth or mud, with a few brush, partially covered; it will not become compact and hard before next summer. The roads always ought to be repaired during the Spring and Fall months of the year, so that from travel they will become firm, smooth and hard for winter travel. We all agree, that good roads are of the greatest importance to the farmer market-man, and private travel; and all knowing this to be so, still the law is violated by neglecting the roads, almost entirely. It is too commonly the case with overseers, if they work their sections as well as that is done just before court. They have an idea that that is the time to work—seemingly not to care what their condition may be between these long intervals—whether the market-man can haul his produce or not, is a matter that seems not to concern them. I very well remember that the Grand Jury is a neighboring county, a few years ago returned all the public roads, as being almost impassable and well-nigh neglected. I passed through the county by a short time after sunrise, and I assure you it had a good effect—the overseers did not wait until court or just before, they made the dirt fly at the wheels and continued until all the public highways were put in a good passable condition; but with all this, they troubled considerably, in attending court with some cost. The court was lenient, and by the action of that Jury, much good was accomplished, and travel made more easy, comfortable and light.

Mr. Editor, you state that "if there is a lawful road in the county, you have yet to see it"; I think the statement correct; I doubt very much whether there is five miles of public road in the county, together that meets the requirements of the law. I think our present laws are very inefficient, and badly gotten up, in their present shape; they are very hard on overseers—no matter how industriously they may be trying to keep their roads in good order. Should they be returned, the best of them will certainly suffer. There are many places in the public roads in the county, that it will cost too much time and labor to overseers and hands on such places, to make them lawful roads; in cases of this character, the law, as it now stands, makes no exceptions, and has little mercy, when once in its embrace. Mr. Editor, I notice that you also state in your article, that you are in favor of working the roads by taxation; that the present laws are unjust, unfair, and a failure, almost entirely. I agree with you. I have long thought the road laws unjust, and oppressive, but I must confess, I can hardly say what is the best, under the present circumstances. I fear the Legislature can not shape a law that would fully fill up all the gaps. It will be right hard to determine just how good, roads shall be kept by contractors, and just how much work shall be done by them. There is a wide and dangerous gap, here, that will be attended with many difficulties. For when the people are taxed to keep in repair the public roads, should they be found out of order, there will be some grumbling tax-payer that will visit vengeance on the contractor without ceremony. I think if the difficulties could be overcome, which seems to exist just here, an Amendment to the Road-Laws, would be a blessing to the people, although I feel satisfied, that a great many tax-payers will grumble and grunt painfully. But this is natural with some folks. I do not since have been from an exempt from work on the public road, I have done my part, but if we can have an improvement that will satisfy the people, in the way of an amendment to the road laws, so as not to make taxes too burdensome, and make our roads good, I should hail the change with joy; and I think

there are but few right thinking men that would not. If it is right to tax property under the advantage system, it is right to work roads the same way; the burthen should rest where they properly belong. I do not think that a poor man who has neither horse or wagon to travel over the public highways, should be held responsible with a wealthy man, and his wages and teams often put to market, freighted with his rice or produce from his fine farm; this is not fair, certainly. The poor man who has nothing to carry to market, but shoulders his corn, takes the by-paths to mill, and a muddy over on the public roads, should not be held equally bound with the wealthy man who is almost constantly on the road, spitting it up with their heavy iron wheels. It is unjust, and gives wealthy men the advantage and gives good cause for complaining.

I will close this article by saying there are many good reasons that taxation is the right and just mode of keeping up the public roads. You may learn from me again on this subject.

[From the Southern Republican.] The Southern States Were Never Out of the Union.

The decision of the United States Supreme Court requiring Tennessee to receive the depreciated notes of the State bank in payment of taxes, although he notes were issued during the war while the State Government was in rebel hands is of considerable importance, as showing the court's position respecting the status of the seceding States. The court holds that it is a fanciful idea that there could be two different States, one loyal and one rebellious, within the same limits, and practically says that secession never took the Southern States for a moment out of the Union by the denial that rebel State Legislatures are void and invalid. The States were States all the time, and their acts while in secession are binding now. The Charleston News and Courier holds that this practically declares that the seceding States are in the possession of Congress in preserving a full Union for the return of the States "to the Union" was unlawful, the reconstruction acts unconstitutional, revolutionary and "void" and the constitutions formed under those acts unlawful and invalid. —A short that the governments of the Southern States, based upon the reconstruction acts, derive their sanction from the subsequent consent of the people of the States, and not from any other authority. The Charleston paper, however, anticipates "no disposition in the South to rip up the reconstruction acts and begin over again." But it is so consistent with the probabilities that the North may attempt to enforce the negro, on the ground that the constitutional amendments were ratified by State Legislatures, but under military orders, and not under constitutional authority, that it is probable the South, standing on the rights of the freeman, will oppose and prevent it.

Reviving the Whipping Post.

There is an evident disposition in many parts of the country to re-adopt the whip as a method of punishment for crime. While Delaware, clinging persistently to the ancient plan, stood aloof for years and preserved, by the sheer force of her persistency, the life of the system, which everywhere else has perished, several other States have joined her, or at present seem likely to do so. In Virginia, for a year or two past, whipping for larceny has been quite common; in South Carolina it has been to some extent introduced, and from the tone of the discussions in the California Constitutional Convention, it is esteemed likely that that State will incorporate it in a new penal system.—Philadelphia Times

Agricultural Statistics of North Carolina.

According to the statistics of the National Bureau, North Carolina, during the twelve months preceding January 1st, 1878, increased her wheat products had a million of bushels, adding exactly one bushel per acre to the average yield of the State, and 60,000 acres to the wheat acreage of the State. The increased value of the crop for the year was \$800,000. Oats fell off 5,000 acres in area and 8 cents in average price, yet by increasing the yield 2 bushels per acre, adding 450,000 bushels to the product for the State, the total value was increased about \$95,000. Corn fell off 200,000 bushels, notwithstanding an increased acreage of 55,000 acres, and lost in value \$550,000. Rye increased its yield 85,000 bushels, but fell off 25 cents in price, losing \$74,000 in value. Hay increased 10,000 tons, but having decreased in price more than \$1 per ton, fell off in total value \$54,000. Irish potatoes increased 3,000 bushels, and 14 cents in price, gaining \$121,000 in total value. North Carolina also fell off 25,000 acres in cotton; whereas Mississippi increased hers 70,000.—News.

There is a general feeling that the plan of electing Congressmen a session in advance of taking their seats is all wrong, a man is now elected before he sets upon, and then a delegate man who does not feel any responsibility remains in a session after his defeat.

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