

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE AMERICAN CENTENNIALS.

In the press dispatches a few days ago appeared a synopsis of a letter from Mr. Gladstone, read at the Centennial celebration. His reflections on the American Revolution are rather peculiar. There is a little irony in the following passage:

"In a retrospective view of the eventful period, my countrymen can now contemplate its incidents with impartiality. I do not think they should severely blame their ancestors whose struggles to maintain the unity of the British Empire is one that must, I think, after the late great war of the North and South, be viewed in America with some sympathy and indulgence."

This polished Englishman could not resist the temptation, to remind the Northern people that they had recently been guilty of a war of coercion themselves in forcing an unwilling South to remain a part and parcel of the Union, and hence they should be charitable to their English ancestors who a century ago treated the Colonies in a like manner. Mr. Gladstone could have reminded them also that the Colonies had not one-half the grievances to complain of that the Southern States had before the war, and have had since. Besides the colonies had not a shadow of a right under the constitution of Great Britain, to dissolve their connection with the mother government, and the patriots of 1775 recognizing this fact based their action upon the right of revolution, which fact was distinctly set forth in the Mecklenburg Declaration and afterwards in the Philadelphia Declaration. Not so with the people of the Southern States. They not only had the shadow of a right, but the great constitutional lawyers, regardless of their political affiliations, of both North and South, have been nearly equally divided, since the foundation of this Republic, on the question as to whether a State had not a right under the constitution to withdraw from this confederation of States. As to the policy and patriotic propriety, so to speak, of the step, that is altogether another matter which we do not propose to discuss. The people of the two sections took up arms to settle this constitutional puzzle, and we accept the decision of the sword, only we do not want to be continually called a "rebel"—not that the epithet has any sting for us since the heroes of the Revolution made the term honorable—but because it is not certain which was the rebel side in the late war—whether the Northern or the Southern people were rebelling against the constitution, and the constitution is surely the government in a Republic. We do not say these things to revive sectional animosities or rake up old issues, but there is no better time than now to show our Northern friends the folly of assuming that they are infallible, and that we, of the South, all sinners, etc. After scanning the constitution of this country with an unprejudiced eye, the historian, a century hence, will laugh at the presumption of the Northern people in calling the Southerners who remained true to their States in the late war, "rebels."

One more extract from Mr. Gladstone's letter and we are done. He says: "The circumstances under which the United States began their national existence, and their unexampled rapidity of advance in wealth, population, enterprise and power, have imposed on their people an enormous responsibility."

We have not quoted the foregoing to comment on the sentiment expressed, but on Mr. Gladstone's use of the term "United States" and plural pronoun, "their" in speaking of this government. It is refreshing to hear any one, especially a foreigner, speak of this government as a confederation of sovereign States. Since the war we have heard nothing but the "federal government," "the American government," "what it is going to do" &c. We are inclined to believe from the frequency of the plural pronoun, referring to this government, in Mr. Gladstone's letter, that he used it intentionally. On the whole, we like the tone of Mr. Gladstone's letter and we are glad he wrote it.

OUR FIRST REBELLION.

It has been mentioned in these columns that the Baltimore Sun had come to the defence of the priority of the Mecklenburg Declaration, and an extract of the Sun's article published. Below we give the full text of the same.

"It has been already mentioned that the centennial celebration of the first formal declaration of American Independence, made at Mecklenburg, North Carolina, will occur at Charlotte, the county seat of that county, on the 20th of May next. The declaration to be celebrated, was made in Mecklenburg county on the 20th of May, 1775. A copy of that paper was first published in the Raleigh (N. C.) Register, April 30, 1819. The words of the paragraph of the declaration are as follows: 'That we, the citizens of Mecklenburg county, do hereby dissolve the political bonds which have connected us to the mother country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British crown, and unite all political connections, contracts and associations with that nation, who have wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties, and inhumanly shed the blood of American patriots at Lexington.'"

"That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent empire, and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self-governing association, under the control of no power other than that of our God and the general government of the Congress, to whom we solemnly pledge to each other mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes and our most sacred honor."

In another paragraph the phrase is

used of the "inherent and inalienable rights of man." There are coincidences in the phrase italicized with those of the National Declaration of Independence, which led to a correspondence between Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson at the time of the publication of this paper in 1819. While there was nothing specially noticeable in most of these coincidences, as any man might use as his own such collocations of words as 'free and independent,' 'all political connection,' &c., without the imputation of plagiarism, yet Mr. Jefferson, in his letter to Mr. Adams, seems to believe the declaration spurious and an unjustifiable quiz. Some of the coincidences were made in North Carolina to what was considered Mr. Jefferson's insulting attack on the Mecklenburg declaration, although his statement was intended only as a defense of the originality and priority of the National Declaration of Independence. The Legislature of North Carolina took up the affair in 1831, and published in a pamphlet a mass of testimony which had been collected, intended to prove, first, that a Declaration of Independence was made by representatives of the county of Mecklenburg in May, 1775, and second, that the paper first published in the Raleigh Register, April 30, 1819, was a copy of that identical declaration.

Whatever may be the difference of opinion on this latter point, the first part is conceded to have been satisfactorily established as could well be done, after such a lapse of time, by oral evidence, numerous perfectly credible survivors, who participated in, or witnessed the scene, positively affirmed that a declaration was made and that they understood it to be a Declaration of Independence. Documentary evidence subsequently sustained these recollections. The discovery of the contemporaneous published and recognized Mecklenburg declaration has fully settled this question.

Thus Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, was the real cradle of American Liberty. The Scotch whig blood which flowed in the veins of its people was the first in this county to boil over in the tide of independence. Gen. Joseph B. Johnston, who derives his lineage from Scotland, will be present at the coming celebration, giving another proof that the late Confederates, whose fathers did more to establish American independence than any one else, have no desire to surrender their heritage."

NOT ONE KIND WORD.

We have read all the accounts of the New England Centennial carefully, and we must confess some little surprise that decency never suggested to some one of all the orators of that occasion the propriety of making some allusion to the Mecklenburg—the first declaration of independence—made on American soil. It seemed to us that some of the speakers studiously avoided the subject. Well, we are under no obligations to the selfish Yankee crew, and perhaps it is best as it is; but we hope no invitations will be sent up that way.

THE DIFFERENCE.

A Milwaukee Democratic paper asks the following questions: "Did not the Republican Administration put in the Cabinet the ex-rebel, Akerman? Did they not put into office the rebel General Longstreet, who almost gained the battle of Gettysburg? Did they not appoint the ex-rebel Governor Orr Minister to Russia? And yet do the Republican party talk into of very true, but there are rebels and there are ex-rebels. Longstreet, for example, is different from Semmes, and Akerman from Gen. Toombs."

Yes, there is a difference; and as the devout old deacon exclaimed when the minister referred to a remarkable difference on another occasion very early in the history of our race,—"We thank God for the difference."

STATE NEWS.

Slight fire in Raleigh Thursday—one house burnt.

Reports from Old Fort represent the fruit crop as destroyed by the frost.

The Citizen has a article headed, "That Hat." What kind, brother, old or new?

Major Seaton Gales delivers his Odd Fellows lecture in Fayetteville Monday evening.

The Gazette mentions a civil rights case in Fayetteville. Saw old story, lawyers want to eat "wid de white folks."

The body of a child in a state of decomposition has been discovered on the plantation of Mr. Tuttle of Caldwell county.—Cor. of Press.

The Expositor has a tragic account of the arraignment of Hall and his wife for the murder of Gillespie, at Buncombe Court last week.

A movement is on foot to celebrate the Centennial of Methodism in North Carolina, the first society being organized here in 1775, and the first Circuit formed in 1776.

Asheville Expositor: We were pleased to meet last week in town one of our old friends, Erwin Rankin, who is traveling for the well known shoe house of Alexander, Seigle & Co., Charlotte, N. C. Erwin is a good business boy, and we wish him much success.

Piedmont Press: Mr. J. P. Caldwell, Local editor of the Charlotte Observer, has been off duty nearly three weeks. He is confined to his bed, the disease having attacked him. He is so feeble he is unable to use them without extreme pain. We trust his health may soon be restored.

The editor of the Wilson Advance writing from Raleigh says: "We met our late brother Stamps, who has left us. And is now practicing law in Raleigh. Rumor, however, introduces him again on the tripod in connection with the new Democratic paper, the Capital, which appeared there on Tuesday."

Gen. J. B. Hood denies the statement that is finding free currency in the press just now, to the effect that he contemplates a removal to Minnesota for the purpose of engaging in the fur trade. He says that when he goes into the fur business it will be in Louisiana or Texas, where he can purchase better land at cheaper rates than in Minnesota.

Just Married. And they were on their wedding way. A funny-looking old fellow, gray-haired, wrinkled face, and evidently about sixty years of age, entered the City Hall yesterday with a girl of 18 hanging on his arm. He had an old fashioned black coat, with a double row of buttons up and down, a Greenie plug hat, new buckskin gloves, and a severe attempt had been made to get up a "shine" on his cowhide boots. "You're a good fellow, you are," said the girl, "but that blue shawl, green kids, and a white dress on, and the two attracted attention at once. No one had an idea that they were husband and wife until the old man stopped a passing policeman and said: "My wife, mister. Just got married Sunday, and we want to look around this courthouse a little."

She reached out and "shook" with the officer, and the old man looked pleased as he said: "Didn't I tell you, Lucy, that folks in Detroit would all notice you?" "You did, do to bad when you married the old man, eh?" "So you have just entered the state of matrimony, have you?" asked the officer. "I don't know anything about your matrimony," answered the old chap, "but I know you're a good fellow, and I'm the happiest old sunflower in the States."—ab. Lucy.

"Married for love, I suppose?" queried the officer.

"Love, and nothing else," replied the old man. "I was struck with her—she with me, and we eloped. I'm gettin a leetle old, and I s'pose I'll make a baby of her, but Lucy's a good girl. She can put on style with anybody, or she can flop a mop around as good as any woman in America. She'll introduce her to some of the bigbigs, I'm bound she shall go in the best society or none."

The officer sent them down the hall to the Mayor's office. The bride hung back, but the old man passed his arm around her and said: "Come along, Lucy, you've got heaps of expensive duds on. You are handsome, and I'll risk you alone with anybody in Detroit!"

As they entered the Mayor's office, the clerk came forward and asked what was wanted, and being told that they would like to see the Mayor, that were informed that the gentleman was out. "Oh, well, it don't make any great difference," said the old man. "This is my wife, mister—just got married."

"Happy to congratulate you," said the clerk, as he shook hands.

"She's a leetle shy," continued the old man, pinching his wife's ear, "but that's the way with 'em all. Lucy's a mighty good girl, and she worked out at two dollars per week and bought all her wedding duds. Say to the Mayor that we called; wished he had been here."

They went out and wandered about for awhile, the old man keeping his arm around her, and finally they entered the City Clerk's office. A lawyer happened to be standing near the door, and walking up to him, the old man said: "Mister, my wife. Looking around a little, and thought I'd drop in and introduce her."

The bride and lawyer shook hands, the lawyer wondering what it all meant and after a painful pause the old man said: "She's a little shy, but she's just old lightning after she gets acquainted. I told her we might as well step in and make friends while we are here. If you ever come our way we'd like to have you stop."

"I shall be glad to," replied the lawyer, and they went out to drop in on the City Attorney. He was out, but his clerk received them with a bland smile which went right to the old man's heart.

"Folks all well?" inquired the husband as he shook hands, and then turning and bowing, he said: "My wife, mister. You can see for yourself she's a little shy, but it'll wear off bimbeby."

"Come to see the City Hall?" inquired the clerk.

"We're on our wedding tower around," replied the old man. "I'd like her around a leetle afore we settle down. Lucy's a powerful good girl, stranger, and she's cream and sugar on keeping house. You don't find no dirt in the corners, and no cordwood under the bed. It's a case of love from the start. I call her 'darling' and she calls me 'dear hubby,' and I'd lay my life down for her as quick as wink."

About four o'clock the same couple were seen at the Central depot, waiting for a train. The bride sat on one of the old man's knees, both his arms around her, and he was heard to say: "I don't care a gin what folks think—don't we live!"

BUY THE BEST AND LATEST IMPROVED LIGHT RUNNING HOME MACHINE EXCELS ALL OTHERS.

Advertisement for a sewing machine, featuring an illustration of the machine and text describing its features and availability at Burgess Nichols & Co.

Advertisement for Burgess Nichols & Co. furniture and bedding, listing various items and their prices.

Advertisement for a full assortment of metallic goods, including various tools and hardware.

Advertisement for a large lot of wagons, highlighting their quality and low prices.

Advertisement for buggies and carriages, offering a variety of models for sale.

Advertisement for Drucists' supplies, including paints, oils, and chemicals.

Advertisement for a shoe shop, offering a wide selection of footwear.

Advertisement for warm weather clothing, featuring various styles of suits and shirts.

Advertisement for removal services, offering assistance with moving and relocation.

Advertisement for Wooten's Carolina Central Railway Express Company, detailing shipping services.

Advertisement for flour and meal, highlighting the quality and variety of products.

Advertisement for a notice regarding the Atlantic, Tenn. & Ohio R.R., including ticket information.

Advertisement for J.S.M. Davidson, Agent, listing various goods and services.

Advertisement for a notice regarding the sale of a horse, including details on the animal's characteristics.

Advertisement for Commission Merchants, offering services for the sale of various commodities.

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Advertisement for an important notice, likely related to a business transaction or legal matter.

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