WM. H. BERNARD, | Editors. CICERO W. HARRIS,

WILMINGTON, N. C.: SATURDAY MORNING, Aug. 9, 1873

BLECTORAL REPORM. Interest has again in the past few days been awakened in the manner of voting for President and Vice President of the United States. Senator Morton has gone to work in Wash-ington to prepare his scheme which he proposes to elaborately unfold and earnestly urge at the next sitting of Congress.

Mr. Morton is not a man after our own heart. He is an artful, scheming demagogue, a bitter enemy of our section, and in no sense of the word is he a statesman. But while we do not admire the man, we are disposed to like his plan. It has been several times endorsed by us as an improve-

ment on the present system..

This plan proposes to abolish the present Electoral College with its cumbersome machinery and illusive pretension to maintaining the equilibrium of the States in national elections, and substitute for it the simpler scheme of an election by Presidential electoral districts corresponding with the Congressional districts. These may, if it be deemed desirable to retain the semblance of State autonomy, certify their vote to the State Governments who shall in turn certify the vote of each district to Congress, It is claimed that this mode will be more likely to effect an election in complicated canvasses by the people, and avoid the necessity of going to the House of Representatives. It is also claimed that it will put a check upon the cancus. Unquestionably it will have the effect to smash the metropolitan and Philadelphia rings which usually control the politics of the two great States of the Union.

The system of electing a President republic, with its virtuous politics and strictly republican character, there was no necessity for a better system. It was truly a check on central aggressiveness. It fitly represented the genius of the republic and the will of the people in sovereign States .-But things have all undergone a change since then. Consolidation, the product of hate and corruption, more than of any growing need of change on account of increase of wealth, territory and population, has supplanted the simpler and purer forms of our Government. And this almost alone remains of old landmarks -the shadow after the flight of the spirit. What do we want with the sham of State sovereignty when its soul is fled? But out of respect for the hallowed and hallowing associations of the past, it might be well to to let the present Electoral College system remain, if it did no harm, if it boded no danger.

Gradually the system has undergone change from the intention the founders of the Constitution. They intended, it is evident, that the people should select electors who could be trusted to cast the electoral vote for a suitable person without a direct expression of preference by the people themselves. But long since this idea has been discarded and the electors have been chosen to cast the vote of the particular party for the man of its choice. There has always been a danger lest some of the electors should turn traitors through some consideration, and vote against the person whom the people desired. In an age of political purity this danger is not obvious; it would not be appreciated. But in such time as this, when speculators and bribe-takers are our "statesmen," the danger may at any moment be

But this is not all. Men in politics. chosen to represent the people's wishes might be immaculate, and still there would be a possibility of the system working adversely to the intention of its originators, through its own intrinsic imperfection. Suppose (we explain the principle by an example, Mr. Greeley had been elected in November last and had died before the votes were counted in the several State capitals, and supthere had been no concert of ac tion agreed upon or some of the electors had refused to vote for some person whom a majority of the electors in the several States voting, for him at the popular election had designated to receive the suffrages of the party's the beauty of this system with all its

the "President of the Senate, in presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, shall open all certificates of election, and the votes shall then be counted." This gives Congress no discretion in the premises; but Congress has assumed at once judicial and elective powers by an arbitrary rule which it has established. Under this rule, the objection of a single member to the counting of a vote necessitates a withdrawal of the Senate from the joint session, and a separate consideration by both Houses of the objection. If, on reassembling, both Houses do not agree to count the vote which has been objected to, the vote is thrown out. The power is thus conferred upon a majority in Congress, or in either House of Congress, to defeat an opposition candidate who may have been duly elected. This actually occurred at the last election. At the last counting of votes Congress threw out the votes of Louisiana and Arkansas, and rejected three electoral votes from Georgia east for Horace Greeley, all of which was clearly unconstitutional. For these reasons we advocate

change in the mode of voting for President and Vice President. would even be more simple and more in accordance with the genius of the Government to cast the vote direct, the returns from each State being forwarded to Washington, Morton himself is understood to favor this plan, though, thinking the one mentioned above more popular, he has adopted it instead.

ENGLISH POLITICS. The English Liberals, so the dispatches of vesterday say, have lost another seat in Parliament, East Staffordshire going Conservative. Important changes in the Cabinet have just been made. Mr. Gladstone assumes the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, his old place, still retaining the Premiership. Mr. Bright joins the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. This is a very needs reform. Under the primitive decided gain. Mr. Low takes the Home Office, and Mr. Bruce succeeds Marquis De Gray and Ripon as President of the Council. He is to be made a Peer. and lo see la tale

> "Mr. Coffinberry has bought part of the Peoria, Ill., Review. Ominous name." He may cause you to review your present opinion, or better, bury it. "What's in a name," if a man's 'art is in the right place?

That properly named idiosyncrasy of churchy Brooklyn, Rev. De Witt lallmadge, will send up a book of Sky Rocket Sermons" ere long.

"Louise Chandler Moulton, the critic, weighs 160." Critically and physically considered, though, the literary Louise is not Moultin'.

[Yolo county Mail.] Singular Effect of California Whiskey.

Lately two mysterious fires occurred at Woodland, Yolo county, and no one could account for the origin. A day or two after the last fire a man uamed Edward Nickerson delivered himself up to the police and voluntarily confessed himself the author of both. He said he had been drinking freely, and that whenever he did so he was always seized with an uncontrollable impulse to burn buildings. He did not even know the owners, and had not the slightest motive for being an incendiary; but whenever he in-dulged in drink he became such in spite of himself. After commitment for examination he was interviewed by some of the officers and three medical gentlemen. It seems that some two weeks ago Marshal Strong received through the post-office a letter signed "Mary," requesting him to put the police on watch for a man who would be certain to set buildings on fire if he got to drinking, and giving a detailed description of the individual. Nickerson was asked if he could surmise who had written that letter. His reply was that he had written it himself, giving as accurately as pos-sible a discription of his own person, in the hope that if he got to drinking he police might arrest him before he could do any mischief. The case is a strange one, and perhaps furnishes a new type of insanity.

A Man Murdered by His Brother Cairo, Ill., Aug. 4. Daisy Bruze killed his brother, Dan Bruze; near Hazlewood, Alexander County, on Thursday night. Both nen were rather notorious characters. They had stolen some horses, and, after hiding them, were proceeding to the house of Oscar Grunlee with the intention, it is said, of carrying out previously-arranged plan to kill Grunlee. Dan showed an inclination to back out, and when the brothers were last seen together they were quarreling, Daisy carrying a heavy club, and threatening Dan. Daisy went home alone, bringing Dan's shoes with him. He remarked to his wife, 'If you hear me accused of murder, don't go back on me." Suspicion being aroused, search was made, which resulted in the discovery of Dan's body, with the neck broken and marks of heavy blows on the head.
Officers started from here last night in pursuit of the murderer.

A Rich Little Port. in the several States voting for him at the popular election had designated to receive the suffrages of the party's electors, and Gen. Grant had by this want of concert been elected by the Electoral College, where would be the beauty of this system with all its boasted State rights origin?

But there is a greater danger even than this: The Constitution says that THE OIL BARGE FIRE

Particulars of the Great Oil Fire on Long Island.

The New York World gives the following graphic account of great conflagration of oil warehouses and tank boats at Hunter's Point, Long Island, on Tuesday:

Tuesday afternoon, shortly after two o'clock, the inhabitants of Long Island City were startled by a terrible explosion, which could be heard for miles around. It occurred on board a barge in charge of Captain Wm. Meyers, which was unloading a mantity of refined oil at the wharf of the Standard Oil Company's works. The fire was caused by Captain Meyers lighting his pipe and carelessly throwing the match away, which came in contact with the gas of his tank boat. The explosion blew three men into the air, two of whom swam to the opposite side of the dock; the other man is missing, and Captain Meyers was blown to pieces. The boat was in an instant a mass of flame. The barge adjoining and two tank boats filled with crude oil instantly caught fire. The wind blowing from the north and spread the flames from the burning vessels to the dock, and in a few moments the warehouses of the Standard Company were on fire. The men engaged in the works fled, earing another explosion. The volunteer fire brigade of Long Island City were soon on the spot with seven engines, but as they were only worked by exertions of the men, only proved their utter helplessness to stay the progress of the fire. Leaping high in the air, with a heat that could be felt hundreds of yards away, the

FLAMES ENCIRCLED EVERYTHIG n their grasp, and the sight was grand and terrible when the second block of stored barrels of oil caught fire. The crowds which collected in the vicinity fled in dismay, appalled at the imposing spectacle. The firemen seeing their efforts worse than useless tried to remove their apparatus to a safer distance, but so close to the flames had the men ventured in their energy that it required the necessity of a couple of streams of water to be directed on those who volunteered to drag the engines away. At this time the square bounded by Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Front streets, the creek on one side and the river was one roaring mass of flame, the smoke from which in rolling masses formed a pillar that darkened the whole lo-In the creek another tankbarge filled with oil also caught fire, as did also the brig Oscar, which had crude oil on board. Mr. Beach, general superintendent, directed his attention to this point, seeing that there was no chance for the safety of the fleet of brigs, schooners and scows that was lying along side except through the assistance of the Harlem steamers. The steamboat Jewell passing by was hailed, and the brig Oscar which had just caught fire, was towed up to Hell Gate, and the other vessels which had so far escaped were towed into the river. During this

SPECTATORS IN THOUSANDS assembled near the works, and the police were unable to keep them back. These contained several thousand barrels of crude oil. But the fire department soon proved totally inadequate to the task, and the tender of the steamers of the eastern division was gladly accepted, and two engines from Brooklyn, under the direction of Chief Engineer Smith, were soon on the ground. After four hours of steady work the fire department succeeded in preventing the flames spreading to the iron tanks. Just however, as another search was about to be made on the boat

AN EXPLOSION TOOK PLACE which caused every one to beat a hasty retreat, and in an instant the barge was a roaring mass of flame from stem to stern. All hope of saving any of the sheds or stores of the Standard Works was abandoned, and the wind freshened, causing the burning barges to float higher up the creek towards Pratt's Astral Oil Works. A cry soon filled the airthat Pratt's factory was on fire, and the crowd fled, even the firemen, and police, it being well known that the storehouses were filled with oil ready for the market, and also with a large quantity of benzine and naptha. It was feared the explosion would cause the destruction of every building within half a mile. The railroad depot it was believed would share the inevitable fate of the surrounding buildings. The stores and dwellings were covered with wet blankets and carpets. The wind freshened and the flames were fanned into renewed fury. On came the barges closer to Pratt's works until within a few feet of the stores. The flames cracked the glass in the windows. The tugs, which kept up a dozen of streams on the barges, were in imminent danger, and they got up steam and steered out of danger, those on board fleeing to the cabins. All hopes of saving Pratt's works was given up, and

THE CROWDS PLED to Front street and to the felt works to escape the effects of the expected explosion. Four volunteers offered to cast an anchor and chain aboard the barge No. 5 from the tugboat Abe if she steamed into the creek. A short consultation was had and the offer accepted. The tug backed into the slip, and the men, upon whom three streams of water were pouring, succeeded after several attempts in heaving the anchor and chain aboard the burning barge. This could not have been carried out if the wind had not blown the flames towards the works, which by this time were completely enveloped and the crowds waiting to hear the crash of the explosion. The tug steamed out and the burning barge followed, and pro-bably one of the greatest conflagra-

tions that ever visited Long Island was averted:

At 8 o'clock no apprehension was felt for the safety of the other works in the vicinity; the Standard Work having been totally consumed with the exception of the iron tanks. Chief Engineer Sneider stated that none of the members of the Standard company knew what amount of oil was burned; but last year he gave a calculation after the conflagration which proved afterwards to be almost correct. He estimates that there were 25,000 barrels of oil consumed, and the loss thereby, with the buildings will be over \$200,000. The premises were insured.

At the time the fire broke out there were six barges belonging to the Harlem Navigation Company lying alongside the docks in addition to the Austrian brig Oscar. Off

Meyers's body, when found, was almost unrecognizable, only the lower portion of the body being found. At late hour the fire was completely overcome, and a more serious disaster was fortunately prevented.

LITERARY AND DRAMATIC.

- George Eliot's favorite writing time is 6 to 9 A. M.

- The minor works of the late Mr. Grote, including several unpublished papers, are to be published in London. - Rev. William F. P. Noble will publish "Centennial Biography: Men of Mark in the Great Republic, 1776 1876."

- We are promised a new grand international magazine in this country next season, and "Tom Brown" Hughes is promised as a frequent contributor.

- Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" is being dramatized by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, of Boston, for Anna Dickinson to star the country in next season.

- D. DeVivo will be, next season, the manager of the Salvini Dramatic Company, business agent of Mr. Tamberlick, and also connected with the Aimee Opera Bouffe.

- Max Maretzek's Italian Opera Company, after the three weeks' season at the Grand Opera House, New York, will appear on the 27th of October, for two weeks, at Boston; on the 10th of November at Cincinnati; on the 17th at Chicago for two weeks, and thence to St. Louis, where, after a week's engagement, the company leaves for Havana for a season of six

- Mr. E. Tamberlick, the king of tenors and the first discoverer of the "Ut Dieze," will be the so long expected advent in the operatic world next season. He will appear at the Grand Opera House, New York, on the 6th of October, in Polluto—one of his best roles-with Maretzek's grand star combination, comprising Lucca and Murska.

SHORT STOPS.

- To those who eat corn-go it while it's young. - The rose is the longest lived of

all shrubs. - Every year Nebraska sets out millions of trees.

- Over 20,000 tons of white lead are used in this country yearly. - Burlington grew epitaphic at

this rate: Here lies our darling little John; He neither screams nor hollers. He lived just one and twenty days, And cost us forty dollars,

- Odger, the English Republican, has become a bankrupt through his efforts in behalf of liberty. His liabilities are \$4,860, and his assets \$30. He is a cobbler by trade, and he lost his money by disregarding the pro-

- The men of the period are not rallants-they are boatmen, they are base-ballists, they are fond of horse racing, and some are fond of money making, but they are not chivalrous or appreciative of ladies who are quiet and well bred. The consequence is that ladies are learning to do without them and have a good time in spite of their absence.

- "Prince Arthur is charming in his manners, the Prince of Wales is good-natured and easy, but nothing can make the Duke of Edinburgh a gentleman," says more than one courtier. The young man whom Lavater would not trust was then about to be engaged to the Czar of Russia's only daughter.

Drunk and Disorderly Under Sentence of Death.

William J. Sharkey, who has been sentenced to be hung on the 15th instant in New York, has been observed for some time to be under the influ-ence of intoxicating liquors, though from what source these have been obtained the warden has been unable to find out. While in this state he displayed a most vicious and unrestrainable temper, spitting at the Wardens and deputy keepers through the gra-ting of his cell in the tombs and abusing them with the vilest epithets. A few days ago his counsel, Mr. Beach visited him, when Sharkey slammed the door in Mr. Beach's face and as-sailed him with abusive language. A few days after this he treated his brother in the same manner. Warden Johnston now has him closely confined, and all visitors to him are searched in the most rigid manner.

Chinese in a Railway Wreck. One incident of the wreck of a train in lowa by outlaws, that appeared to have escaped the reporter's pencil have escaped the reporter's pencil-heretofore, was the conduct of the Chinese students in the rear car. The suddan stop piled them in an indis-criminate heap on the floor of their coach, and there they laid during the melee, mourning in choice Chinee and swearing in choicer English. A Californian, one of those untameble wags that no disaster can disconcert, sagely assured them that there was nothing unusual in that way of stop-ping, in fact, that all trains east of nothing unusual in that way of stop-ping, in fact, that all trains east of Omaha would come to a halt in the same manner. Chung Fy Ong, one of the attendants, expressed the opinion that it was "one heliee country," and the Mongolian howl was renewed. BUSINESS CARDS.

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July 10th, 1873.

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PROSPECTUS OF THE

North Carolina Gazette.

The Undersigned will commence in gust, the publication of a weekly newspaper to be styled "The North Carolina Gazette will be consistently Conservative and devotedly Southern in principle and political it will advocate economy, integrity and reform in the administration of both State and National Governments; it will favor the payment, by North Carolina, of her just and equitable indebtedness, and more; it will support the nomination and elevation to office of such men only as are pledged to economy and reform; and it will unalterably oppose the relection to place and position of any and all public officials who have proved recreant to the high trust reposed in them by the people.

The Gazette will, above all, be honestly and earnestly devoted to the advancement of the trade, industrial and commercial interests of its town, section and State. In short, its publishers will labor hard to render it welcome and indispensable in the counting-room, on the farm and around the home fireside.

Bringing to the task before them years of experience in their business, (both being practical printers, and one of them engaged in journalism for the past eight years,) the undersigned hope for the liberal patronage of their people, and will exert all their energies and abilities to deserve it.

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