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LEGISLATIVE CORRUPTION.

A Committee of investigation, appointed by the legislature of Pennsylvania, are making some startling disclosures as to the bribery of certain members of that body. A bill was introduced into the legislature last winter making the State liable for the losses incurred at the great railroad riot in Pittsburg in July 1877, and appropriating the sum of $4,000,000 to pay the same. To secure the passage of this bill and obtain so large an amount of money, it was alleged that corrupt measures were being used, and that the votes and influence of members were being obtained by bribery. A committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and for some time past they have been examining witnesses. From the testimony already taken it is fully proven that bribery was used, and large sums of money offered and paid to those patriotic (?) legislators. The price of members varied according to their influence and capability, some valuing themselves at only $300, while the consciences of others could not be quieted for less than $5,000.

Among the guilty members was one, Representative Pennell, of Philadelphia, who seems to be an old offender, having been expelled from the legislature in 1876 for endeavoring to obtain $7,500 for the purchase of fifteen votes in the passage of another bill. So it would seem, that the expulsion of a man from one legislature on account of bribery, is not considered by the voters of the "city of brotherly love" as any objection to his being elected a member of the next legislature!

But we need not be surprised at this, for the Pennsylvania politicians and legislators have long since established the unenviable reputation of being the most venal and corrupt in the United States, being only equalled by the band of Carpet-baggers that preyed upon the South. The mere fact of itself, that such a man as Simon Cameron, who has lived a long life stained with all manner of bribes and frauds and corruption, should have had for so many years supreme control of the dominant party in that State, is sufficient evidence of its corrupt morals, and it is not surprising that petty members of the legislature should follow his example.

The Federal Land Tax.

Many of our readers will doubtless remember that immediately after the war the federal officers were collecting from our people a tax levied on their lands by an Act of Congress passed in August 1861. Money was very scarce at that time among the Southern people, and it was an extreme hardship upon them to be compelled to pay this tax. Many of our citizens, fearful lest their land would be seized upon and confiscated, succeeded in scraping up by hard work enough money to pay this tax, but there were hundreds and thousands who were utterly unable to meet the demands of the tax gatherer, and so the further collection of this tax was suspended by Acts of Congress. A resolution has recently passed the Senate calling upon the Secretary of the Treasury for a statement of the amount of these taxes yet due from the several States. In his statement the Secretary of the Treasury says, that the amount still due and uncollected from the eleven States which seceded is $2,725,104 and of this sum North Carolina owes $199,000. He also says that this tax was charged against the land and was a lien until paid, and "this lien evidently remains upon each and every parcel in those States upon which the direct tax has not been paid." He goes on to say still further, that

"There can be no doubt that the Secretary of the Treasury is charged with the duty of collecting this direct tax under the provisions of existing laws. To leave these portions uncollected will be an unconstitutional and inequitable discrimination against those States which have paid their respective quotas of the tax under the statute of 1861 and other acts. The last legal suspension of the collection expired January 1, 1869. It remains for Congress to decide whether the collection shall proceed under the methods provided by existing statutes, or whether additional legislation is necessary. The protracted suspension only renders the final collection of the tax more difficult and uncertain, and if further legislation be necessary it should be immediate."

To pay this tax even now would be very oppressive to our people, and we sincerely trust that Congress will at once pass an Act to again suspend the collection. For the people of North Carolina to pay $199,000 to the Federal Government as taxes on their land in addition to their State and county taxes would produce much suffering, and force the sale of many farms.

Vance's Speech.

Gov. Vance made his first speech in the United States Senate on the 16th inst, the following synopsis of which we copy from the New York Herald.

No measure advocated by Southern men, said Mr. Vance, had a fair hearing in this body. The fact that it is upheld by them is the signal for reviving old issues not pertinent to the question. He thought it essential to a proper consideration of this bill that it be discussed on its merits; but the arguments of its opponents were more party denunciations. If this were an action at law, and such answers to the complaint were filed they would be treated as trashy. Who made the Single Party Claim? Is the Republican party, Mary Southern party opposed Secession? Were not Southern men driven out of the Union? At the close of the war those men were influential and highly respected by the Southern people, and if the people of the North had offered to coalesce with them in an effort to heal the wounds of war a prosperous country would soon have been established. Instead of doing so the South was placed in office parts, now held to be in the Union and now out of it, as best served the purposes of the dominant party of the North, and protest was impossible. Finally they were declared out of the Union entirely given over to martial law and every fourth or fifth man of the best citizens were disenfranchised and members of the most prominent ante-bellum political families were held under military ban. The result of all this was the adoption of so-called State Constitutions and the election of so-called officers, so that a strong system might be maintained against the party which had saved the Union. It was only that party which could have saved it, and they are now driven from their place in the Government, and at the will of the President are left without protection. Democrats are now in the majority in the House, and they will do what they can to protect the South against the usurpers. What is the question to be settled? Vance is a Democrat, and Mr. Vance is a Democrat, and Mr. Vance is a Democrat. The Democrats are in the House, and they will do what they can to protect the South against the usurpers. What is the question to be settled?