

New Hampshire Election.

The result of the New Hampshire election will be variously interpreted. For, like Bible texts, elections will bear many constructions. We are disposed to consider that it shows the radical distrust of the Democratic party of which we have often spoken, and the existence of which is undeniable. The feeling toward that party, which naturally grew out of the war and its antecedents, can be changed only by the clearest and most positive evidence that it can be safely trusted to deal with vigor, sagacity, and patriotism with all the questions of the hour. But instead of revealing these qualities, the Democratic party has displayed a total want of them. It has shown by the organization of the House its continued subserviency to its old masters. By its elections of Senators, and nominations, as in New Hampshire, to conspicuous positions, it has indicated the tone of its preferences. It has attempted to carry Ohio and Pennsylvania upon a platform of rag money. It has aimed zealously to help itself by exposing the offenses for which the Republican party is responsible, but it has shown no serious, earnest, intelligent purpose or capacity of reform or progress. It would, therefore, be surprising that it should be preferred to the party which, whatever its evils, is unquestionably that which commands the sympathy and support of the larger part of the voting population of the Union, except in the late rebel States.

To this must be added the conviction that although the Republican party can not escape responsibility for the character and acts of those whom it places in conspicuous positions, the events of the last few months show not only the necessity, but the purpose, of the control of the party by those who represent its real spirit of progress and reform. It is the belief that the plain protests and criticisms of Republican papers upon such scandals as the whiskey trials, the BELKNAP disgrace, and the SCHENCK affair, such vigorous denunciations and demands as those of the Union League Club resolutions in New York; the general feeling, of which everybody is conscious, that the condition of success is a loftier tone of political morality in administration—it is the belief that all such signs show a healthy Republican revival, which still keeps the State of New Hampshire in Republican lands.

This we say upon the presumption that there is some kind of political significance in the election. If there is not; if it be, as some of the papers stoutly and with perfect composure assert, merely a bargain and sale; if each party, anxious to secure the first marked success of this year, sent thousands of dollars into the State and entered into a rivalry for the purchase of votes, the result of the New Hampshire election shows only that the Republicans spent the most money, and that American institutions are far gone in utter decadence and decay. There is something astonishing in the half-indifferent way in which it was asserted that the election was carried by money, and that more dollars would have made the victory Democratic instead of Republican. The composure of

the allegation implies that there is nothing very remarkable in it. But it is none the less an allegation that government is put up at auction. And this shows, like every other unhandsome phenomenon of our politics, the imperative necessity of a reform of the system which makes it worth while for a party to spend money profusely for success in an election. That the statement which represents the New Hampshire polls as open markets is largely untrue we have no doubt whatever. Nothing is easier than to make such assertions, and nothing is more susceptible of exaggeration than the amount of money which is given and spent for bribery at elections. But it is alarming to see that the assertion that the government of a State was determined by notorious fraud can be generally made without exciting other than a languid and amused wonder that any body should be so innocent as to think it strange.

Official Salaries.

The Senate has passed a bill restoring the President's salary to the old sum of twenty-five thousand dollars. The House will probably concur, and then we presume that the President will veto it. We suppose so because it is well known that he thought the compensation of the President should be increased. And if the reasons were imperative two or three years ago, they certainly are not less now; and he would hardly wish to subject his successor to inconveniences which he has himself experienced, and which he strove successfully to have removed. The restoration of the old salary is a measure due to the general demand for reduction and reform, and to the popular indignation with what is justly held to be the great social extravagance of Washington. But the principle of low salaries for high public officers is not a sound one. When Dr. Franklin's proposition that the honor should be the reward for public service was discarded, and most properly, since it would have made the government a kind of plutocracy, the reason of the opposing theory should have been more clearly apprehended. The ablest administrative genius in the first cabinet was that of ALEXANDER HAMILTON, but he retired to private life that he might enjoy the income which his talent could readily command, and that he might not leave his family penniless. HAMILTON could not afford to remain in public life.

And that is the point: ought not the pecuniary condition of high and responsible public office to be such that men of the first talent may be induced to take it? The various great positions of the government at the present time require for their successful and proper administration executive talents for which there is always sharp private competition between great enterprises of various kinds. Can we expect a man who can command forty thousand dollars permanently for his ability to be content with ten thousand temporarily? Or, again, can we wonder, under such circumstances, that the ability which is called to public position compares unfavorably with that which is devoted to private business? Wise heads are speculating upon the means of attracting more generally superior men

into politics. Honor, as such, has been found not to be enough. The reasons of the situation are, indeed, many, but one of the chief and most obvious is the honorable reluctance of men to sacrifice their families to themselves. Eight out of ten clever and highminded Americans, if they are asked why they take no active interest or part in politics, instantly reply that they can not afford it.

The small extent of the country when the national government went into operation, the simplicity of its functions, the roll of its officers not reaching the number of servants of very many private companies to-day, the feeling of a large party in regard to the government that it was, as JEFFERSON belittlingly called it, a mere Department of Foreign Affairs, and the peculiar distinction of the public service at that time, were conditions very different from those with which we have to deal. It is the interest of the country to-day to tempt the best ability into official position. The favorite theory of many worthy people that any average American can admirably perform the duties of any office is not justified by the fact. For the higher political posts, the occupancy of which properly changes with a change of party ascendancy, the salaries should be so liberal that trained ability would gladly accept them, and would therefore put itself in the way to reach them by participation in political affairs; while for the lower grades of subordinate and ministerial positions the tenure should be honesty, industry, and efficiency. The question is not, for how little can we get this office filled? but, how can we fill it with the most ability?

Such considerations do not, of course, apply to the Presidency. But it is plain that if twenty-five thousand dollars was a proper compensation for the President eighty years ago, it is certainly not proper now, unless there has been such an increase of allowances that the salary has been virtually doubled.

THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE'S LANGUAGE.—The orator must command the whole scale of the language, from the most elegant to the most low and vile. Every one has felt how superior in force is the language of the street to that of the academy. The street must be one of his schools. Ought not the scholar to be able to convey his meaning in terms as short and strong as the porter or truckman uses to convey his? And Lord Chesterfield thought that without being instructed in the dialect of the Halles no man could be a complete master of French. The speech of the man in the street is invariably strong, nor can you mend it by making it what you call parliamentary. You say, "If he could only express himself!" but he does already better than any one can for him,—can always get the ear of an audience to the exclusion of everybody else. Well, this is an example in point. That something which each man was created to say and do, he only, or he best, can tell you, and has a right to supreme attention so far. The power of his speech is that it is perfectly understood by all; and believe it to be true that when any orator at the bar or in the Senate rises in his thought he descends in his language; that is, when he rises to any height of thought or passion, he comes down to a language level with the ear of all his audience. It is the merit of John Brown and of Abraham Lincoln, one at Charlestown, one at Gettysburg, in the two best specimens of eloquence we have had in this country.—R. W. Emerson.

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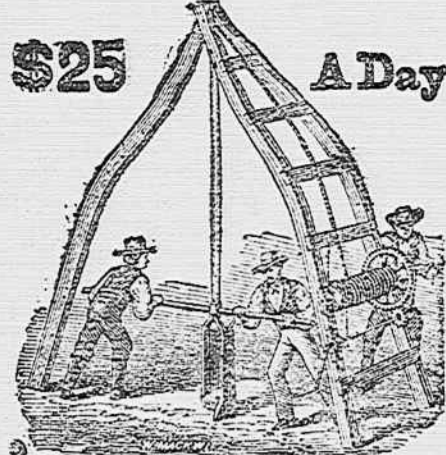
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