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Secretary McCulloch's Views upon the Situation.

We copy the following Washington letter from the Hartford, Connecticut, Courant WASHINGTON, March 1, 1866.

The political world has been turbulent of late. Whether there has been any reason for it may be doubted, but no one who has observed the current events for these few weeks need be ignorant of the cause of this great uproar. The collision of extremes and the lust of partisan rule seem to be that cause. We are passing over from one form of society to another and antagonistic form, and it is but natural that much misunderstanding and confusion should attend the process of transition. But the American people in the North and in the South have common sense, and they are already accepting the necessity and adapting themselves to the new order in affairs.

The Chief Executive of this nation is a representative man; and he has qualities which are characteristic of both forms of society. Born among slaves, he learned to support himself by his own labor. Not recognized by the ruling class in the commencement of his career, he has, step by step, attained to the highest dignity in the commonwealth. It would be interesting to analyze the character of a man who has experienced such vicissitudes, but I shall not undertake to do so now. It is sufficient to say that his patriotism and personal integrity are without reproach, and that his most implacable enemies have never questioned his official purity of life and conversation.

He has been accused, however, of inconsistency, of capriciously abandoning his "party," and of turning his back on his original friends. He does not deserve these reproaches. He was called suddenly and in a crisis to administer the affairs of the nation, for which he could not have prepared himself, because the public annals offered no precedent for his guidance. He was compelled to make out his own chart; and with trust in God and reliance on the people he endeavored to fulfill his duty in conformity with the Constitution.

For the general principles of his administration I know of no better authority than Mr. McCulloch's speech at Fort Wayne in October of last year. At the time this was uttered there was no "flagrant war," as some term it, between a portion of Congress and the Executive, nor was such rupture apprehended. It had been alleged, indeed, that certain individuals, known as "Radicals," had attempted to dictate to the President the policy which was to control him in the reconstruction of the Union. Their prejudices and not his views were to be the criterion of equity towards the rebellious States. The President, however, considering himself a co-ordinate and independent power in the Government, determined on a course consistent with his own conscientious understanding of his duty. These contradictory views were clearly stated by Mr. McCulloch in these words:

"I know that many doubt the wisdom of Mr. Johnson's policy; that many are of the opinion that by their Ordinance of Secession the rebellious States had ceased to be States under the Constitution, and that nothing should be done by the Executive in aid of their restoration of State Governments until Congress had determined on what terms they should be re-tored to the Union which they had voluntarily abandoned and attempted to destroy, that as the people of these States had appealed to the sword and been subjugated by the sword, they should be governed by the sword until the law-making power had disposed of the subject of reconstruction; that no State that had passed Ordinances of Secession and united with the so-called Confederate Government should ever be admitted again into the Union, unless in its preliminary proceedings all men, irrespective of color, should be permitted to vote, nor without provisions in its Constitution for the absolute enfranchisement of the negro. Some go even further than this, and demand the confiscation of the property of all rebels and the application of the proceeds to the payment of the national debt.

"These are not, I apprehend, the views of a respectable minority. I know that they are not the views of a majority of the people of the North. The better opinion is that the States which attempted to secede never ceased to be States in the Un-

ion; that all their acts of secession were of no effect; that during the progress of the revolt the exercise of the Federal authority was merely suspended, and that there never was a moment when the allegiance of the people of the insurrectionary States was not due to the Government, and when the Government was not bound to maintain its authority over them and extend authority to those who required it. When the rebellion was overcome, the so-called Confederate Government and all State Governments which had been formed in opposition to the Federal Government ceased to have even a nominal existence, and the people who had been subjected to them were left, for the time being, without any government whatever. The term of the Federal officers had expired, or the offices had become vacant by the treason of those who held them. There were no Federal revenue officers, no competent Federal judges, and no organized Federal Courts. Nor were the people any better off so far as State authority was regarded. When the Confederacy collapsed, all the rebel State Governments collapsed with it, so that, with a few exceptions, there were no persons holding civil office at the South by the authority of any legitimate government.

"Now, as government is at all times a necessity among men, and as it was especially so at the South, where violence and lawlessness had full sway, the question to be decided by the President was this: Shall the people of the recently rebellious States be held under military rule until Congress shall act upon the question, or shall immediate measures be taken by the Executive to restore to them civil government?"

"After mature consideration, the President concluded it to be his duty to adopt the latter course, and I am satisfied that in doing so he has acted wisely."

The plan of reconstruction thus attributed to the President has been confirmed by the present Administration. The President has never sought to interfere with the legitimate authority of Congress. In vetoing the Freedmen's Bureau Bill, he simply did what he believed to be his duty. His motives have been, by a few, arraigned, but no one has shown that the President there in violated his oath. If he had so transgressed, the Constitution prescribes a mode for inflicting the due penalty. He can be impeached by the House of Representatives and tried by the Senate—the Chief Justice presiding in the trial.

"In the work of restoration," says Mr. McCulloch, "the President has aimed to do only that which was necessary to be done, exercising only that power which could be properly exercised under the Constitution, which guarantees to every State a Republican form of Government. Regarding slavery as having perished in the rebellious States, either by the proclamation of his predecessor or by the result of war, and determining that no rebel who had purged himself of his treason should have any part in the restoration of the civil governments which he is aiding to establish, he has not considered it within the scope of his authority to go further, and enfranchise the negro. For this he is censured by many true men at the North and a few extreme men at the South, but I have no doubt that he will be sustained by the people, and that the result will vindicate the wisdom of his course."

The opinion thus expressed by Mr. McCulloch in October last, was a prediction. The President has been sustained by the people, and the wisdom of his course has been vindicated. No one desires less than he to see deliberate traitors or leaders in the late rebellion admitted to seats in Congress; but is there any good reason why men, always loyal and able to take the "test oath," should be repelled merely because they have been elected by citizens of a State lately in rebellion? Ought not the election of such a Representative to be considered evidence of repentance and of a bona fide intention to obey the Constitution and the laws of the Union?"

It is alleged by those opposing their admission that the successors to these disloyal men will be disloyal, and that the next Congress will be filled with representatives from the seceding States, who will coalesce with the Copperheads, and again embarrass, if not overthrow the Government. But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Let us do justice now, and restore the Union as soon as possible. The people of this country need not be afraid to do right. There is a Providence who thwarts the plottings of bad men. Let the loyal representatives from the late seceding States be duly qualified and take their seats in Congress.

If disloyal men be sent from these States, shut the door against them, no matter whether they present their credentials during this or any other Congress. A majority sufficient to reject such an applicant may always be relied on. The loyal people everywhere will sustain Congress then as heartily as they sustain the President now, and all the powers of the Government will harmoniously co-operate in promoting the welfare of this great Republic.

The Works about Petersburg.

A correspondent of the Washington National Republican gives a brief description of the present condition of the famous line of works around the city of Petersburg. He says:

Fort Steadman, "The Crater," "Fort Hell," and other prominent points on the memorable lines, are still nearly the same in appearance that they were just after the "evacuation" of Petersburg by the Rebel army. The bomb-proofs and other works, the construction of which required the use of wood, are being demolished by the owners of the land, who were cutting up the wood for the Petersburg market. And I may here say that nearly all the fuel, in the shape of wood, burned in this city comes from the fortifications. It is the best fuel in the market, as it is so much better seasoned than any other.

But the most interesting spectacle one beholds at present along these lines is the large number of colored persons who make a living in digging and searching for the lead, bullets and other implements of war so profusely scattered about and buried in these fields of death.

Did you ever go a "huckleberrying" way down in Yankeeedom, "just in the nick of the season?" If so, you can form a good idea of the view of the visitor from the mouth of the "Crater." I was at this point a few hours ago—I mean the place where the mine was exploded. From this point you obtain, by far, the best view of the entire lines East of the city. This point is the nearest to the town, and is so elevated that you can distinctly see the celebrated "lookout" of General Butler at Dutch gap, on the James river, twenty miles distant.

As far as the objects are visible we discern the color d people of all ages and both sexes, with a spade, hoe, shovel, or pick, and all busy as bees digging for "minnie." By the denser squads of these people it is easy for the stranger to know where the "iron hail and leaden rain" fell thickest. But the "darkies" are everywhere—some on the embankments, and some in open fields, each with a haversack or small sack slung over the shoulder, and every now and then a stray rammie ball or a shell cap, or piece of shell is transferred from the earth to the bag of the digger.

As near as I could ascertain a day's work to a good digger was about \$1.50 to \$2, though many fell short of that. The lead is sold to an enterprising junk dealer in this city, who pays seven cents per pound. As about fourteen minnies make a pound, the anxious digger can, any time during the day, by counting his balls, learn how he is progressing in his day's work. And if you meet any of them toward night on their "winding way" toward the city, as you usually may see them in droves, any of them will tell you "zactly" how much money he has made during the day.

I am sorry to say that the remains of the numerous dead who lie buried all over these fields of death are often disinterred, and the head boards, placed by careful comrades, often taken away by the less scrupulous of these diggers. As I may have something more to say about the dead of these fields, I will reserve comments on this matter for another letter.

While I was watching the operations of had gathering to day, a negro boy threw up in his spade a silver pen case and gold pen. It was found at a point where one hundred and fifteen of our brave men, under Burnside, met with death in the crater and were buried in a common grave.

A very learned and compassionate Judge in Texas, on passing sentence on John Jones, who had been convicted of murder, concluded his remarks as follows: "The fact is, Jones, that the Court did not intend to order you to be executed before next spring, but the weather is very cold, our jail, unfortunately, is in a very bad condition; much of the glass in the windows are broken; the chimneys are in such a dilapidated condition that no fire can be made to render your apartments comfortable; besides, owing to the great number of prisoners, not more than one blanket can be allowed to each. To sleep sound and comfortable is out of the question. In consideration of these circumstances, and wishing to lessen your sufferings as much as possible, the Court in the exercise of its humane compassion, hereby orders you to be executed to-morrow morning, as soon after breakfast as may be convenient to the Sheriff and agreeable to you."

KEEP IN GOOD HUMOR.—It is not great calamities that embitter existence; it is the petty vexations, the small jealousies, the little disappointments, the minor miseries that make the heart heavy and the temper sour. Don't let them. Anger is a pure waste of vitality; it is always disgraceful, except in some very rare cases, when it is kindled by seeing wrong done to another; and even then noble rage seldom mends the matter.

A Shrewd Editor.

At a Welsh celebration in New York, Dr. Jones told the following amusing anecdote:

The speaker said the editors are like other shrewd men who have to live with their eyes and ears open. He related the story of an editor who started a newspaper in a new village in the West. The town was infested with gamblers whose presence was a source of annoyance to the citizens, who told the editor if he did not come out against them they would not patronize his paper. He replied that he would give them a "smasher" next day. Sure enough, his next issue contained the promised "smasher," and on the following morning the redoubtable editor, with scissors in hand, was seated in his sanctum cutting out news, when in walked a large man with a club in his hand, and demanded to know if the editor was in. "No, sir," was the reply, "he has stepped out; take a seat and read the papers; he will return in a minute." Down sat the indignant man of cards, crossed his legs, with his club between them, and commenced reading a paper. In the meantime the editor quietly vamoosed down stairs, and at the landing below he met another excited man with a cudgel in his hand, who asked if the editor was in. "Yes, sir," was the response. "You will find him up stairs reading a newspaper." The latter, on entering the room, with a furious oath, commenced a violent assault on the former, which was resisted with equal ferocity. The fight was continued until they had both rolled to the foot of the stairs, and pounded each other to their hearts content.

JOINED TO THEIR IDOLS.—The Baltimore Methodist Conference, in session at Alexandria on Thursday, voted unanimously to dissolve its connection with the Church South. Rev. Mr. Register, in a speech on the occasion, thus explains the reasons for this step:

"After five terrible years of hardship, toil and suffering, they had, through the blessings of Almighty God, been gathered together to do what they proposed to do in 1861. To Almighty God be endless praises for his overruling care. In taking this step he hoped that they would all rise above feelings of retaliation or ill-will to any one. As a body of Christian ministers, representing a membership of about twelve thousand, they realize that conference independence is impractical; they find that they cannot with self-respect unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church. In casting about they find the Church South in organization, doctrine and discipline, all they can desire, harmonizing with their own views. They propose with all due solemnity to unite to that church. The question had been asked as to what would be the boundaries of the Conference. He had the pleasure of attending the Virginia Conference of that church at Danville, and had received assurances that all that this body could ask as to its present boundaries would be accorded.

In doing this they looked to a future which may be cloudy, and in taking this course they may lose much. Many of them had lost all except their honor and religion. The future was, however, bright, and trusting in God that He will defend the right, he was ready for the movement." [Boston Journal.]

FRIGHTFUL EFFECT OF ABSINTHE.—A correspondent relates the following strange story of the horrible effect of absinthe which was recently presented before the Paris Courts:

"A strange spectacle of the horrible effects of absinthe was recently presented before the Paris Courts. A negro only 37 years of age was arraigned; he seemed to be at least 80, and a complete idiot; his vacillating eyes wandered restlessly and listlessly over the audience, his emaciated hands and his lips quivered with nervous trembling. He was sixteen years in the Post office and rose to a high post when the demon of absinthe took possession of him, and he began to steal for stealing's sake. He stole objects of no value, and he stole so much that when his house was searched, the objects found filled two hundred and twenty-two boxes, each as much as a man could carry."

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.—A writer, whose life has passed its meridian, thus eloquently discourses upon the flight of time:

"Forty years once seemed a long and weary pilgrimage to make. It now seems but a step; and yet along the way are broken shrines, where a thousand hopes are wasted into ashes; footprints sacred under their drifting dust, green mounds where the grass is fresh with the watering of tears; shadows even which we should not forget. We will garner the sunshine of those years, and with chastened steps and hope push on toward the twinkling, where the waters are still and storms never beat."

THE OLDEST CITY IN THE WORLD.

Damascus is the oldest city in the world; Tyre and Sidon have crumbled on the shore; Baalbec is a ruin; Palmyra lies buried in the sands of the desert; Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared from the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates. Damascus remains what it was before the days of Abraham—a centre of trade and travel, an island of verdure in a desert, "a predestined capital," with martial and sacred associations extending beyond thirty centuries.

It was near Damascus that Saul of Tarsus saw the light from Heaven, above the brightness of the sun; and the street which is called Strait, in which it is said he "prayed," still runs through the city; the caravan comes and goes as it did one thousand years ago; there is still the sheik, the ass and the waterwheel; the merchants of the Euphrates and the Mediterranean still occupy these "with the multitude of their waiters." The city which Mahomet surveyed from a neighboring height, and was afraid to enter, "because it is given to man to have but one paradise, and for his part, he was resolved not to have it in this world," is to this day what Julian called the "Eye of the East," as it was in the time of Isaiah "the Head of Syria."

HOG CHOLERA.—The Petersburg Intelligencer, says the following recipe, new for the first time made public, may be relied upon as a specific for hog cholera. It has been fully tested and tried, in the hogs of a gentleman of Amherst, Va.—The remedy was given in all the stages of the disease:

"Beat up an ounce of assafetida and add about one ounce of whiskey or other kind of spirits, and give to the hog two table-spoonfuls. It produces an immediate relief, and speedy and permanent cure. The effect which the drench had on the hogs spoken of, was to cause them to vomit the most disgusting and loathsome mass of matter conceivable from the stomach, when a moderate reaction took place, and the hogs were carefully cured."

CORNERED.—Covetous people often seek to shelter themselves behind the widow's mite, and to give a paltry sum to the benevolent objects under cover of her contribution. The following incident has a moral for all such:

A gentleman called upon a wealthy friend for a contribution.

"Yes, I suppose I must give my mite," said the rich man.

"You mean the widow's mite, I suppose," replied the other.

"To be sure I do."

The gentleman continued:

"I will be satisfied with half as much as he gave. How much are you worth?"

"Seventy thousand dollars," he answered.

"Give me a check, then, for thirty-five thousand dollars; that will be half as much as the widow gave, for she gave all she had."

It was a new idea to the wealthy merchant.

WHY MEN FAIL.—A young merchant, who had just failed in business, having spent in four years a legacy of ten thousand dollars in addition to any profits realized, was met by a thrifty young mechanic, who had formerly been on terms of intimacy with him. During the conversation which ensued, the merchant said to him:

"How is it, Harry, that you have been able to live and save money on the small sum which you receive for services, while I found it impossible to live in my business with a good round ten thousand dollars to back me?"

"Oh," said the mechanic, "that is easily understood. I have lived with reference, mostly, for the comforts and tastes of myself and family while you have lived mostly with reference to the opinion and tastes of others. It costs more to please the eye than to keep the back warm and stomach full."

THIS BEAUTIFUL WORLD.—Ah, this beautiful world! Indeed I know not what to think of it. Sometimes it is all gladness and sunshine, and heaven itself lies not far off. And then it changes suddenly, and is dark and sorrowful, and the clouds shut out the sky. In the lives of the saddest of us there are days like this, when we feel as if we could take the great world in our arms. Then come the gloomy hours, when the fire will neither burn in our hearts nor on our hearths; and all without and within is dismal, cold, and dark. Every heart has its secret sorrows, and often times we call a man cold when he is only sad.

Here is the pithiest sermon ever preached: "Our ingress in life is naked and bare; our progress through life is trouble and care; our egress out of it we know not where; but doing well here we shall do well there; I could not tell more by preaching a year."

Shopping is woman's only consolation when she has no money to spend.