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A. H. Stephens' Views—Reconstruction—Sufrage.

Under the above caption, the Washington correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial, gives an interesting report of the views of Mr. Stephens on the questions of the day, as expressed in an interview:

WASHINGTON, April 6, 1866.—Probably no man in the South, who was closely identified with the rebellion, is less distrusted by the loyal people, than Alexander H. Stephens. Before the culmination of that treason to the United States, which is declared in the organic Act of our Government to consist in levying war against them, Mr. Stephens strenuously opposed secession, and predicted what has come to the Southern people as a result of their mad folly and crime. But that indescribable ignis fatuus of State sovereignty, popularly called States rights, seems to have drawn not only Mr. Stephens, but General Lee, and many other Southern men who professed loyalty, into the maelstrom of treason. And to conciliate that numerous class of Southerners, known there at that time as Conservatives, Mr. S. was selected as their second Executive officer of the Confederacy. Officiating in that capacity, he may be fairly presumed to at least understand the feelings and wishes of the Southern people, a correct reflex of a large and respectable portion of whom he was, immediately preceding the rebellious outbreak.

Hence, upon the arrival in this city a day or two ago, I had the pleasure of several long interviews with him, that I might cull from these copious and unreserved expressions of opinion on the various subjects now agitating the public, such main features as will give us "more light" on the great problem of reconstruction. He expressed to me

HIS VIEWS ON JOHNSON'S POLICY. and thinks the principles enunciated by the President in his annual message, last December, and reiterated in various official and unofficial documents and speeches since, are the fundamental elements of our system of Government. This policy is acceptable to the late insurgents, and is, in his opinion, the only basis of restoration which will command the hearty cooperation of the conservative and peace-loving people in all sections of the country. He thinks that all Mr. Johnson has done towards reconstruction was done under the sanction of military law and as commander-in-chief of a victorious army and navy. What the conquered people of the South did was a part and parcel of the terms of surrender. When they had complied with the conditions exacted by the President, they were entitled to all the rights allowed other sections of the country, and that Congress had no more right to dictate any additional terms of surrender than the same body would have had to have dictated the terms of surrender at Vicksburg. But

WHY DO THE REPUBLICANS PERSIST in their attempt to keep out in the cold all these States now at peace and penitent? Because they will vote with the "strict constructionists" (as they always have done, he said) and not with the Federals; and thus, by uniting with the Northern Democrats, there would be formed a large national party, possessing a sufficiency of strength and adhesiveness to warrant a defeat of Black Republican Radicalism. They think if they can compel the adoption of universal suffrage, by the enchantment of

THE STEWART PROPOSITION

of universal amnesty, or otherwise, then, the negro voting with the Federals in the South, there would be hope of a longer continuance in power. He could see no other explanation of the zealous manner in which the Radicals urged the titles of the late slaves to political equality with the whites, a new and unheard of question sprung upon the issues of civil war. And he does not think the Stewart plan of "tickle me, Johnnie, and I'll tickle you," would be sanctioned by a single Southern State. He thought the Northern view of the question of secession was that the Southern States had never gone out of the Union, and the war was prosecuted to keep them from going out. If the Southern States were out of the Union, then the war against them was cruel and atrocious. The President's view that the functions of these States were merely suspended during the

rebellion, and to quote from Mr. Lincoln, out of their "proper practical relations" with the Union, he thought consistent; and on this hypothesis, the moment the resistance to the Federal Government ceased, the Southern States stood just where they did when the war began, with all their rights as States unimpaired, and their domestic or other relations, only changed in such aspects as the amended Magna Charter designated.

Mr. Stephens expressed his opinions fully and freely on the subject of

RIGHTS OF NEGROES,

and held, in emphatic language, that their civil rights should be precisely those of other people, with no separate and discriminating codes or regulations.

Many of the legislators of Georgia had sought his advice on a "black code" of laws designating a different, and in many instances, severer punishment for negroes committing certain crimes, than that applied to whites—such as hanging for rape, while the penitentiary was only given the white man guilty of a similar offence. He opposed any discrimination in defining crime or devising penalty. That Legislature finally legalized negro testimony in cases affecting their own race. This proposition he philosophically submitted to his body servant, an intelligent negro, and Cuffy was elated to think they had been given superior advantages over their white friends, claiming very naturally that the negroes were not permitted to tell the truth except where one of their own race was interested! With Cuffy's logic Mr. Stephens went back to the Legislature, and in a week, a new, just and practical law was enacted, admitting the testimony of all persons, regardless of color, leaving, of course, the credibility of the testimony to be adjudged by the court. And Mr. Stephens successfully urged upon his people the necessity of legalizing the negroes in the enjoyment of civil rights possessed by other persons. On the all absorbing subject of

SUFFRAGE.

Mr. Stephens holds that under our system of Government, each State has reserved the right to declare who shall exercise the elective franchise; and he does not recognize suffrage as a right pertaining to citizenship, but a granted privilege. Congress, therefore, has no authority to confer it upon any class of persons, and should not force so odious a measure upon the South. Ultimately, when the negro shall have become intelligent and frugal, and incorporated, by his possession of real estate, into the body politic of the various States, he thinks all of them will, if from no other motive, from that of interest, grant the privilege of suffrage to the blacks. He elaborately unfolded to me some of

HIS PECULIAR IDEAS

in regard to suffrage and representation, and proposes a plan which he thinks would intercept the necessity of, and absolutely prohibit the formation of large and corrupt political organizations. Following up the political reasoning of the ancient savant, Aristotle, he would divide society into numerous classes, representing every profession, trade and interest. There should then be a basis of intelligence to start from, and each interest of the studio, law, morals, religion, mercantile, mechanical, agricultural, all, should be represented according to its ratio of adherents and wealth. He would restrict the suffrage of the lower, ignorant and debased strata of society, to check what excesses and mischief the indiscriminate franchise of the rabble might induce.

A CURIOUS ILLUSTRATION.—"My friends," said a returned missionary at a late anniversary meeting, "let us avoid sectarian bitterness. The inhabitants of Hindostan, where I have been laboring for many years, have a proverb that 'Though you bathe a dog's tail in oil and bind it in splints, you cannot get the crook out of it.' Now, a man's sectarian bias is simply the crook in the dog's tail, which cannot be eradicated, and I hold that every one should be allowed to wag his own peculiarity in peace!"

Horne Took challenged Wilkes, who was then sheriff, and received the following laconic reply: "Sir—I do not think it my business to cut the throat of every desperado that may be tired of life; but as I am at present the sheriff of the city of London, it may happen that I shall shortly have an opportunity of attending you in my official capacity, in which case I will answer for it that you shall have no ground left to complain of my endeavors to serve you."

An elderly gentleman travelling in a stage coach was much amused by the constant fire of words kept up between two ladies. One of them at last kindly inquired if their conversation did not make his head ache, when he answered with a good deal of naivete, "No, madam, I have been married twenty-eight years."

From Texas.

INDIAN DEPREDACTIONS—ROBBERIES, MURDERS AND OUTRAGES UPON THE PEOPLE. The following letter from the Hon. J. E. Ranck, tells a fearful tale of Indian depredations upon the apparently helpless people of Texas:

AUSTIN, March 10, 1866.

In compliance with your request, I hasten to lay before you such information in regard to depredations by Indians upon our Northwestern frontier as have come within my personal knowledge during the last few months. I shall confine my remarks to what I know to have occurred within the district which I have the honor to represent. About the time of what is known as "the break up" in Texas, the Indians, some twenty-five in number, came into Mason County, not more than three miles from where I live, and killed Mrs. Todd, wife of Geo. W. Todd, who was our County Clerk, carried off her daughter Alice, a young and interesting girl of fourteen years, who had just a few days before returned from the San Saba Female Seminary, and killed a negro girl who was in the party. Mr. Todd was in the party but managed to escape unhurt.

The Indians were generally dressed in the Mexican style, but were chiefly armed with bows and arrows—only a few guns. That same party went on into Gillespie County, and there within two miles of Fredericksburg, captured two young German girls, one eighteen and the other about fourteen. They killed the elder one before they left the neighborhood, but not until after they had treated her in a manner too revolting to describe. The girls were the daughters of a Mr. and Mrs. Engle, of Grape Creek. On Grape Creek, in that county, they shot an old lady by the name of Fraill, and carried off her little son, a promising boy of ten years. On Crab Apple Creek they killed an old man whose name was Walker, burned his house and carried off two of his children—a little boy and girl. From every neighborhood they so far succeeded in collecting and driving off all serviceable horses that there was no possibility of overtaking them. They went out without even feeling the necessity of being in a hurry. In the month of August last they returned to the Saline, in Mason County, and there killed an old gentleman by the name of Park, his wife and grandson, burned their house and drove off their horses.

On Red Creek they killed a man by the name of Fred. Conway, who left an excellent wife and five little children to mourn his untimely loss. Fred was a noble man, and brave as brave could be, but the savages overpowered and murdered him in a most shameful manner. Not far from there they killed an old man, a German, by the name of Sheeman and his little son. On Spring Creek, in Gillespie County, they killed Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and carried off their children. I don't now remember the number, but three or four I'm sure. They killed at the same time and place a Mr. McDonald, and carried off his family, consisting of his wife and five children. On the Tertenolis, in the same county, they carried off a promising boy fourteen years of age, the son of a Mr. Fisher, and again took the horses about the different premises, and escaped without injury. Still later they came again, and on Beaver Creek, in Mason County, they killed a Mr. Gauding and his wife, but not till six of the red devils had violated her by turns in the presence of her husband, who was, of course, wounded and helpless. They finally scarified Mrs. Gauding by drawing a knife across her abdomen and thighs in every possible direction, and then left her to die by slow degrees; she was far gone in pregnancy, but strange to say, she retained her senses to the moment of her death, and when found, was able to give the statement as just related. They killed an old man by the name of Couch on Deer Creek, on the edge of Mason County, shot a young man by the name of John Lowe, on the Little Llano, did many other depredations, and as usual, drove our horses before them and escaped without injury. Just as I was leaving home they came on the Leon, in Macon County, and shot old Mr. Putnam and son, and drove off quite a number of horses that were making their way further down in the settlements. I have not mentioned near all the depredations that have been committed on the Sixty seventh Representative District alone within a few months past. I do not remember the name and particulars of the other cases; the truth is, I rather seek to forget than to remember such horrible scenes. You may ask why we don't keep our horses in good strong stables, and be ready to make chase after the Indians. I answer, that ten, twenty, or thirty Indians generally take horses regardless of one or two or three men and their stables.

Again I may answer that the people on the frontier of Texas are generally stock growers—they raise cattle; and the fact that their herds have been subject to all manner of depredations for four years, leaves many men without the means to buy

meat and flour for their families, much less for their horses. The horses are necessarily left, therefore, to take the desperate chance on the range. Since the break up the few in that country who were fortunate enough to have any horses remaining, have been unable to render them available for much good, because when they could collect them they couldn't sell them, and now that they could get a little something for them, their horses are all gone, and they are unable to collect them. Last summer and fall, men, neighbors of mine, came to me at San Antonio and begged me to aid them, if I could, in getting four or five dollars per head for the choice out of a drove of five hundred noble muskero grass hoes, where in a drove at that time not one beef of which was less than four and from that to eight years old. They had to drive them home again. The great necessities of the people had caused them to overstock the market.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

JAMES E. RANCK.
Fort Mason, Mason County.

Stamps.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue has the following circular in relation to stamping instruments issued without stamps, or insufficiently stamped:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF INTERNAL REVENUE,
WASHINGTON, March 16, 1866.

The first internal revenue act took effect, so far as related to stamp duties, October 1, 1862. Instruments executed and delivered prior to that date, though they may be recorded afterwards, are not chargeable with stamp duties.

If any instrument subject to stamp duty was issued after October 1, 1862, and prior to August 1, 1864, unstamped, or insufficiently stamped, the appropriate stamp may be fixed in the presence of the Court, Register, or Recorder, as provided by section 163 of the act of June 30, 1864.

Any instrument issued since August 1, 1864, unstamped, or insufficiently stamped, may be stamped by the Collector upon payment for the proper stamp, and of a penalty of fifty dollars; and where the amount of the stamp duty exceeds fifty dollars, on payment also of interest on said duty at the rate of six per cent. from the day on which the stamp should have been affixed.

If the instrument is presented to the Collector within twelve calendar months from its issue, the Collector is authorized to remit the penalty, provided it shall appear to his satisfaction that the omission to stamp it was by reason of accident, mistake, inadvertence, or urgent necessity, and without wilful design to evade or delay the payment of stamp duty.

If the instrument is not presented within twelve calendar months, the penalty and interest must be paid to the collector before he can render it valid by fixing the appropriate stamp, without regard to the cause of the omission to stamp it at the time of its issue. The Commissioner has no power to remit this penalty.

Deputy collectors, unless acting as collectors under section 39, have no authority to affix stamps or remit penalties under section 158.

The stamp to be affixed to any instrument is that required by the law existing at the time when the instrument was made, signed, and issued.

When an instrument is properly stamped under either of said sections, the stamping relates back to the time when the instrument was issued, and renders it from the beginning as valid to all intents and purposes as if it had been duly stamped when made, signed, and issued.

The whole amount of penalties paid to collectors for validating unstamped instruments should be returned on form 58, with other unassessed penalties, and the money deposited to the credit of the Treasury of the United States, with other collections.

E. A. ROLLINS, Commissioner.

From the Paris Kentuckian, March 26.

Homicide in Kentucky.

On last Monday a fearful tragedy was enacted in Millersburg, Bourbon county. Henry M. Boulden, of this county, about 19 years of age, son of Jesse H. Boulden, was being tried before the trustees of Millersburg for a breach of the peace committed the night before. During the progress of the trial young Boulden jumped up, drew his pistol, flourishing it and swearing, and said "any person who said he fired his pistol the night before told a lie, and he would kill the person who touched him." The marshal attempted to arrest him, and called upon the bystanders to assist, and in the attempt to do so he fired his pistol twice, the first shot killing F. E. Waters, son of H. H. Waters, of Columbus, Ga., and formerly auditor of that State. Waters was about 21 years of age, and had lost a leg before Atlanta during the late war, having been a major in the Fourth Georgia regiment. He was a student in the College at Millersburg, and was looked upon as the most brilliant young man in the institution. He was

preparing to leave for his home, with the intention of studying law under Governor Brown. When Boulden found he had killed Waters he was deeply affected, and kneeling over his prostrate body made great lamentations. Boulden had an examining trial at Millersburg the same evening, before Esquires Trigg and Barnett. They held him to answer before the next April Bourbon court, in the sum of \$2000, Jesse H. Boulden and Dr. Carpenter being his securities.

The father of young Boulden paid the expenses of Major Waters's funeral, and sent Joseph H. Miller with the body to Georgia.

Albert Barnes.

High in social position in the community where he has lived so long—high in the sacred profession which he adorns—is the gentleman whose name we have taken the liberty to put at the head of this article. He is an able, accomplished and Christian gentleman, gentle in every sense. Unlike most of his clerical brethren, he maintained the gentleness of tone throughout the conflict of fierce passions now happily at an end, and with clear and fixed opinions—and those, too, on the side of the government—we have never heard or read one word from his lips or his pen which seemed like the utterance of ill-temper or intolerance. He never prostituted his pulpit by truculent harangues. He never defiled the sacred elements he administered by reading bulletins of bloody strife. He never haunted clubs or leagues. He prayed for victory for the cause he thought the right one, but he blessed no flags waving over ghastly fields of fraternal war. Such was the tone of this good man's course during the war. What it has been since the war is over and the blessed light of peace is shining upon us, the reader will see in the following extract from a sermon of Mr. Barnes, which we find copied in one of our exchanges, and which we gladly reproduce. What a contrast to the scream of vindictive fanaticism which comes from every corner of infidel New England, and as infidel Ohio, where New England seed is sown, whose organs are Sumner and Stevens and Wilson and Wade:

I hesitate not to say that, on the whole, the conduct of the South in the feelings evinced on the termination of the conflict has been such as to demand the confidence of the North, and to secure the admiration of mankind. The surrender of armed forces was so complete and entire; the cessation of hostilities was so immediate and universal; the acknowledgment that they had been overcome was so prompt, frank, and manly; the readiness to return to the Union has been so general and apparently so sincere; the recognition of the fact that slavery is extinct forever has been so wisely admitted as a fact—vast as are the consequences involved, and is the change in their habits; the readiness to come under the arrangements for collecting the revenue has been so prompt; the disposition to resume commercial intercourse with the great cities of the North has been so marked; and the willingness to come into the great arrangements of the nation for perpetuating freedom has been so general, that we see in this, I think, the return of the feelings of the best days of the republic. There are exceptions (individual), but there has never been a civil war closed where there was less lingering animosity, or more willingness to unite again under the same government. Can we forget, when we think of what is in the Southern bosom still, that long-cherished opinions, feelings and customs do not soon change among a people? Can we forget how long after the wars of the "Roses," and after the civil wars that resulted in the establishment of the "Commonwealth" in England on the cessation of the forms of war, the feelings that had been engendered lingered in the bosoms of Englishmen? Can we forget how long after the Revolution, the banishment of James, and the accession of William and Mary, love for the "Pretender" lingered in the hearts of a portion of that nation; how firm was the conviction that he was the rightful heir of the crown; how strong the hope that he would yet come to the throne? Shall we blame our Southern brethren if some similar feelings linger in their bosoms?

We are exceedingly sorry to say that we yesterday saw a man get himself bitten by a big rattlesnake for the sake of having a quart of whiskey administered to him. He wasn't killed by either the bite or the drink.—[Prentice.]

With many readers, brilliancy of style passes for affluence of thought; they mistake butterfies in the grass for immeasurable gold mines in the ground.—[Long-fellow.]