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The Impeachment of Belknap.

The news of the impeachment of General Belknap, President Grant's Secretary of War, says the Augusta Chronicle & Sentinel, came like a clap of thunder from a clear sky. No intimation had been given that any such proceeding was in contemplation. No statement came by telegraph or mail that such serious charges had been made against a Cabinet officer. The members of the committee made their investigation very quietly and kept their proceedings a profound secret. The first intimation given of their discoveries was contained in the resolutions of impeachment presented to the House of Representatives Thursday, and which were adopted by a unanimous vote of its members. From the statement of the case sent by telegraph it appears that General Belknap sold a position as Post-trader at Fort Sill, in the Indian Territory, to Caleb P. Marsh for the sum of twelve thousand dollars and an annuity of several thousand as long as the appointment was retained. Their bargain was made several years since, and the payments have been made regularly since that time—the last installment having been received two months ago. The Secretary made a clumsy attempt to conceal his corruption or to provide a shield for himself in the event of discovery at the expense of his wife's honor, by causing the money to pass through his wife's hands. This arrangement continued up to the death of the first Mrs. Belknap. After that event even this flimsy cloak was laid aside and the annuity was paid directly to the Secretary of War.—The annuity of a man whom General Belknap had dismissed from the service brought the transaction to the ears of an Alabama Congressman and the Committee on Expenditures in the War Department traced the matter until Thursday, when their labors terminated in the resignation and impeachment of one of the highest officers of the Government of the United States. The case seems to have been made out so strongly that no defense was possible. The man who bought the appointment was brought, an unwilling witness, before the Committee and rather than commit perjury, gave the history of the whole transaction. Confronted with Marsh the Secretary could do nothing but make confession of his guilt, and ask for the mercy which could not be shown. Knowing that impeachment was inevitable if he remained in office he sought to avoid it by resigning his position in the Cabinet. The President attempted to assist him to evade justice by accepting his resignation the moment it was tendered. Forgetting what he had said in the case of Columbus Delano when charges of corruption were pending against that man as Secretary of the Interior, viz: "That no officer of the Government would be permitted to resign while under fire," the President hastened to accept the resignation of a high officer who had been proven guilty of the grossest corruption, in order to shield him from the punishment which he so richly merited. Gen. Grant cannot be condemned too severely for his conduct in this case. If his design had succeeded the Secretary of War would have been permitted to retire from office and escape the only punishment which can avail to check the crimes of which he had been proven guilty. It is true that General Belknap could have been indicted and tried in the Courts for accepting a bribe, but the chances are that he would have finally escaped through the law's delays and the influence of the President which would have shielded him as it has just saved Babcock. For a man occupying his position and guilty of his offense there is but one punishment, and that

punishment must be administered by the verdict of a high Court of Impeachment. Fortunately the firmness of the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives rendered the President's effort abortive.—Notwithstanding his resignation Belknap has been impeached and must answer at the bar of the Senate for his offenses. As in the Babcock matter the President will and ought to suffer by the impeachment of Belknap. The corrupt official was his warm personal friend. His appointment was a surprise to the whole country. He was not a statesman. He was not a soldier of distinction. He was simply a young man who had served creditably in a subordinate capacity during the war and acquired the friendship of General Grant. His name was scarcely known out of the army registers and pay rolls. Yet to this young and obscure man the President gave one of the highest and most responsible positions under the Government. He was placed at the head of the army, given entire control of all military affairs and entrusted with immense patronage and the disbursement of enormous sums of money. This untried man was unable to resist the temptations which promotion placed in his path, and fell from honesty and from honor. He trafficked in offices, and made merchandise of his patronage. At last detection and exposure came, and he appealed to the President for protection. The President, who had just proclaimed that no official would be permitted to resign while under fire, who had just seen his Private Secretary under indictment for conspiring to defraud the Government, who knew that the air was filled with charges of corruption, who knew that the people were growing indignant at witnessing, day after day, the escape of men who despoiled them, the President made indecent haste to accept the resignation of his favorite, and to screen him from impeachment and punishment. It can be said that for the first time in the history of the nation a member of the Cabinet has been arraigned before the Senate for the commission of high crimes and misdemeanors. It can also be said that for the first time in the history of the nation the President of the United States, knowing the guilt of a Cabinet officer, has sought to shield him from punishment. Grant's Masterly Move to Throttle Investigation. The President recommends the prosecution of Marsh, the witness whose testimony has revealed the most glaring and outrageous fraud that ever disgraced the history of a people. Why this recommendation? Does such action tend to advance the cause of justice? Marsh was examined on behalf of the Government, and testified to facts which tended to exonerate himself.—This testimony he could not have been compelled to give. It is the universal practice of the Courts, founded upon sound policy, to grant immunity to those accomplices in crime who are used by the State as witnesses for the conviction of more prominent offenders. Change this rule, publish to the world that witness who testify against high officials are to have arrayed against themselves the power of the Government, and the result will be that no one will ever again be found so bold as to impeach the character of a friend of Gen. Grant. Marsh is insignificant and unknown, and though his guilt be as dark as Erebus, it is better that he should go unscathed than that the rule, which is more potent than all other agencies in the discovery, and hence in the prevention of crime should be violated.

But for the circumstances, pointing with unerring certainty to the opposite conclusion, we would gladly infer that this recommendation was an error of judgment. We find, however, the President interposing the shield of his power to prevent the impeachment of Belknap, to prevent the action of a tribunal whose judgment he could not nullify, and immediately afterwards warning Marsh of his danger instead of assuring him of safety. The result is entirely natural, and perhaps was anticipated. Marsh has fled, and the Attorney General may find himself without sufficient testimony to establish the guilt of Belknap in a Criminal Court, and the Senate will lack evidence for his impeachment. "Let no guilty man escape."—Charleston News and Courier. Robeson's Courtesy. In July last Mrs. Belknap, wife of the then Secretary of War, arranged a yachting excursion for herself and some of her society friends. The only trouble was about a yacht. The Secretary did not number one among his possessions, not having had an opportunity to obtain one from any of his bribe givers; and it would not be exactly the thing for a Cabinet lady to sail in a hired vessel, or even in a chartered steamer. Besides, the expense would be a serious consideration to a family that was struggling along on \$5,000 a year. In this dilemma, Mrs. Belknap sought counsel of that pure and virtuous official, Secor Robeson, and intimated to him that the loan of a government vessel would lend eclat to her proposed voyage. Robeson promptly placed at her disposal the United States steam frigate Powhatan. The pleasure party, consisting of Mrs. Belknap, her child and nurse, seven lady friends, and a war department clerk as her escort and messenger, embarked on board the Powhatan at the Brooklyn navy yard, on July 27, 1875. The frigate proceeded first to New London, Conn., where the party remained for ten days, and where Mrs. Belknap excited great admiration both by her style and her flirtations. She then visited Newport, then Narragansett Pier, then steamed back to New York again, and up the Hudson to West Point, where a stay of several days was made. At this point the Powhatan, which is one of the largest and most effective ships in the navy, was recalled by the department and ordered to prepare for active duty in the waters of Hayti, where trouble was then anticipated, growing out of the official misconduct of another of Grant's proteges. But notwithstanding the ship was under positive sailing orders, Mrs. Belknap was unwilling to end her pleasure trip so abruptly. She posted off to Washington, saw Secor Robeson, and actually prevailed upon him to countermand the Powhatan's sailing orders. The Swatara was consequently substituted and despatched to the West Indies, while the Powhatan remained at Mrs. Belknap's commands. The Powhatan is one of the most powerful cruisers of our poor navy. Her running expenses are not less than \$18,000 a month. Yet Secor Robeson and Mrs. Belknap managed to keep her out of service when she was really wanted, and to transform her into an excursion barge for a party of women and children. A scientific authority says that a properly qualified old ram never butts without first backing. This is true; and from the way the Democratic Congress has been going back, it will soon butt the gable end off of something.

Selling the Traderships.

The St. Louis Times publishes on the authority of a man who has been engaged in frontier trading for the past eighteen years some very interesting facts connected with that business. He says that Orvil Grant, the brother of the President, has been interested with Belknap in disposing of the trading posts for money. Orvil Grant, shortly after the appointment of Belknap as Secretary of War, visited most of the posts on the frontier and cancelled all the licenses issued by Secretary Rawlins. Durfee and Peck, two government transportation agents on the frontier, held the principal sutlerships at this time, and were astonished at the unexpected change. Mr. Peck investigated the matter, and found Orvil Grant had full authority from the Secretary of War to dispose of all trading posts as he thought fit. Mr. Peck applied to Orvil Grant for authority to retain posts where his firm had invested large sums of money in buildings and goods, and would agree to it only on terms of so much cash down and a certain share of the profits; precisely the same arrangement that existed between Marsh and Evans & Co. at Fort Sill. Peck refused to comply with these terms, and others received the appointments at Fort Buford and Fort Peck. A. C. Leighton was appointed sutler upon the terms proposed by Orvil Grant, but the bonus required was so large that he lost money, and subsequently offered to sell to Durfee & Peck. The latter agreed to buy, but Leighton had first to obtain permission to sell from Orvil Grant. This the latter refused, and made easier terms with Leighton. The Fort Sully tradership was taken from Durfee & Peck and given to John T. Athey. Athey paid all the money he had to get the post, and was obliged to make terms with Durfee & Peck to manage and run it. The latter firm leased from him and carried on the business for a year, when the profits accruing to Athey enabled him to manage the business himself. Durfee & Peck had the tradership at Fort Sill, but it was given to Evans & Co. Durfee & Peck attempted to carry on business in opposition to Evans & Co., but the officers of the post were forbidden to give the soldiers orders on any firm but Evans & Co., and they were forced to abandon the post. Orvil Grant went so far in his opposition to Durfee & Peck that he forbade those to whom he gave appointments to purchase the goods or buildings belonging to that firm. Orvil Grant also had an arrangement with the interior department by which he controlled many of the Indian trading posts.—Those he disposed of in the same manner as the sutlerships—to the highest bidder. Orvil Grant was in the habit of visiting the military posts and Indian trading stations every year to collect money due him and his partner Belknap, and for this purpose he had authority from Secretary Belknap to draw upon any military posts for ambulances, teams, and such aid as he might require. His authority was generally recognized, and he was greatly feared all along the frontier. The authority for these statements is Dr. Terry, who has been for many years past actively connected with the firm of Durfee & Peck, and who has spent much of his life on the frontier. He says that the Congressional committee will open up a rich lead if they will investigate affairs at Fort Buford. The Georgia Legislature has adjourned without calling for a general convention. No harm done, and no capital for the Northern "bloody shirt" Republicans.

How Many More?

The demoralization which followed in the wake of our great civil war has not ceased yet. Each day brings us in evidence of new bribery committed or of old corruption revealed.—The highest offices, which none but the purest in the land should fill, are occupied by swindlers. We need, perhaps, not be much astonished to see a newly emancipated slave whose former position was not favorable to moral development, play rather loosely with the commandments when it is put in his power to make an easy living, plenty of money and no work. When, however, corruption invades the greatest offices in the government, it affects by a reflex action the whole nation and we feel that we are to a certain extent responsible for having selected such public servants, and we consider our good standing as a nation imperilled. Revelations follow each other with startling rapidity.—The Emma Mine scandal seems to be now fixed on Minister Schenck; there is no doubt that he received some \$50,000 to give English capitalists confidence in the stock by having his name connected with it; a Minister at a foreign court who should represent the good character of his people abroad. Then came in quick succession the uncovering of the frauds of the Whiskey Ring in the West, which revealed gigantic fraudulent operations; Babcock, the President's private Secretary, was acquitted by a St. Louis jury, but there are but few people who do not think that he was the soul of the plot at Washington. But he had to be saved at any risk, for if Babcock was guilty Grant could not be innocent. Pierrepoint, the Attorney General—and here is another outrage—sends for Dyer, the District Attorney for Missouri, and worms out of him his plans of prosecution against Babcock, and the names of witnesses and the nature of the evidence, and communicates them to Storrs, the leading counsel for Babcock. A beautiful picture for an Attorney General. The Babcock excitement has not subsided before there is another thunderclap, the bribery of Belknap, the Secretary of War, an officer of the President's Cabinet; he received \$20,000 from one Marsh to secure to him the post traderships at Fort Sill and other army posts in the Southwest. Belknap confesses, resigns and the President immediately accepts his resignation, so as, if possible, to prevent impeachment. Being represented by corrupt officers at home, by swindlers abroad, we can hardly expect admission into the society of civilized nations. There is a good deal of Centennial work ahead. A STARTLING ESTIMATE.—The New York Bulletin makes this startling estimate of the losses to property and trade by corrupt government: "After allowing for the inevitable addition to the taxes arising from war expenditures, it may be safely estimated that for the last ten years the taxes, including all kinds, have been swelled by corrupt political influences at the rate of \$250,000,000 a year. If this estimate be correct, we have paid within one decade \$2,500,000,000—an amount sufficient to extinguish the whole national debt and equal to four years net earnings of the nation—as the penalty tolerating political corruption." The President has decided to retain Babcock. Cant ex-Gov. Moses, got an appointment by the President, he is a game Rooster. The Government sues the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad for \$300,000 unpaid taxes. Beecher calls Bowen a dismal swamp. He probably wishes he would "dry up."

Chamberlain and Parker.

It is generally known that Niles G. Parker, of "Parker's haul" notoriety was convicted in a civil suit, and a judgment entered against him for defrauding the State to the amount of \$75,000, which is only 50 per cent of the money which he stole. Parker was released from jail upon habeas corpus by an intimate friend of Chamberlain, and in an improper way, as the Supreme Court has decided. After his release, Parker was again arrested on a criminal charge for this fraud, and gave bail in the small sum of \$2,500 for his appearance when called. Since this time he has resided in New Jersey. Now, the report comes to us, with how much truth we do not know, that Parker has written to friends in Columbia expressing his willingness to return and tell all that he knows, provided he can get immunity. It is further asserted that he says that the testimony of Captain Ladd, given in the trial of Parker, is true. It will be remembered that the amount missing from the treasury was about \$450,000, and Captain Ladd testified that Parker received \$150,000, Chamberlain \$50,000, and other various sums, making the amount of deficit. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the testimony, and, of course, this verdict leaves a cloud resting upon the fair fame of our Puritan Governor. That Parker is in New Jersey, is asserted and, we believe, admitted. He offers to return and make a clean breast of it, if immunity be granted. If Chamberlain is slandered, why does he not grant the immunity—let Parker return—give the history of his thieving, and convict the other robbers? But let us take another view of this matter.—Parker is a fugitive from justice—he is in New Jersey. Why does not Governor Chamberlain make a requisition for him and bring him back to Columbia? We leave these questions to be answered by Democrats who are throwing their hats in the air and shouting hosannas to Chamberlain. If Parker is wanted he can be found. But just here is the rub. Would the party in power like to see Parker again in Columbia? Words are leaves; gentlemen—doers are fruits. Don't tell us you would like to see him, but prove it to us by your actions.—Laurensville Herald. A BOY SCARED TO DEATH.—In New York, on Thursday, William S. Parsons, aged 15 years, who was sick, was given by his father a quantity of acornite in mistake for his regular medicine. He told the boy of this and he was so badly frightened that he died immediately. Physicians were called and said that the boy died from heart disease, the result of fright. In Jones County, Ga., some days since Charles F. Bird killed his brother Pleas G. Bird. The killing seems to have been done in self defense. The evidence before the coroner's jury shows that they were both drunk and that Pleas was rushing on Charles with a piece of light wood, and Charles defended himself with a knife. A New York letter says: Southern vegetables and fruits are beginning to crowd the city markets. Green peas from Florida are selling at \$4.50 to \$5 per crate, and cucumbers at from \$5 to \$6 per dozen; lettuce 50 to 75 cents per dozen; strawberries \$4 to \$5 per quart. Bermuda potatoes are also beginning to make their appearance. The case of Hoge, the Congressman, goes to the committee without any defense, and as a consequence Hoge will be ruled out. The New Hampshire Republicans think the Belknap bombshell comes at a most unfortunate time. Reverdy Johnson was insured for \$100,000; Charles O'Connor is worth a million. When we read of Bowen, Beecher, Babcock and Belknap, we well may inquire, "Can such things be?"