

# The Nation.

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## The Week.

THE New York *Times* has taken the trouble to make enquiries through 170 correspondents, in every State in the Union, at 1,000 localities, of well-informed persons of various classes and conditions, as to the candidates most in favor for the next Presidency in the Republican and Democratic parties respectively. The enquiries at 130 "points" out of 157 show Grant to be the Republican favorite; at 98 "points" out of 157 Tilden is the Democratic favorite. The other competitors may be said, in racing parlance, to be "nowhere." This mode of ascertaining election prospects is, of course, simply an amplification of the process called "straws," which appears in the newspapers during the campaign, and in which anonymous letter-writers communicate the result of a vote taken on the railroad train, or on the ferryboat, or among the workmen in a sugar-refinery. Its value depends almost altogether on the character and capacity of the 170 correspondents and of the persons whom they sound. As long as their names are concealed their letters are simply a huge "straw." Nevertheless, as we have said elsewhere, the result will be found to tally with the experience of most people as to their own circle of acquaintance in this part of the country.

The *Times* confesses that Grant is by no means its own choice, and, indeed, deplores the prospect for obvious reasons, while accepting it with resignation. It does not point out, as it ought to have done, that old Dr. Dwight's saying with regard to the Democrats, "that while he did not maintain, by any means, that every Democrat was a horse-thief, he did maintain that every horse-thief was a Democrat," may, by a slight paraphrase, be applied very aptly to the supporters of the Grant movement. That is, while it is true that there is a large body of respectable Republicans amongst them, it is also true that there is no Republican whiskey-thief or corruptionist of any description, defrauder of the revenue, bribe-taker or bribe-giver, worthless or lazy custom-house or other officer, rascally blackmail editor, knavish contractor or ring-master; no jobber in offices or perquisites; no drunken loafer or gambler; no enemy of improvement in any branch of the government, who is not a hearty and vociferous "Grant man," and who is not now rubbing his hands over the chance of seeing "the old man" back in the White House. This is an undeniable fact, proofs of which could be readily collected at 200 "points" and by 200 correspondents at least, and it is worth pondering.

We hope the *Times* will now institute a similar enquiry as to the popular preferences for the second place on the ticket in each party. We have little doubt that if conducted by the same machinery it will show that at a great majority of the "points" Pelton and Babcock are the favorites for the Vice-Presidency. They are certainly the legitimate candidates. Each has stood high in the confidence of his chief, is familiar with his inner counsels and views, and with the precise process by which he would save American society, and should, therefore, occupy the position in which he would in case of accident to either of "the old men" succeed to the Presidency.

The debate over the Army Bill is raging in the Senate, Mr. Blaine having been the principal speaker during the week. He made very good use of figures in ridicule of the Democratic fear of oppression by the Army, showing that the whole United States force in the Southern States would furnish only one soldier for every 700 square miles of territory, and only 70 to every 1,000,000 inhabitants. There are none in Virginia, or Kentucky, or Tennessee, or Missouri, or Mississippi, and only 30 in North Carolina, 120 in South

Carolina, 57 in Arkansas, 32 in Alabama, and 239 in Louisiana. Of course these are not sufficient reasons for allowing a law to remain on the statute book permitting military interference at elections, but they are a complete answer to the claim of urgency for the measure now before the Senate; they show that it was very foolish to have made an extra session necessary to pass it, and to have tacked it to the appropriation bill now. The case of Mr. Bell was decided on Thursday, agreeably to common sense and the Constitution; a result, of course, not brought about except by Democratic votes. Mr. Bell was admitted to a seat by 35 yeas to 28 nays, among the latter being Senators Conkling and Carpenter. On Monday, the Vice-President being called from Washington, Mr. Thurman was chosen President *pro tem*.

The House proceedings have not been lacking in variety. On Wednesday week the entire session was consumed in considering the report of the Committee on Rules. No objection was made to the revival of certain select committees, on the census, the yellow fever, the civil service, on the "state of the law respecting ascertainment and declaration of result of election of President and Vice-President," etc.; nor to increasing the membership of the most important standing committees, as the Committee on Coinage, Weights, and Measures (to eleven), Ways and Means (to thirteen), Agriculture, Judiciary, Elections, Commerce, and Appropriations (to fifteen each). But an additional rule, requiring a three-fourths vote in order to suspend the rules and pass a general appropriation bill, was attacked with great vigor from both sides of the House. The tenor of the debate which arose showed clearly that the scandalous method of passing the River and Harbor Appropriation Bill was the evil aimed at by the new rule, and defended not only by Mr. Reagan, of Texas, but by Mr. Conger, who represents the Detroit River. The opposition prevailed, and, turning the tables, secured for the Committee on Commerce the same privilege to report river and harbor improvement bills that is accorded the Committee on Appropriations in reporting general appropriation bills. Next, the Committees on Ways and Means, Banking and Currency, and Coinage, Weights, and Measures, were given leave to report at any time, and a majority authorized to fix a day for the consideration of any bill thus reported, and to continue the consideration from day to day until disposed of. These rules make log-rolling easy, and invite the wildest financial legislation. They are all the more mischievous because Speaker Randall has not counteracted them by the composition of his committees. Of one-half of these (26 out of 52) the chairmanships are assigned to Southerners, including those on Banking and Currency and on Coinage, which as now constituted are in the best possible shape for promoting inflation and the fulfilment of the silver curse. Mr. Hewitt's Labor Committee has been humorously handed over to Hendrick B. Wright, the Pennsylvania Communist. The Railroad Committee is doubtfully adverse to the Texas and Pacific Railroad subsidy. The Ways and Means Committee is likely to avoid extreme views on the tariff question. General Bragg has been very properly placed at the head of the Committee on War Claims. The Appropriations Committee has been judiciously selected, and considerably strengthened intellectually as well as numerically.

On Monday the Republicans successfully filibustered away the morning hour, over a point of order neither raised in good faith nor capable of being sustained, and so prevented the introduction of sundry bills by the Greenback party and Mr. Stephens's select company of silver maniacs. All these measures, however, found a side entrance under the guise of petitions, and were *ipso facto* referred to their appropriate committees; but a declarative vote taken on the same day against meddling with the tariff or the currency at

the present session showed that their chances of being passed, if reported, are very slight. The main business with the House has been the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Appropriation Bill. On Thursday the inflationists incautiously furnished the President with a new and substantial excuse for vetoing it, by inserting a provision that \$10,000,000 to meet the arrears of pensions should be taken from the greenback reserve, held for the redemption of the fractional currency. On Tuesday, General Bragg sought to insert a clause repealing the law creating the Southern Claims Commission; but while this touches too many interests and feelings, North and South, to be likely to succeed, it promises, as we go to press, to ensure the adoption of the plan proposed at the last session by Mr. Potter, in accordance with which all pending and future claims must first be passed upon by the Court of Claims, and can only come before Congress for action with the endorsement of that tribunal.

The negro movement towards Kansas has somewhat fallen out of sight during the week, but it appears to be uninterrupted. Its political significance is now little insisted on. An apparently well-informed writer in the *Herald* of Monday, a Southern clergyman, recalls the very considerable migration to Texas from Tennessee and Kentucky begun as early as 1870, and still stimulated by land agents, whose plan is to send off only small bodies from each locality, in order to avoid alarming the whites. Kansas began to be attractive, within this writer's experience, even in 1875. He considers the prime cause of the unrest of the blacks to be the huge disappointment in their ideal of "freedom." They expected it to do more for them, to make a greater change in their mode of life, and to furnish them with an independent outfit in the shape of land and mules. Hence the notion readily sprang up that freedom could be realized only in a Free State. But more important than such considerations is the undoubted fact that the landlord and the storekeeper have, from the want of capital on the negro's part, ruined him with liens upon his crops and his land and implements, advancing him money at extortionate rates, and charging him enormously for all goods obtained on credit. In fact, in some parts of the South, though by no means in all, his condition closely approaches that of the unfortunate ryots of British India, the amelioration of whose condition is one of the most difficult as well as urgent problems in the government of that country; they are virtually the slaves of the usurers, and seem incapable by their own unaided efforts of throwing off the crushing weight of debt which rests upon them and their posterity. At the South, the dependence on the storekeeper affords a simple means of exerting political control which is not neglected.

Dr. Cooke, the President of the Claflin (colored) University in South Carolina, who was accused by the *Tribune* of having voted for Hampton in 1878 because he had been assaulted in a railroad train in 1876, but wickedly denied it, has been writing a letter to a convention of Northern residents at the South recently held in Charlotte, N. C. The wretched man, who is originally from Massachusetts, reports "that in no State at the North do the colored people enjoy superior rights to those enjoyed by them at present" in South Carolina. He, moreover, has the audacity to assert, after eight years' residence in the West, "that the South presents greater inducements to settlers of small capital than any portion of the country with which he is acquainted." This malicious assertion was doubtless suggested to him by the story of the *Tribune* correspondent who exposed him last winter, that he (the correspondent) had ridden eight miles from the town of Kingstree along a road lined with negro farms. Cooke's persistence in his stories of Southern peaceableness is a shocking spectacle, but is doubtless the result of recent corporal chastisement, and is a "Tilden move." The Convention received letters from a large number of Northern settlers in various parts of the South, many of them old Union soldiers, testifying in the most brazen manner to the peace and prosperity they enjoyed, and trying to show that there ought not to be any ill-feel-

ing between North and South, well knowing that ill-feeling is at this juncture of the highest political importance.

We are informed that the first news of the death of Judge Robinson, of the Court of Common Pleas, reached Governor Robinson in the shape of thirteen applications for the vacant place from members of the bar in this city. Since then the number has risen to over fifty, and is steadily rising. This is very gratifying in one way, as it shows the existence among us of a greater amount of judicial talent than most people suspected. On the other hand, it raises the question whether we have enough judges "to meet the wants of trade," as the inflationists say. Upon the principle held by so many financiers in this country at present, that we cannot have too much of a good thing, it would seem as if our supply of judges was deplorably short. We get our justice from our judges, and the more judges we have, therefore, the more abundant will our supply of justice be. Therefore, we say that the bench ought to be elongated until every member of the bar who wants to be a judge has a place on it. The increase might be "based," as in Mr. W. D. Kelley's plan, on the issue of 3.65 bonds; that is, whenever a judge got tired of the bench or thought himself superfluous he might draw bonds enough from the State treasury to keep him comfortably until his services were again wanted, and then pass in his bonds and begin adjudicating again. Whether this be a good plan or not, it is certain that the bar will not submit much longer to the present miserable smallness of the bench, and any politician who tries to stem the tide of their discontent will find he has made an enormous mistake.

By the death of General Richard Taylor this week in this city one of the most striking and characteristic relics of the "antebellum" period at the South has passed away. He was in more ways than one the typical representative of an extinct society, and for this reason alone was an interesting person. But he was besides this a man of many gifts and graces. He started in life with peculiar advantages, and had a wide experience of the world while still young. He was in his early days a great sugar-planter, when sugar-planters were a baronial class; was an excellent politician in the time when politics were managed by a few wealthy men; showed himself a good brigadier under Jackson in Virginia, and was probably a good strategist, though his afterwards defeating Banks in Louisiana did not prove it. He came out of the war ruined, but never lost his cheerfulness and vivacity, and remained to the last a gay, brilliant, but thoroughly "unrepentant rebel," with a hatred of the new régime and a belief in gentlemanly government which carried one so far back as to have the air of a joke, which he himself enjoyed. He won the esteem of a good many men to whom his politics were simply a curiosity, and was followed to the grave by the regrets of a great variety of mourners. The appearance of the present and late Secretary of State, Mr. Evarts and Mr. Fish, among his pall-bearers, in a Northern city, was a curious illustration of the distance which separates us from the war, and of the hollowness of all attempts to revive its passions.

The Massachusetts Legislature has by majorities of two to one in both houses passed a bill securing what is called "school suffrage" for women. That is to say, every woman who is a citizen of the Commonwealth, twenty-one years of age, and possessed of the other qualifications of male voters, may participate in the election of school-committees. The same privilege has lately been accorded in New Hampshire, and still earlier in Kansas. The admission of women to the Boston school-committees had paved the way for the larger liberty in Massachusetts; but both the one and the other are a natural outgrowth of the enormous part allotted in our educational system to female teachers, as in no other country in the world. In the public schools of the United States, according to the last census, they outnumbered the male teachers by nearly fifty per cent.; but when abstraction is made of the South, where in only four instances (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Louisiana) the male teachers

are exceeded by the female, and generally exceed them from twenty-five to three hundred per cent., the proportion is vastly more favorable to the latter. Thus, in 1870 there were 2,600 female teachers in New Hampshire to 510 male; while in Massachusetts there were 5,387 female to 753 male. Nothing was more natural than that women should be thought qualified to examine and inspect as well as to teach, or that they should desire to have a share in the choice and in the work of committees; and the only wonder is that they were not enabled to do so long ago. The recent extension of the higher education to women, particularly in Massachusetts, is the best assurance that the new privilege will be usefully employed.

The Massachusetts House, on the same day, rejected without a count a bill granting women the right to vote and be voted for in municipal affairs. The *Woman's Journal* might console itself with the reflection that women are eligible to clerkships in our State and National administrations, and that whatever promotes the business view of the civil service, as opposed to the political view, will improve the chances of woman's entering it, though, to take a single instance, perhaps there are more postmistresses now by appointment than there would be, in the beginning, as the result of popular election. More comfort is to be found in the rational belief that "school suffrage" is an entering-wedge for "manhood suffrage." The analogy both of right and of expediency goes so far that, with the unthinking at least, it may be expected to prevail in the long run. When once the sight of women being registered and voting, no matter for what public purpose, becomes familiar, a great obstacle will have been removed from the common mind.

Of the \$40,000,000 of U. S. 4 per cent. bonds which the Bank of Commerce subscribed for last week, to furnish all the money needed to redeem the entire outstanding remainder of 5.20 6 per cent. bonds, the sum of \$10,000,000 was relinquished to the London syndicate, and what threatened to be a serious dispute was thereby avoided. The Secretary of the Treasury has not yet named a price at which he will sell any more of the 4 per cents, but it is expected that he will soon do so; and it is known that the terms of sale will be less favorable than they have been. In anticipation of the sales of the new \$10 certificates of deposit, which are payable only through conversion into the 4 per cent. bonds, the Treasury early in the week called in for redemption ninety days hence \$10,000,000 of 10.40 5 per cents. This is the first step in refunding 5 per cent. with 4 per cent. bonds, and is taken because the option to redeem any of the remaining 6 per cents does not mature until the year 1881. In the financial markets there was a further reduction of the discount rate in London to 2 per cent. by the Bank of England, and to 1½ per cent. in the London open market. British consols there advanced to 98¼—the highest price for more than twenty years. Here the money market became easier, and it was demonstrated that the large bond settlements at the Treasury can be made without disturbing it. The New York banks raised their reserve about \$4,000,000 last week, and the closing rates for money were 5 to 6 per cent. Silver in London again fell from 50*d.* per oz. to 49½*d.* per oz.; and the bullion value of the 412½-grain dollar here fell to \$0.8353—a circumstance which is important in view of the strenuous efforts in Congress so to increase the coinage of 412½-grain dollars as to force their circulation in the market at their bullion value.

Another peculiarly bold attempt on the Czar's life, following close on the attempt to shoot the Chief of the Gendarmerie in the open street in broad daylight, shows that the war between the Nihilists and the official class is becoming more and more desperate. What is singular about it is that the poorer classes, who fill the ranks of the army of discontent in other countries, take no part in it. It is a conflict between the educated or half-educated nobles and traders and the bureaucracy, in which quarter is neither asked nor given. The root of it seems to be in the fact that the Nihilists

have received too much intellectual training for their political surroundings, and not enough moral and social training to enable them to seek redress and expansion by peaceable means. Their ideas, in other words, are those of advanced communities, their weapons those of the infuriated Muzhik or Tartar. At a great dinner given to Turgeneff in St. Petersburg the other day, at which he was received with unbounded enthusiasm, he warned the Government in thinly-veiled terms that the only remedy for the crisis was the establishment at any cost of free political institutions; in other words, the educated classes must get a share in the Government.

The scheme of joint occupation in Eastern Rumelia seems to have been abandoned at the last moment, partly owing to the difficulty of arranging the details, and partly to the reluctance of the Porte to submit formally one of its provinces to this sort of tutelage. It doubtless feared that the plan might be tried by-and-by in other parts of the empire. So the last news is that it has proposed to Russia that the present status should be prolonged for another year—that is, that the Russian occupation should continue—in the belief that by the end of that time the Rumelians will be more reasonable and willing to welcome back the Turks. All observers on the spot, however, seem to be of opinion that the Turks will never have as good a chance of occupying their Balkan frontier as they have now, and that the Rumelian hostility to them will grow with time, and that the means of resisting them will grow with it, and that a year's postponement will make the Beaconsfield part of the Treaty of Berlin impossible of execution. In fact, it is more and more doubtful if Lord Beaconsfield would any longer defend his plan. The idea that the occupation of the Balkan Passes would add to Turkish strength, when the troops would have a savagely hostile population in their rear, is fast becoming ridiculous.

The Khedive's last performance, by which he has rid himself of Mr. Rivers Wilson and M. de Blignières, as well as Nubar Pasha, whom he detests, is greatly puzzling the French and English Governments. They do not well know how to deal with him, and each is afraid to let the other act alone, which is doubtless exactly what he anticipated. They do not like to use force against him, for of course he would be overthrown at once, and then what would they set up in his place? France proposes the Sultan should be got to punish him by dethroning him—for he is the Sultan's vassal—and the Sultan is said to have expressed willingness to deal with him in this way, and has called on him to show cause. But England is evidently doubtful about resorting to this expedient, and the London *Times* is calling loudly for patience and deliberation. The Beaconsfield Ministry probably dread adding another foreign complication to their already formidable list. In the meantime the unfortunate fellaheen are dying of famine, and the taxes are being collected in the old way with the whip.

The budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, submitted to the House of Commons a fortnight ago, and the details of which have just come out, show that his last year's estimate of receipts has been justified within \$500,000, but this has been more than due to the hurried passage through the custom-house of a large quantity of tea in anticipation of a rise in the duties, so that he has to a certain extent anticipated next year's revenue. With this exception, however, his estimates have proved fairly correct. But there has been a serious falling off in the excise and stamp duties, showing the decline in trade, which, however, has been more than made up by an increase in the returns from the land-tax and house-duty, and the income-tax and the post-office. He proposes to put off paying the expenses of the preparations to fight Russia, and the expenses of the Zulu war until next year—that is, probably, until after the next general election—and the expenses of the Afghan war he apparently means to impose on "the mild Hindoo."

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