

THE OMAHA BEE.

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THE PIVOTAL STATE.

Under the new congressional apportionment the states will have four hundred and one electoral votes, of which two hundred and one will constitute a majority. The nineteen states which four years ago gave their votes to Hancock numbered 135 electoral votes, and by the new apportionment these states have an addition of 17 votes—making their total electoral vote 172. Add to this the thirty-six votes of New York state, and it would make democratic vote of 208, being a majority of seven. New York is therefore the one state which the democrats will do their level best to carry. In no previous contest has the possession of that state been of such vital importance to the democrats. At no other election in twenty-five years have they had the certainty of enough votes elsewhere to elect their candidate even if they did carry New York.

The problem which the republican party has to meet is to nominate a ticket which will carry New York. The results of the election of delegates to the coming state convention will be looked for with intense interest.

THERE is no issue in congress between free trade democracy and republican protection. The Morrison bill is not free trade, and opposition to it is not the support of protection. The bill is, in effect, a moderate attempt to deal with the pressing business needs of the country. By treating it fairly and intelligently the republicans can serve the country without harm to themselves, and with no decided advantage to their opponents. By blind adherence to the tariff as it is, they will do themselves injury and may greatly help the democrats.

THE first state election, this year, will be that of Oregon, which takes place on June 21, just before the republican national convention meets in Chicago. The election is an important one. It comprises a governor and full set of state officers, a supreme judge, a congressman to succeed M. C. George; also a legislature, which will elect a successor to Senator Slatter. The chances are in favor of republican success, owing to a large immigration from republican states of the northwest, which has gone into Oregon over the Northern Pacific railroad. On this account, Oregon may be safely counted upon by the republican column makers.

THE secretary of war has sent to the senate the compilation of the militia returns from the various states. The returns show that there are of organized militia 81,268 non-commissioned officers and men and 6,802 commissioned officers, and that the unorganized militia is 6,412,921 men. New York has the largest organized force, 10,779 men, and 788 commissioned officers; Pennsylvania is second, with 7,454 men and 552 officers; Florida third, with 6,261 men and 455 officers; Ohio fourth, with 5,515 men and 300 officers; and South Carolina fifth, with 4,612 men and 507 officers. Delaware, Nebraska, Nevada and Vermont report the smallest organized militia, the first named having 234 men and 21 officers; Nebraska, 450 men and 42 officers; Nevada, 615 men and 76 officers, and Vermont, 624 men and 65 officers.

ASKED by a representative of the New York Times in regard to Arthur's prospects for the nomination, a prominent Ohio politician says: In my judgment the more the people have to say about the decision of the convention the stronger Arthur will be. You saw what Charles Foster said the other day. Arthur, he thought, could not carry Ohio, but you saw how quickly the Ohio republicans in congress contradicted him, and they spoke for their constituents, the voters. Arthur may come up too strong before the convention for the managers there to resist the popular impulse for his nomination. But, on the other hand, he may refuse to let his name be used at all at Chicago. So far as New York and New England are concerned, in the last case I believe they would go almost solely for Edmunds, for I believe the Arthur men, if they are not to support him, will stand for Edmunds, and at least half of the half-breeds in New York will go for him from the first.

THE Chicago Tribune's special from Cincinnati, on Thursday morning, reports an old steamboat captain as saying that it takes as much water as there is in the Ohio at its usual stage to raise it one inch after it passes sixty-five feet. The fact that from fifteen to twenty-four inches have been added daily since the rise exceeded sixty-five feet is the indication of the tremendous amount of rainfall. Says the Tribune's report: The city has a river front of nine miles, and extends five miles back along both banks of Mill creek. There is, therefore, a flooded district nineteen miles in length. Front street, for instance, is lined with warehouses and factories, and along this distance the water is from twelve to sixteen feet deep. On Second street it averages ten feet deep, and on Pearl street there is a depth of from two to four feet. In the West End the water is running along the greater part of Freeman avenue at a depth of from one to four feet, and all the streets west of Freeman avenue are flooded to depths varying from four to ten feet. The streets here mentioned are all closely built up with business houses, warehouses, factories and residences. The district west of Baymiller street and south of Eighth street, which is filled with railroad tracks, distilleries, lumber yards, etc., is flooded to a depth of from eighteen to twenty-five feet.

THE Chicago Tribune publishes a letter from Lawyer Sweet, of Chicago, giving Lincoln's views of the Porter case twenty years ago. The motive of Sweet's letter seems to be to interpose Mr. Lincoln's opinion at that time, when he shared in a common error, against the judgment of such men as Grant, Terry,

Seofield, Slocum and Rosecrans. This statement by Lawyer Sweet is no new one. The St. Paul Press says it is today a matter of universal knowledge that the whole point and force of the Porter case lies in the weight of evidence, which was not only unknown when Lincoln's opinion was formed, but which is contradictory in every particular to that on which he based a hasty and confessedly imperfect judgment. Says the Press: Of all the twaddle talked in the Fitz John Porter case, the Lincoln twaddle is the silliest and the meanest. It is silly because it declares that the personal opinion of a man, formed on imperfect information, is more certain than the most incontrovertible proof adduced after his death. It is mean because it is an appeal to prejudice and passion by those who have been worsted at every point in the examination of the facts of history. Among all the uncertainties of the case there is nothing more certain than that the great-hearted and just-minded president, whose memory is outraged by the partisan appeals sheltered under his name, could he live again and know what none of the men who sentenced Porter knew, but what every man who is not too lazy or too wickedly prejudiced to know today, would be found on the side of Terry and Schofield and Grant and hundreds of others, demanding that the wrong so cruelly done to an innocent man should receive what slight reparation it may.

OTHER LANDS THAN OURS. Egyptian affairs still engross the attention of the English parliament. The fall of Sinkat—in which Tewfik Bey and his six hundred men were all massacred by the rebels—has painfully impressed the English cabinet with the necessity of immediately sending heavy reinforcements to the front. The vacillating policy of the government is being severely criticised, particularly by the marquis of Salisbury, who said in his speech in the house of lords that England has been defeated again and again, and was now being hunted out of Egypt. England's name, said he, would be a legacy of hatred and contempt to Egyptians. The news of the fresh disasters would now run through the whole Mohammedan world.

Granville, foreign secretary, in reply to Salisbury, protested against the idea that because the foreign army had selected English officers, England is thereby made responsible for that army's success. England and India had no interest in Soufan, nor, indeed, had Egypt any permanent interest in that country. The government, said Granville, had no intention of annexing Egypt. It would remain there simply long enough to secure a stable government. The only thing that could be done would be to appoint a first rate man to represent England and Egypt, and then commend English men to civil and military positions, and give them English support. The force of circumstances had obliged the government to go further than it had proposed, but the cabinet ought to restrict England's connection with Egypt to the objects declared by the government.

The Marquis of Salisbury's motion censuring the Egyptian policy of the government was debated at considerable length, and was carried by a vote of 181 to 81, and the same motion was made in the house of commons by Northcote. Gladstone, of course, defended his Egyptian policy, and maintained that there had been no vacillation or inconsistency. General Gordon, he said, had a plan of his own for extricating the garrisons and restoring the country to its former pacific condition. Gladstone said General Gordon's plan would restore the former rulers to their ancestral power, usurped by Egypt. He denounced as a gross error the dual control which had been left him as a legacy. England had not withdrawn from the hands of the Egyptian government the control of its institutions. He had simply made Egypt understand that British military occupation of Egypt entailed the necessity of seeing that British advice was followed. Gladstone strongly opposed the reconquest of Soufan. In conclusion he said the house should accord the government the acquittal to which it was entitled.

Mr. Gladstone's ministry is certainly better and stronger than any that its opponents could compose. A respectable nullity like Sir Stafford Northcote and a political gerrilla like Lord Randolph Churchill, even a cultivated cynic like Lord Salisbury, would be very far from meeting the requirements of the situation. Upon the Irish question the conservatives are bound by all their acts, while in opposition, to undertake a policy of more rigid coercion. Whatever an Englishman may be moved to say in the heat of his indignation, it is not to be taken as a reasonable Englishman can doubt that the conciliatory policy pursued by Mr. Gladstone is better for both countries than any policy the conservatives would or could pursue. The Irish question constitutes the real and continuing problem of British politics, and the Egyptian protectorate is merely an episode. The hatred of 600 years cannot be allayed in a day or a year by a policy of conciliation, but it can be embittered and reinforced by a lapse, even for a very short period, into a policy of repression unmitigated by conciliation. It would be fortunate for England and for Ireland if the Gladstone ministry should be put out of power on what is really the same issue of the Egyptian question, although that question has by accident and for the moment been brought to the front.

Bradlaugh has applied for the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds. This is a rather roundabout way of saying that he wants to resign the seat which parliament will not let him occupy. There is no way in which a member of parliament can voluntarily leave that body save by suicide, during the term for which he is elected. All he can do is to ask for the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds, and when that mythical office is given him he is absolved from all further attendance upon the duties of legislation. Chiltern Hills are a broken district in Buckinghamshire, to which is attached a nominal office of steward under the crown. As members of parliament could not originally resign their seats when they wished to leave,

they accepted the nominal office of steward of this district, and thus vacated their seats. It thus grew into established custom, like many other fictions of English law. Mr. Bradlaugh, as well he should, is a very obstinate man, who started out as a great reformer some years ago, and there is very little reason to suppose that he will ever get over his original folly. The oath required of members was always stuck in his throat, and for that reason he has never been permitted to take his seat in the house of commons. He is to be about as pig-headed as himself, for they have persisted time after time in returning him to renew his hopeless struggle with the majority. Mr. Labouchere, in speaking in behalf of Bradlaugh, expressed his contempt for any form of oath, which, he declared, was a superstitious incantation and sanctimonious sophistry. This hypocrisy, he said, was being exposed, and it was his opinion that Mr. Bradlaugh would ultimately win.

The story of the fall of Sinkat has been told in detail in our dispatches. Tewfik Bey and his garrison of six hundred men, who had been besieged for a month and were in a starving condition, made a desperate effort to cut their way through the ranks of El Mahdi's troops. The effort was a forlorn hope. The gallant Tewfik and his followers met a heroic death. Although fighting with the greatest desperation and bravery they were mowed down like grass, and not one of the brave six hundred escaped. Encouraged by this victory the rebels at once turned their attention to Suakin, and reinforcements are being dispatched as rapidly as possible to the relief of Suakin, which is said to be a stronghold which can be easily commanded by a few gunboats. There is a universal feeling of humiliation and shame that Tewfik and his followers were massacred almost in sight of British ships.

General Gordon has arrived safely at Berber, and has begun the work of straightening out Egyptian affairs. Whether he will be successful, now that the rebels have won so many victories and are in a state of jubilant defiance, is a question which time alone can answer. But very little news has been received from Tonquin during the week. Admiral Courbet was making preparations to attack Bac Ninh, when he was superseded by General Millat, and of this action he pretends as yet to know nothing. The reinforcements which he asked for reached him too late, and even now he says the force is too small. Tseng, the Chinese ambassador, has received instructions to remain in England until further orders. The report, therefore, that he is going to Paris to negotiate a peace is premature. About three hundred Christians and missionaries have been massacred by the Chinese in Tonquin, and their mission houses have been destroyed. It is reported that the court of Hue punished mandarins who permitted the massacre.

THE Egyptian soldier acquired his phenomenal non fighting qualities is well told by Mr. Mackenzie Wallace in his recent volume on Egypt and the Egyptian question. The method of recruiting for the army is that village sheikhs give the names of a certain number of men to the local police, who go to the hovels of the luckless fellows and drive them into the street, put iron collars or yokes around their necks, fasten the several collars together by a chain, and drive them, as cattle are driven in other countries, to the prison, to be examined by the medical officers. The great majority of the recruits endeavor to prove by wordy arguments, solemn asseverations, expressive gestures, and revolting contortions that they are totally unfit for military service; and when arguments fail, importunate entreaties, and pleading appeals, or indignant protest are employed. In vain the police, with the aid of their sticks and switches, endeavor to keep order and impose silence; the more obstinate persistently break from the ranks and have to be kept in their places by force, which is not always successful. It is a painful defect, and who has not succeeded in privately conciliating the medical officer or the military authorities, are marched off. Once in the army the recruit is given up for dead by all friends. His term of service is fixed by the will of the government, and if he survives the hard treatment of his officers and the casualties of war until old age, he is turned out almost penniless, to be a burden upon relatives who have forgotten him, and who have scarcely enough for their own support. It is no wonder, with such prospects before them, that many are able to construct a future for themselves by cutting off the right eye, finger and putting out the right eye. This practice was so common in the time of Mehemet Ali that that enlightened prince formed battalions of one-eyed men and sent them to battle with Turkish bashibazouks and artillery behind them, with orders to shoot down every man who attempted to run away.

Khartoum's chief importance consists in the fact that it is the first post beyond Arabah's which is next to the fertile southern end of the Nile, and northwards, towards Egypt, the desert lands are almost worthless; south of that point they may be made to yield an abundant trade. The evacuation of Khartoum would, therefore, mean the abandonment of the attempt to enter equatorial Africa from Egypt. The fact will be left to Stanley, on the Congo, whom General Gordon is soon to join.

The insurrection which is said to have broken out in Crete is the violent expression of a grievance which has for some time seemed inevitable, and which is not unlikely yet to become grievously felt throughout Turkey. The trouble is the religious one which has already resulted in Turkey in the resignation of the patriarch of the Greek church. This body has since the days of Constant II in the 15th century, settled by its own laws a matter regarding wills, bequests, marriages and the like. The ports has, however, within a year withdrawn this venerable privilege, and now insists that the Greek communities must in every way be subjected to the general laws of the empire. That is, Turkey insists that the Greek church shall even in its internal affairs have affairs adjusted by Musulman religious law—since that is the only law Turkey has. This curtailment of religious liberty has aroused throughout the Turkish empire a storm of indignation but thus far unavailing protest. Crete has, moreover, a special and pressing grievance. Nearly half of the real estate of that classic island is either owned or at least taxed by the mosques. The treaty of 1878, which practically gave self-government to Crete, aimed also to lighten this burden of taxation; but things have apparently been little bettered, and it is declared that in some fertile districts nearly the whole land is

levied upon to support the mosques. But whatever the immediate cause of the outbreak, its origin lies back of present maladministration in the national spirit which has been steadily gaining power in Crete since its memorable insurrection of 1830-8. That insurrection, too, began in a demand for the freer exercise of Christian liberty; it ended in giving further privileges to Crete, and it had a still greater effect in that it brought to the brave Cretans the knowledge of the sympathy of the great powers of Europe. The love of liberty and the ability to enjoy it wisely have steadily grown in Crete in the last fifteen years, and if any considerable expression is given to the feeling, decaying Turkey will find it difficult to suppress it now, perplexed and almost helpless as she is before the grave prospect which the state of Egypt presents to her.

WHAT THE LAND GRANT RAILROADS MEAN. Chicago Tribune.

The land grant railroads are showing their usual stolid contempt for the public by their opposition before the committee on Pacific railways to the bill requiring them to pay taxes on their lands. That they have the least obligation to contribute towards the maintenance of the community that protects their property, as other citizens do, is an idea that has apparently not yet entered the average subsidized corporation manager's head. To grow rich by the appreciation of the value of gift land by the pioneer development of the country despite their extortionate charges, so that, after having charged twice as much as they should have done for transportation, they may charge two prices for all the gift land they hold, and to secure all this without contributing a cent towards the support of the institutions by which they exist, is evidently the sole thought of these subsidized corporations. They hold, according to Senator Van Wyck, 100 million acres of donated land on which they are evading the payment of state and territorial taxes. They are beginning to lease large tracts of this for grazing purposes. The next step will be that they will possess vast untaxed estates, which they will hold to be ranked in the most approved Irish landlord fashion. If they succeed we shall have all the horrors of British landlordism reproduced in this country, with this all-important difference against us; that our landlords will be subsidized corporations whose entail is absolutely perpetual. That is the state of things towards which our land grant roads are dragging us, the perpetual ownership of vast landed estates by landlord corporations paying no taxes.

The supreme court has twisted the law against the people to prevent the local taxation of these corporations, and a congress of faithless demagogues have not untwisted it but lets the unjust laws remain untouched.

VAN WYCK IN THE SENATE. (Lincoln Democrat)—Old Van's resolutions always pass. The railroad capers in the senate at the start endeavored to bulldoze him, but he sat down on them so heavily that they have disappeared from public gaze. It will not be out of place for us to say, democrat though we are, that the resolutions of Senator Van Wyck always mean business, and that the people regardless of party affiliations are the gainers thereby.

Why He Was Bounced. He kicked him and clubbed him and showed him the door, and told him to enter his sanctum no more; and what was the cause of the whole blessed thing? Give us a hint, I suppose? 'Twas a poem on IMPITIES.

Barrett's great white elephant hymn for next season will be: "Just as Stan without one flea." Mr. Talmage has been lecturing on "Charity in street cars." Talmage is always discovering something which nobody else ever sees.

A New York pastor preached the other Sunday on "The Shameless Age." It was probably a hit at some of the 60-year-old bald datums. A little 6-year-old witness at court proved her right to be sworn by saying that she went "regularly to a church and Sunday-school and once to church fair."

A western woman prayed for money, and found it. As though this was a miracle! We know of several eastern men who have prayed for money and found it. A widow Van Cett says she saved thirty thousand souls during her ministerial life. From this it appears that the Lord retired from business some time ago.

An exchange says a little four year old listened attentively to a Scandinavian preacher last Sunday, and then whispered, "Mamma, if I don't understand sat, He's a dood one." A priest visited a coachman who was seriously ill. "Have you the habit of going to the church?" "I cannot say that I have," said the coachman in a feeble voice; "but I have given a great many persons there!" "Are you certain of curing the dead?" asked the minister of the dying man. And when the man said that "he did not want to die," the minister and the doctor flew out, as a natural consequence, the man got better.

There are no oaths in the Chinese language. When a Chinaman has his leg knocked from under him by a box or a chair, he probably hurries home and claims the door with thundering emphasis. There must be some way to give vent to his feelings. An effort is being made in New York to have church bells silenced. A man who attended a dog fight or slugfest match on Saturday night, and doesn't get into bed until 2 o'clock Sunday morning, naturally dislikes to have his slumbers disturbed by the clanging of a church bell a few hours later. A party of Baptist clergymen were blaspheming of Martha's Vineyard the other day. A question arose as to whether a certain doctrine was really a blasphemy. "We call 'em Baptists," said a native fisherman. The Baptist Chinaman rather eagerly asked why. "Gee they spile so soon after they're taken out of the water." An old-time clergyman of Eastern Connecticut was very quick at repartee. Once when on an exchange he was annoyed to find the room so dark, and beckoning to a person near the door to open the blinds, he said, "I'll let you see the light from you," said the gentleman, "I must get it from Heaven first" was the quick rejoinder. "So, my little man, you would like to join our Sunday school, would you?" said the superintendent, kindly. "Yes, sir," replied the little boy. "What is your name, did you say?" "Johnny Simpson," "Oh, yes, you are the son of Mr. Simpson. Let me see, is your papa a Presbyterian or an Episcopalian?" "No, sir, he isn't either; he's a newspaper man."

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