

STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

Speech of Governor Parker, of New Jersey, at the Tammany Wigwam, Fourteenth Street, New York, Oct. 27, 1874.

Fellow Citizens—You have met to consider the state of public affairs and to hear political questions discussed with a view of deciding how you should vote at the approaching election. In the remarks I shall submit for your consideration I will not discuss at length the merits or qualifications of the candidates presented for your suffrages, nor will I enlarge upon local issues, but will speak of national topics which interest all the people of all the States. The result of the election in November will go far toward determining the political complexion of the next national administration, and hence its vital importance. Three questions naturally present themselves:

First—What is the present condition of the country?

Second—Who are responsible for that condition?

Third—If the condition be found unsatisfactory, how can prosperity be restored?

Upon the solution of these questions should depend our action and our vote.

To the first question I answer that no nation pretending to civilization is in so sad a condition as ours in many respects. In one-third of the States the masses of the people are reduced to abject poverty. The educated and refined as well as the humble and lowly are suffering for want of the comforts of life. The State governments are so deeply in debt that it seems almost impossible for them to extricate themselves. The public debt incurred at the South since the war has been estimated at nearly \$200,000,000. Much of this is doubtless fraudulent, but most of it seems to have been contracted by the constituted authorities and is a lien on the resources of the people.

This vast debt is not compensated by corresponding benefits, for most of the money has been squandered or stolen. The State and local taxes are so enormous that in some sections the land at the present depressed prices will not bring an amount sufficient to pay the assessment upon it. Even with such sacrifices some of the States cannot raise enough money to pay the interest accruing on the public debt. Men of property, education and culture are, as a general rule, excluded from office and take no part in directing public affairs. The State and local governments are in the hands of the corrupt and ignorant. Strangers, without character or capital, who after the war, settled down on the South like a swarm of locusts seeking what they could devour and cunningly operating on the minds of the credulous blacks, have with the aid of the general government taken possession of that country and hold the white people there in bondage worse in some of its features than the slavery that existed before the war. Not only are the white people there ruined in estate, but through terrorism exercised by those in power, aided by federal troops, they have practically no voice in the government. If in the strength of desperation they attempt with the ballot to throw off the yoke of despotic power the men they elect are not suffered to hold their offices, but usurpers lord it over them with ten-fold more rigor. The result is that in a country of vast resources and fertility there is an impoverished people, not only broken in estate but almost broken in heart and with no hope unless we of the North apply the remedy which I shall presently recommend. The truth is that in no part of the globe is there a government so tyrannical as that at present exercised over some of the States of this boasted land of freedom, and, if I mistake not, this tyranny and misrule will in after years be stigmatized throughout the world as the great political crime of the nineteenth century.

We now turn from this sad picture to look for a moment at the condition of other sections of the country. As a paralyzed limb impairs the general health and vigor, so where we find one portion of the country prostrate we must expect to find the whole body politic affected. Commerce, which has heretofore been our boast, and which in a great degree determines

the prosperity of a nation, is declining. The number of American vessels has within a few years been reduced to less than one-third of the former number, and the tonnage to less than one-half, while the tonnage of Great Britain, that was formerly less than ours, has more than doubled. In the North the goods of the merchant remain in store for want of customers. Manufacturing are closed or running on half time; laborers are out of employment and cannot find work even at starving prices. Taxes have increased and real estate has diminished in value to such an extent that where the owner is in debt and his property is forced into market, one-half the price paid for it a few years since cannot be realized, and the man who thought himself in comfortable circumstances finds that he is a bankrupt and is obliged in his old age, perhaps with a family around him, to commence the world anew. The prostration of the South and the poverty of her people have deprived the north of a vast market for our goods and manufactures. The city of New York and the state of New Jersey are perhaps the greatest sufferers from this cause, but while they suffer all sections feel the effects of the great stagnation of business. Nearly ten years have passed since the war closed, and the condition of the country is daily growing worse. Pestilence has not visited the land, the crops during that time have been abundant, and yet the farmer, merchant, manufacturer, mechanic and laborer, are alike feeling the ruinous grip of what is called hard times.

We now come to the second inquiry, viz:—What has produced this condition of things? Who are responsible for the hard times? In my opinion the chief cause is the radical policy of reconstruction of the Southern States adopted and enforced at the point of the bayonet by the dominant party. At the close of the war two distinct lines of policy were open to the national administration. One founded on amnesty and reconciliation recognized the fact that the acts of secession were null and void, that the States had never been out of the Union, but their relations with the national government had been only temporarily interrupted, and that when loyal citizens in any considerable number desired to renew those relations it could be accomplished under the constitution and laws that existed in the State when the war commenced, on condition that slavery should no longer be lawful, and, further, that they who were legal voters according to the laws of the State at the Presidential election in 1860, with a few exceptions, should enjoy the right of suffrage upon taking the oath of allegiance. This was in substance the plan proposed by Mr. Lincoln in the proclamation appended to his annual message of 1863, and he adhered to it through life. After the death of Mr. Lincoln President Johnson endeavored to carry out the same policy, and before the next session of Congress commenced nearly all the States had elected State officers and members of Congress.

Notwithstanding the people of the South had done all that was asked of them, had abolished slavery and repudiated the rebel debt, notwithstanding General Grant, before he joined the radicals, had reported that he believed those lately in rebellion were sincere in their desire to have their relations to the Union restored, their members of Congress were refused seats, and then was inaugurated by the radical party that fatal policy of hate and vengeance which has been the cause of all our woes. I charge that the radical administration at Washington, regardless of the public welfare, sustained and encouraged the vagabond carpet-baggers in robbing the people of the South of their property and liberties, in consideration that they, in turn, would control the States in the interest of the radical party. The evidence in proof of this is full and cumulative in respect to all the reconstructed States, but time will permit reference only to a few facts in the case of Louisiana. In the fall of 1872 an election for President, Governor, State and county officers was held in Louisiana. The conservatives carried the State by a large majority. As soon as the result was known the radicals determined that the official returns should be disregarded and the defeated candidates installed into

office and in this stupendous outrage they were aided by the national administration. A returning board that had no legal existence, without any official returns before it, upon estimates, newspaper reports and affidavits admitted to have been forged, declared the radical candidates elected. In the meantime the legal returning board, upon a count of the official returns submitted to it by the Governor, declared the conservative candidates elected. But before the time appointed for the meeting of the Legislature and the inauguration of the Governor, a federal judge presiding in the district of Louisiana, on his own motion, without notice, not in court but in his own house at midnight issued an order directing the United States Marshal immediately to take possession of the State House and prevent the assembling therein of the Legislature which had been declared legally elected by proclamation of the then Governor. This order, admitted by all candid men to have been issued without authority of law in a matter over which the federal courts had no jurisdiction, was actually enforced by the national administration at the point of the bayonet. The evidence proves conclusively that the order of Durell was made upon advices from Washington in advance, and that the seizure of the State House and the consequent expulsion of the legitimate government of a sovereign State was the result of a conspiracy between the authorities at Washington and their tools in Louisiana, to do the very thing that was done. Never in the history of our country has so gross an outrage been perpetrated upon State sovereignty.

[The speaker recounted all the well known facts regarding the Louisiana usurpation, claiming that they proved conclusively that the party in power was deliberately responsible for the wrong and violence.]

All the circumstances go to prove that the case was from the first prejudged, and that no amount of representation of facts or argument could induce the administration to recognize the officers chosen by the people of Louisiana. It is true that the President afterwards called the attention of Congress to the subject, but Congress failed to do anything but talk, and the usurping government of Louisiana is, after the lapse of two years, still occupying the places to which others were undoubtedly elected, and at this moment is engaged in projects to cheat the people of that State out of a fair election by means of a false registration and preventing naturalized citizens from voting.

Having first depicted the condition of the country, and, secondly, proved who are responsible for it, I now come to the third inquiry, viz:—What is the remedy, and how are we to restore to the downtrodden people of the South their rights and give prosperity to the whole country? The answer is plain and we need not dwell upon it: We must have a change of rulers. The party in power in this country, after a long series of years, has failed to give us good government, and the people have lost confidence in its ability to do so, even if it had the disposition. The signs of the times indicate the success of the democracy, and that they will control all branches of the government at no distant day. Am I asked what they propose to do when they get in power? My answer is, that we propose to give self-government to the people; we propose to withdraw the army and liberate the white people of the South from a bondage which has well nigh ruined them. We propose to lift up the South from the depths of poverty to a development of progress she has never yet known. We propose to abide by the constitutional amendments of the Organic law in their letter and spirit. We propose to protect the colored man as well as the white man in the enjoyment of freedom, and of all the rights he now has. But we do not propose to give to him more rights than to the white man. We will administer the government not in a partisan spirit, but with a view to advancing the best interests of the whole country. The general and State governments will be administered within their respective constitutional spheres of action, and centralization of power be at an end. Colossal fortunes will not pass away in a night under democratic government. We will give to the country such a currency that capital will come out of the vaults

and hiding places and embark in enterprises that will give employment to the mechanic and laborer. A market, as in former times, will be opened to the merchant and manufacturer, where the customers will be able to pay for what they buy. The value of real estate will again be advanced, so that the man of moderate means need not fear the coming of the Sheriff. The fires of our forges and furnaces will again burn brightly; the cheerful hum of busy industry will again be heard throughout the land; labor will find employment, with good wages, paid in stable currency, and commerce will again dot the ocean with her white-winged messengers, and the American flag, as of yore, float proudly in every harbor of the civilized world.

When the word is given to advance all along the line, New York in the Centennial year should be where she was in the American Revolution, in the front rank and in the thickest of the fray, contending, as then, for constitutional liberty, the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, the right of petition and home rule.—*New York Herald.*

REPUBLICANS RATING REPUBLICANS.

THE Washington National Republican, a republican paper, recently had an editorial of a peculiarly pungent character, in which the party, and especially some prominent members, were severely scourged. Here are some extracts—

"In the fourteenth year of its power, it cannot be denied that the party enters into the contest under burdens which it has not known in the past; that its chances for success are less than they have been in any one of its previous years; that if we win it will be owing more to good luck than good management."

"The party itself, and it alone, is responsible for the position in which it is now placed; there are fearful odds that stare us in the face. We may win, and probably we shall, but the mass of the party should not have been placed where it is, and we charge that it has been put there by so-called leaders—leaders without any element of leadership, who in their legislation have dragged the party down from its commanding position, held even two years ago, till to-day it is at the mercy of the enemy."

"We have still a majority of the people of the country, but that majority has been so demoralized by its leaders in Congress that it is unconscious of its own strength."

"We charge upon Mr. Dawes and Mr. Garfield the responsibility for the position in which the party is placed to-day, and in doing so we know that we represent the feeling of every thoroughbred republican in the land of every thorough republican in Congress. Cutting \$100 from the appropriation of this Bureau, ten dollars from that is not statesmanship. Whining, as Mr. Dawes did years ago for the leadership, Dawes and Garfield and Foster have brought the party to the pass it is in to-day. Still holding a majority of the country, it is led to slaughter by commanders who ought to be only corporals, by statesmen who do not possess the first requisite of statesmanship. Under such management no party can live, and all history cannot show in a popular government a single case of imbecility, cowardice and treachery that we have not been guilty of the last three years."

"The country flooded with defamation and slander, suspicion cast upon every chief of the party, what wonder that the confidence of the people is shaken—that the issue of the battle next Tuesday, with the Republican party still in the majority, is a matter of doubt and uncertainty? No party could support the burden even if it had the majority the Republican party has to-day. We stagger into the campaign under a load of stupidity for which our party leaders in Congress and out are responsible."

"It is hard to be patient when we think of all the party treason, cowardice, stupidity, ignorance of the plainest needs of the country, and neglect of the most palpable duties. What wonder that there is distress and dissatisfaction on every side, that the Republican

majority of nearly 100 in the elective branch of the government seems likely to be blotted out in the contest of Tuesday next?

Thus is the party in power condemned by its own partisans, and out of their own mouths. Is it any wonder that its opponents condemn it, and that the general popular vote last Tuesday took a revolutionary turn?

By Telegraph.

AMERICAN.

CHICAGO, 9.—On the 28th of last month Joseph Robbins, bridge watchman at Kaskeaskia River, on the St. Louis and Vandalia R. R., was murdered; Nathan Burgess, one of his neighbors, was arrested on suspicion, and to-day he made a full confession, and stated that knowing Robbins received his monthly pay that day, he took a shotgun and fired at him through the window of his watch-house. He then approached the house and through an open door saw Robbins praying, and heard him say, "Oh God have mercy on the one who did this, and spare him for Jesus' sake. I was horrified and turned and ran, I did not know where. I did not enter the house nor touch the door; his words haunt me still."

At Vienna, to-day, Judge Trimble, at the instance of the citizens, remitted the fine and revoked the order of imprisonment against Lieut. Hodgson. Marshall Seely is still in jail.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., 9.—The democratic majority in the State will be 15,000. Six democratic Congressmen are elected, and there will be 30 democratic majority on the joint ballot in the legislature. Alex. White and other prominent republicans are in caucus here, but for what purpose is unknown.

WASHINGTON, 9.—General Sherman's annual report to the Secretary of War shows the total number of enlisted men in the army, on October 15th, to be 26,441. It estimates that this number will probably be reduced through natural causes, by the 1st of January, 1875, to the 25,000 allowed by law. It deprecates the inadequacy of so small an army for the demands of so large a territory as it has to be scattered over, involving the necessity of withdrawing troops from one department to meet the requirements of another a long distance away. It compliments highly the efficiency of General Sheridan and his subordinate officers, in maintaining comparative peace in the Indian country. It says the reports of the commanding officers demonstrate that the small army of the United States, called a peace establishment, is the hardest worked body of men in this or any country. The discipline and behavior of the officers and men have been worthy of all praise, and whether employed on the extreme and distant frontier or in aiding the civil officers in the execution of civil processes, they have been a model for the imitation of all good men. In regard to the removal of his headquarters to St. Louis, he says—"I am prepared to execute the duties that may be devolved upon me by proper authority. Here I am centrally located, and should occasion arise, I can personally proceed to any point of this continent where my services are needed."

Lieut. Gen. Sheridan, in his annual report, touches slightly upon General Custer's Black Hills expedition, which it pronounces a successful reconnaissance. The country of the Black Hills was found to be much better than was expected, with plenty of good timber and considerable good soil at high altitudes, and an abundant supply of good water and grass. Some gold was found near Harney's Peak, but of its abundance there is at present no reliable information, as sufficient time could not be given by an expedition such as that of Colonel Custer, to prospect and determine its quantity. General Sheridan again recommends the establishment of a large military post in the Black Hills country. Speaking of Indian troubles, General Sheridan says, "I respectfully differ with General Pope as to the chief causes of these Indian troubles, and attribute them to the impunity with which the tribes have been treated. In all their raids into Texas for the