

THE PENSION BUREAU.

Commissioner Black's Good Work—An Interesting Comparison.

[From the *National View*.]

The following comparative statement contrasts the work of the Pension Bureau during the last two years of Republican rule with the first two years of the Democratic administration:

In the year ending June 30, 1883, there were 52,279 pension certificates issued, of which number 38,161 were original cases, and the remainder increase and miscellaneous claims. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1884, the total number of certificates issued was 56,729, of which 34,190 were original, and the balance increase and miscellaneous cases. In the next fiscal year, up to the 17th of March, 1885, when General Black entered upon the duties of his office, there were 39,154 certificates of all kinds issued. From March 17 up to the 30th of June of the same year—a period of only two months and a half—there were issued 31,232 pension certificates. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1886, there were issued 76,644 pension certificates, 40,852 of which were original cases. In that same fiscal year there were also issued 79,985 supplemental certificates to widows and dependent relatives whose pensions had been increased by the act of March 19, 1886—a grand total for that one year of 159,643 allowances.

These supplemental certificates were issued within a very few months after the passage of the law. At no time in the history of the office has such an enormous number of pensions been "increased" without interference with the regular work of the office or without a call upon Congress for additional help. From the 1st of July, 1886, up to and including the 30th of April, 1887, ten months, there were 74,608 certificates issued, of which 34,852 were original cases.

There are yet remaining two months of the present fiscal year, and the result will be a showing greater by far than any previous year in the history of the office. This immense amount of work has been performed with reduction of the clerical force of over one hundred. General Black determined to conduct the office upon strict business principles, and required that the entire time of the clerical force during office hours should be devoted to the consideration and transaction of the public business and the settlement of long-delayed pension claims. As one result of this regulation the first year of his administration exhibited a saving in the matter of leaves of absence of 15,664 days of the aggregate time of the clerical force, or 12 years 11 months and 4 days of the time of a single clerk.

Since the 17th of March, 1885, when the present Commissioner assumed the duties of his office, no leaves of absence have been granted for political purposes, and no pension-office clerks have gone off on "stumping tours," as was formerly the custom. From July 1, 1884, to June 30, 1885, the average number of working days for the clerical force was 266, while in the succeeding year the average number of working days was 281. In the year 1886 the present Commissioner turned over to the Treasury over \$100,000 of unexpended appropriations on account of clerical hire, and he effected a saving in the same year in the item of stationery of over \$13,000—this notwithstanding the fact that the business of the bureau had been very largely increased.

It was formerly the practice that when a pension claim had been neglected—that is, when the claimant or his attorney had failed to call up the case for a certain length of time—to mark the case "abandoned" and consider it in about the same light as a rejected case. General Black abolished this practice, and required of his chiefs of bureaus that all claims should be given a chance of being considered and finally adjudicated. Every case filed during his administration has received prompt attention. His order that all cases filed prior to his entry into office should be examined before the 1st of June has already been fully complied with, and there is not a single case in the pending files of the office which has not been examined, and in which steps have not been taken toward final settlement. As a consequence of the application of the practical business principles in the management of the office, the Pension Bureau, for the first time in its history, is abreast of the original invalid claims filed. To illustrate the enormous increase in the business of the Pension Bureau, during the month of March, 1884, there were received 159,385 pieces of mail matter, and there were sent out from its office 141,898 circulars and letters, while in the month of March, 1887, there were received 287,263 pieces of mail matter, and there were sent out from the office 183,142 letters and circulars.

"Honest" John and the Whisky Tax.

At the Commonwealth Club dinner George William Curtis delivered an ornate address eulogizing Eatonian reform and the mugwumps, and significantly describing John Sherman as "about the purest and ablest man in public life" at the present time. There are other illustrations in plenty which go to show that whatever Republican or mugwumpian antipathy there may be to Blaine is rapidly crystallizing into friendship for Sherman. The cool, calculating Ohio man is deemed the most available club wherewith to knock out the magnetic man from Maine—if he is to be knocked out at all. Mr. Curtis and his friends feel decidedly uncomfortable. Not being allowed to boss the Democratic party they are pinning to get back into the Republican ranks; but they cannot consistently go back or be taken back next year should Mr. Blaine be the standard-bearer. That is the mainspring of their sudden love for Sherman.

Is it true that Mr. Sherman is "about the purest and ablest man in public life?" It is a query which will by no means command a unanimous affirmative. The most serious smirch on Mr. Sherman's record is that which he acquired near the close of the war when the heavy revenue tax was levied on whisky.

The act of Aug. 1, 1862, imposed a tax of only 20 cents a gallon on whisky. Toward the close of the war the need of increased revenues grew imperative, and by the act of June 30, 1864, the whisky tax was raised to \$1.00 with provision that it should be \$2 per gallon on and after Jan. 1, 1865. Congressman John Sherman voted for that bill, but before doing so he is credited with having quietly organized a big whisky syndicate to corner every gallon that could be secured. Many persons made fortunes at that time by taking whisky out of bond while the passage of the proposed law was yet in doubt, but to Mr. Sherman is attributed the unenviable distinction of deliberately

consin—two States that have been included in the published itinerary of Mr. Blaine—has recently contained a number of statements to the effect that he is an "impossible" candidate for 1888. These statements do not settle the question, but they are significant. He who runs may read the signs they afford, and they will not be lost on Mr. Blaine.

Mr. Sherman, in his remarks he has made since his return to Ohio, has made another thing clear—even clearer than Mr. Blaine's prospects—and that is that there will be no campaign made on the Southern question this year. The stakes that Mr. Blaine drove in his notorious Portland speech on the moral of the election are rudely and even contemptuously pulled up by Mr. Sherman and thrown into the ditch. The negroes of the South are not being oppressed or worked at starvation wages, as Mr. Blaine said they were and would be. The workingmen of the North are in no danger of competition from labor cheaper and more helpless than slave labor, as Mr. Blaine said they would be. Mr. Sherman reports that there is good feeling between the races, that the negroes are not only safe but industrious, busy and prosperous. The stories of Southern progress, he says, are not exaggerated. That region is developing rapidly under the influence of peace, industry, and enterprise; it has become—mark the word—"patriotic!" It will no longer do to hold it up as a bugaboo to frighten either political babies or dotards in the North. Its interests are ours; its methods, principles, purposes are ours. Its representatives are in every market in the North and ours all over the South. The common bond of constant intercourse, on the basis of mutual confidence and respect, is becoming every day stronger. Obviously there can be no use for the bloody shirt in the next canvass.

TARIFF REDUCTION.

A Movement to Unite the Democrats in Congress on that Issue.

A Washington dispatch to the Philadelphia *Advertiser* says: "For some days there has been more or less informal talk in administration circles on the tariff question. From intimations dropped in those quarters it may be announced that Secretary Fairchild is seriously contemplating a movement with the approbation of the President and his colleagues looking to a concentration of the Democrats in the House of Representatives and the Senate upon a measure of tariff reduction. After careful inquiry it has been ascertained that every member of the Cabinet is favorable to such a programme. After the experience of the past two Congresses the President is convinced that but one course remains open to the Democratic party, and that it is the formulation of a bill in consultation with such men as Randall and Carlisle and others representing the diverse positions of Democratic sentiment on the subject, for the purpose of bringing them together upon some common ground of agreement.

The President has seen for some time that an issue will be made on the tariff, and has urged that it would be more sagacious to get to work at once and prepare a bill to be submitted to Congress as a measure of administration policy than to let the question continue to play havoc as a firebrand in the ranks of the party. It is proposed to make the bill an administration question in the House, and thus bring before the people as a distinctive issue upon which the Democratic party will stand in the next campaign. Judging from the present situation of affairs among the party leaders, it will take a large amount of pressure to bring the opposite views of Messrs. Carlisle and Randall together. It has been suggested in Treasury circles that Kentucky whisky influence, the tobacco men, and the protection Democrats can only reach a basis of settlement by pooling their differences and evolving some sort of a compromise. If this should fail a bill will be prepared at the Treasury supposed to strike between these conflicting interests.

Secretary Fairchild is very decided in his advocacy of reduction of revenue from customs. He thinks a necessity exists for some action of this kind, or will do so soon. The accumulation of surplus will now go on steadily, and will lead to formal action on his part before the Cabinet as soon as the first indications manifest themselves in the monetary operations of the people. The theory of reduction will be in placing raw materials, like iron and wool, on the free list, and reduction of rates on certain manufactures. There is an idea, notwithstanding the ruinous importations at present rates, that certain manufactures of iron and steel can stand a reduction. Members of the administration believe there is a point at which modifications of the tariff can be made without detriment to American industry."

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organizing a whisky pool and then hastening back so that his voice and influence in Congress might lend success to his big speculation.

Was not that a far more discreditable transaction than any decision given in favor of Little Rock by Speaker Blaine? And can our mugwump friends strain at the gnat while they swallow the camel?—*New York Graphic*.

Congressman Springer Interviewed.

In reply to a question as to the probabilities of an extra session of Congress Mr. Springer said: "I do not think the President has decided yet what he will do. He has not told me nor any one else so far as I can learn what course he will take. I should like to know very much, as it has a good deal to do with my own future. I think, however, that the President will be actuated by the condition of the public mind later in the summer. If the surplus should increase largely and the people call for an immediate reduction in taxation he will then have to decide between an extra session or the purchase of bonds in the open market."

"How about 1888?"

"Well, I think there is a universal feeling among Democrats that Cleveland will be renominated."

"Because he is the only man available, or because his administration has been satisfactory?"

"Both. There is no one upon whom Democrats can agree. Then he has had a very successful term in the White House so far."

"Would not Hill be a better man to carry New York State?"

"The opinion of New York Democrats who have visited Washington lately is that Hill should run for Governor and Cleveland for re-election. This would combine their forces and make the chances of both much better."

"Who will be the Republican candidate?"

"Blaine and Sherman are fighting hard for it, and it seems to lie between them, unless they should be equally strong, when Allison and Hawley might obtain the nomination."

"You don't put any faith in the reported alliance between Blaine and Sherman—the Ohioans to tail the ticket?"

"No, they will not combine. Blaine is to conduct his campaign from Europe. His is no 'pent-up Utica.' Sherman is coming out here. It is more likely that Gov. Foraker will unite with Blaine. I see that the latter cannot make friends with Bob Lincoln."—*Chicago Tribune*.

New York's Anti-Saloon Republicans.

The character of the men who spoke at the meeting of the Anti-Saloon Republicans in New York the other day shows clearly enough that the movement is one which is not intended to injure the saloon as much as it is to assist the Republican party. It is the result of conviction on the part of certain all-round party men that the saloon influence is too rampant in politics and must be restrained, but it does not contemplate any action which will drive the saloon Republicans into another party. The principal speakers were ex-Judge Noah Davis, Theodore Roosevelt and ex-Senator Windom. Every one of these gentlemen is a partisan, a man who would support by word and vote a Republican saloonkeeper before he would a Democratic saint. Other men prominent in the movement have the same record. No amount of rum sickens them at all if it is on their side.

If a reason for the Anti-Saloon Republican organization is asked for it may be found in the fact that the real Anti-Saloon party is making much trouble for the Republican party, which does not care to take ground on either side of the prohibition question, but which hopes, by assuming a great moral attitude signifying nothing, to stem the tide of desertion from its ranks. There is reason to believe that it will take something more than an occasional meeting of a lot of partisans under a pleasant name to convince the third party that its mission has been fulfilled.—*Chicago Herald*.

Voorhees on Blaine.

Passing to prognosticate on national affairs, the Senator said that, while he was a personal friend of Blaine, and while the members of his family mingled with the friends of Blaine and his family, he thought the Republican party could never nominate Blaine as a Presidential candidate again, especially when they considered his physical condition. As the Senator said: "One of my friends, a warm, personal friend, who has traveled with James G. Blaine recently and for several months, is confident that Blaine is a physical wreck." As the Senator expressed it, Mr. Blaine is a broken-down man. In Senator Voorhees' opinion, James G. Blaine had stood the stock and excitement of a Presidential ambition as long as he could be expected to, and his physical condition was entirely broken down. In the Senator's opinion, so far as he knew, the opinion was sustained by the most prominent Republicans, it would be utterly suicidal to think of nominating James G. Blaine as the next Republican candidate, and he did not think he would be able to do so.

—*Chicago Times interview.*

Mr. HEWITT, the Democratic Mayor of New York, seems to be satisfying all classes in his administration of the affairs of the great metropolis. It has been the experience heretofore of New York mayors, for the most part, to stir up an astonishing amount of antagonism in various quarters of the city. Mr. Hewitt has been exceptionally fortunate. *Harper's Weekly*, which usually looks at affairs from a Republican standpoint, although it supported Mr. Cleveland for the Presidency, says of the Mayor: "Probably no citizen of New York, whether he voted for Mayor Hewitt or voted against him, now regrets his election. The Mayor has devoted himself to the duties of his office with an intelligence and energy which have produced the most excellent results. The Mayor is a Democrat, but he was elected by the votes of citizens of all parties. His course is another illustration of the desirability of totally separating from politics public duties which are in no sense political."

Although Mr. Hewitt undoubtedly received some Republican votes, yet it must be remembered that he made the race as the regular Democratic nominee. The Republicans also made their nomination in the usual way and backed it up by an energetic campaign. Their candidate was Mr. Roosevelt, and he probably drew out the full party strength as full as possible. It is understood that with these assurances his name will be presented to the Cleveland convention.

"I LEFT a boy about twelve years old out here when I went in," said a farmer yesterday as he came out of the City Hall. "I saw him, sir," said a bootblack about a foot high. "Where did he go?" "Why, he ran his tongue at me, and the last I saw of him he was going for the woods. I don't take sass from any granger, I don't!"

NOTHING does so much honor to a woman as her patience, and nothing does her so little as the patience of her husband.

WHAT UNCLE SAM OWES.

The Monthly Official Statement of the National Indebtedness for May.

The following is a recapitulation of the debt statement issued on the 1st inst.:

INTEREST-BEARING DEBT.	
Bonds at 4½ per cent.	\$ 250,000,929
Bonds at 1 per cent.	737,860,150
Bonds at 3 per cent.	190,716,304
Refunding certificates at 1 per cent.	175,650
Navy pension fund at 3 per cent.	14,000,000
Pacific Railroad bonds at 6 per cent.	64,623,311
Principal	\$1,103,315,812
Interest	11,700,163

DEBT ON WHICH INTEREST HAS CEASED SINCE MATURITY.	
Principal	\$6,641,293
Interest	190,107
Total	\$6,737,403

DEBT BEARING NO INTEREST.	
Old demand and legal tender notes	\$346,738,146
Certificates of deposit	5,990,000
Gold certificates	90,960,997
Silver certificates	139,143,328
Fractional currency (less \$8,373,934 estimated as lost or destroyed)	6,943,222
Principal	\$1,635,636,883
Interest	11,945,271
Total	\$1,637,542,151

Less cash items available for reduction of the debt.	
Less reserve held for redemption of United States notes	100,000,000
Total	\$37,308,927

Total debt less available cash items.	
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