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MRS. LINCOLN.

Her Government Bonds—Insane on the Question of Poverty.

A member of the family of Mrs. Lincoln, the widow of the President, is in the city. In speaking of the recent act of Congress, donating to Mrs. Lincoln \$15,000, and an additional pension, he said it was unnecessary, and on being asked why, he said:

"Mrs. Lincoln has \$55,000 invested in 4 1/2 per cent government bonds. In addition to that she had before, a pension of \$3,000 a year. This was ample for all her expenses, and, if it had not been, her son would have made it up to her. The fact is, her mind is completely wrecked, and she is insane on the question of poverty. She has been fearful for years that she should come to want. Her son has done everything possible for her, sparing no pains, money or attention to make her life pleasant; but, because he has not favored her desire for an additional pension from Congress, she has entertained hard feelings towards him. I know when she got her original pension of \$3,000 that he used every effort with Congress to defeat the measure, knowing it was not necessary. This very much incensed Mrs. Lincoln, who was possessed with the idea that she was in great danger of coming to want. She had been some years in Europe, and when she returned she brought back fifty five trunks and no end of bags and packages, the freight on which was \$355 from New York to Chicago. She has been in the habit of going out frequently and buying fourteen or fifteen silk dresses in one day, and then going home and putting them in a trunk and storing them. Of course they never were taken out or used. This idea that has gone out that she needed anything has emanated from her own mind, owing to the fact of her insanity on this subject, and had no real foundation. Her son, the Secretary of War, is very sensitive about the matter, and has done all he could quietly to defeat any such action; but his position is such, and he feels so delicately about the matter, that he has been unable to prevent the measure coming before Congress. Of course, patriotic considerations secured its passage when it was brought formally to the attention of Senators and Representatives. It may be right in one sense to have a bill passed, because it humors the whim of a woman, whose mind was wrecked through the assassination of her husband while in a public position, and she is afflicted with a disease which certainly will result fatally in a few months, and she can live but a short time anyhow, so that it is, no doubt, just as well that the act was passed, but that she has ever wanted anything is not true, nor indeed is it possible that she ever could want, with her own fortune and the watchfulness of her son, to do everything to alleviate her sufferings and cares, mental as well as physical bereavements."

Washington Letter.

Ideas of an Old Journalist.

James Watson Webb said on his eightieth birthday, Wednesday last: "The great want, in my opinion, at the present day is a journal which shall be perfectly independent upon all questions in which party principles are not involved, and in which the editor shall be strictly responsible for everything that appears in its columns. We have no such paper in existence to-day. During my time the editor and his paper were so identified that it was impossible to separate the two, and in consequence the editor was held strictly

responsible for everything that appeared in his paper. Now, newspapers are made to be sold. In my time the newspaper had its subscribers. Now, while the newspapers of to-day publish fifty copies where those of the former period did one, they do not exert one-half the moral influence. In my day the editor of every paper was known, and was held personally responsible for what he printed. That made them cautious what they said. There was never a stronger party paper in America than the Courier and Enquirer, and yet it was always bolting."

Defense of the Railroad Land Grants.

E. H. Talbot in a letter to the New York Herald, sums up the advantages which have accrued from land grants to railroads. He says when, in 1871, the building of the Northern Pacific was begun, the population along its line from Duluth to Bismarck did not exceed 2,600. In 1879 it had reached 75,000. Not one mile of the road would have been built to-day but for the land grant. As late as 1873 an army officer reported that these lands were a desert of bleak alkali. In 1880 this desert produced 9,000,000 bushels of wheat. In 1882 and 1884 the grants were made to the Union Pacific. The last rail was laid in 1879. From that date to 1880 the population of Nebraska increased from 100,000 to 400,000. The Kansas Pacific completed 420 miles west of Kansas City in 1876. In 1869 the corn crop of the State did not exceed 4,000,000 bushels and the wheat crop 2,800,000 bushels. In 1877 the corn crop was 103,000,000 bushels, and the wheat crop 14,000,000 bushels. Of this, he says, fully one-fourth was produced by the country actually developed by the road. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe was completed in 1872 and up to 1879 over 1,000,000 acres of its land had been sold and 4,000,000 acres of Government land contiguous to its line. All government lands within the limits of the grant were pre-empted at \$2.50 an acre. He concludes that there is not a single substantial reason for the forfeiture of the unpatented portion of the grants. In short, the land grant is the great civilizer of the age.

Russia and Rousseau's Predictions.

The present political state of Russia recalls with peculiar force the prediction concerning that country made by Rousseau about 1774 and published in his well known work on the "Contrat Social."

"With nations as with men," he wrote, "there is a period of maturity that should not be anticipated. To do so is to impoverish results. The difficulty is that it is not always easy to determine that precise period in the life of a nation when the people can be brought to recognize and submit itself, in the interest of the commonwealth, to constitute laws. One nation at its birth is capable of being disciplined to a voluntary recognition of and submission to promulgated laws; another would not be so in a thousand years. The Russians will never thoroughly and truly become a law-abiding people. This is due to errors committed by Peter the Great. The genius of Peter was but that of the imitator, not the true genius which, with inferior means, still attains perfection—which out of nothing creates all. His edict was to the effect that from a barbarous people they should instantly become a civilized one, and from the moment he so desired it he insisted on assuming that the trans-

formation had been effected. He saw that his people was a barbarous one; he failed to comprehend that a period of educational transition was necessary before imposing upon it laws such as could only be understood and would only be recognized by a civilized people. He visited Germany, and returned so impressed with German civilization and procedure of government that he determined to make his people as the Germans were. He next visited England, and his residence in that country so modified his views in respect to Germany, that when he returned to his own people, he set about making Englishmen of them. First Germans! then Englishmen! when he should have begun by making Russians of them. He perverted their proper genius, and in this way, persuading them that they were that which they were not, he prevented them from becoming that which they should and might have been. Ideas of inordinate vanity and ambition were implanted on a false and disintegrated basis, the consequence of which will be that Russia will one day want to subjugate Europe, but will, instead, be subjugated herself."

Money and Its Uses.

One celebrated writer gravely exhorts his countrymen, in order to banish all vice at once, to "throw their money into the sea." But is not all this empty cant? Is there any solid reason therein? By no means. For, let the world be as corrupt as it will, is gold or silver to blame? "The love of money," we know, "is the root of all evil," but not the thing itself. The fault does not lie in the money, but in them that use it. It may be used ill; and what may not? But it may likewise be used well; it is fully as applicable to the best as to the worst uses.

It is of unspeakable service to all civilized nations in all the common affairs of life; it is a most compendious instrument of transacting all manner of business, and, if we use it according to Christian wisdom of doing good. It is true, were man in a state of innocence, or were all men "filled with the Holy Ghost," so that like the infant church at Jerusalem, "no man counted anything he had his own," but "distribution was made to every one as he had need," the use of it would be superseded, as we cannot conceive there is anything of the kind among the inhabitants of heaven. But in the present state of mankind it is an excellent gift of God, answering the noblest ends.

In the hands of his children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked; it gives to the traveller and stranger where to lay his head. By it we may supply the place of a husband to a widow and of a father to the fatherless. It may be a defense for the oppressed, a means of health to the sick, of ease to them that are in pain; it may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame; yea, a lifer up from the gates of death! It is, therefore, of the highest concern that all who fear God know how to employ this valuable talent; that they be instructed how it may answer these glorious ends, and in the highest degree. — The Rev. John Wesley.

Losses of Irish Landlords.

Irish landlords lose \$100,000,000 a year, the interest on \$2,500,000,000, by the reduction in their rents. The liberal-administration in England pronounces this enormous fine, inflicted by three men sitting in an extraordinary court without a jury, as just, and it is;

but what shall be said of English rule under which this sum has been yearly extorted for a generation, and what of an economic system, which, after forty years of free trade, leaves land worth to the owner in fee no more than in 1840? Is there a patch even in New England of which this can be said?

The Weekly Astorian.

Is a mammoth sheet, nearly double the size of the Daily. It is just the paper for the fireside, containing in addition to all the current news, choice miscellany, agricultural matter, market reports, etc. It is furnished to single subscribers at \$2.00 per year in advance.

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