

The press of Southern California is discussing the project of dividing the State into two commonwealths. The idea is worth considering. The people of the Nation to-day have a more thorough appreciation of the necessity of local self-government than Californians.

This State has suffered more from New England legislation than from anything else. Our Chinese curse is a child of New England sentimentality; our Indian muddle is a monstrosity born of Boston impracticality. So that we have a lively desire to manage our own affairs.

California is next to Texas, the largest State in the Union. It has as much sea board as Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and North and South Carolina. Its area is equal to that of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa together. Its present population is equal to that of Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Nebraska and Oregon together. And it has just entered upon a period of growth, that will not slacken till the valleys of this Italy shall be settled by millions of people. In the Senate of the United States California has but two voices, while the same amount of sea board on the Atlantic has eighteen, the same amount of territory in the Mississippi valley has six, and the same amount of population in other States has ten. To give us our proper voice in the councils of the Nation, therefore, we should divide the State.

The extreme length of the State extends into two zones. It is Spain and England combined. The very setting of the elements differ. The original boundaries of the State were never run with the idea of following the suggestions of nature in framing a sovereign commonwealth. There are two fine harbors on the coast—one for each proposed division. There are valleys, the Sacramento and Joaquin—one for each division.

The time has begun when the rivalry between the Northern and Southern part of this State will make much friction at Sacramento. As for us, we would gladly forego whatever advantages arise from having within our borders a city like San Francisco, for the sake of being rid of her political corruption. We are weary of seeing the hell-holes of a great metropolis dominate the politics of an entire State. If we are to make two States of California, the sooner we do it the better.

THE READING ROOM.

On Tuesday night, as announced, a few gentlemen assembled at Messrs. Angelow & Boyle's for the purpose of discussing and organizing a new reading room project. Judge Hathaway presided. Those of the old organization did what they could to disband in order, and turn their assets over to such a club as would be formed. It was reported to the meeting that the Ladies' Society had directed Messrs. Hanna and Hathaway to pay over into the reading room organization's hands the funds already collected, amounting to some one hundred and twenty dollars. The meeting appointed a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws for the new club, and report at the same place next Tuesday. Messrs. Hanna and Hathaway were instructed not to pay over any money there was somebody to pay it to.

The reading room scheme was informally discussed. One rash youth started the cold chills down everybody's back by suggesting that the money be spent in a billiard table.

As to a reading room, THE HERALD has but a word to say. It would be a very desirable thing. The means at hand are enough to secure and maintain a comfortable place, where our young men and strangers among us may spend an hour at any time with comfort and profit. The room secured must be large. We do not want to crowd a lot of people into a stuffy little box of a room. There is but one fit place in town—that is the store building formerly occupied by Mr. Mackey. A good stove in there—plenty of fuel, an attentive janitor, card tables and a chess board and reasonable regulations, will make the thing not only a success but a signal advantage to the place. We trust all the gentlemen interested will turn out next Tuesday evening and help the matter along.

With the memory of it fresh on our bosom, and otherwheres, we pen these lines. Young men go to great universities and imbibe lofty notions of sweetness and light. They get into the attenuations of free trade and civil-service reform. They learn more of Socrates than they do of Calhoun, and if seductible enough they become hollow-eyed, and indifferent to excellent food. Maidens within the chaste walls of female seminaries learn to spoil much useful tent canvass, and to fret the chords of innumerable pianos. They, too, go as far as they can to abolish their stomachs. But after all, a learned mind cannot compare with an uncoated tongue. No feast of reason can supplant a good meal. And a meal is a meal. We are apt to forget the gravity of dinner time. Dinner today comes but once in a life-time. Dinner to-morrow is another occasion, and we may not enjoy it. It is ordained that we shall eat but three meals per day. If one of these is missed, it has gone into the unloosable clutches of eternity. Therefore eat when you have an opportunity. Skirmish about and digest it as soon and thoroughly as possible so as to be ready for the next spread, and brag on the good cooks with all your rhetoric, for of such are the kingdoms that we think the most of.

On Thanksgiving afternoon a party of Banningites went into the country for an airing. Misses Bigley, Morris, Pickering and Parker were horseback, with Messrs. Roberts and Carpenter, Mr. and Mrs. McDonald, Mrs. Crosley and Miss McDermott went on wheels. It was a most inviting day out. We would put the 29th of November, 1888, in Banning against the same day in any other quarter of the globe. We do not know where the thermometer stood because nobody thought of a thermometer. There was no heat, there was no cold, it was just right. The sun was unclouded and in his rays one felt deliciously cozy. The wind went about with soft steps—the snows lay silent and unfelt on the peaks. Blue mists veiled the farther hills, the softness of autumn brooded everywhere and the peace of a Sabbath prevailed. An occasional flock of cloud had strayed into the sky. The crinkled sheep on the upland and the children in the streets basked in sweet content.

We had occasion last week to advert upon the very laudable but directionless benevolence of our ladies, which had resulted in a crazy quilt that was as ineradicable as the catarrh. Anent the quilt, we have to suggest that the ladies sell it to some enterprising young man, who isn't troubled with too Massachusetts a conscience to dispose of it in a nimble way, and make it a term of the sale that the young man pay for it 90 per cent. of the net receipts of his venture. But the quilt isn't the only idle and benevolent capital in the place. These same good ladies have on hand something

The Bryant House on Thanksgiving set a table that moved every guest immediately to gratitude, whatever it may have moved him to later.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

No consideration of brevity seem to have moved the President in his message delivered to Congress on Monday. The pressure of the campaign having been removed, he was free to indulge himself in all the fanciful excursions he choose. Of course the message is deplorably written. We venture the assertion that so much bad rhetoric never did nor ever will come from the White House in one document again. It has in it much stuff that would be more appropriate in some remarks to Sunday School children than to a document of national interest. Not unnaturally, he takes a very dun-colored view of our national affairs. Indeed, the President allowed his rhetoric to get entirely away with his sense, when he launched out into the doleful strain that sounds in his message. There are enough ravens croaking about us all the time, without us mounting any on official pedestals to speak from. There is ever a revamping of that rot about the good old times, when our government was purer. This government was never purer, better, more capable or just than it is to-day, and the man, be he distinguished or obscure, who has nothing better to say than to bewail these glad days, and compare them unfavorably with any time that is gone, has made the mistake of learning too little and living too long.

The message repeats the tale of the surplus, and pleads for a reduction of the Tariff. It mentions the Sackville-West episode in rather a dignified fashion. It reminds congress that it don't attend to business, in a way which we heartily approve. In our humble judgment one of the poorest business establishments on the face of the earth, is the Congress of the United States. What is said of the Indians is particularly interesting to us. Of the band of Apache reptiles, that were captured by Gen. Miles, and are now confined in Alabama, the President recommends that they be kept where they are. It seems that pressure is being brought to bear somewhere, to have these devils sent back to Arizona and given a reservation. It does seem as if there were no project than any fool can dream of, that is too fantastic for some people to favor. The hills of Arizona are speckled with the bleaching bones of these fiends' victims. All they want is another opportunity to revel in blood. Their cruelty is unparalleled in all the legends of savagery. Yet there are enough unassumed cranks to demand attention in a Presidential message, who want to restore the bloodhounds where they can have more blood. The

longer we live, the more the nation grows upon us that the victims of this world are its real dangers, and not its vices, or more strictly speaking, the that the perversions, the exaggerations, the wild efflorescences and abnormal growths into which the good impulses of mankind are tortured, do more harm than all the plain vices known. Of the Indian question generally the President has a fair notion. Indeed, it is due to him to say that aside from his rhetoric, and his disquisitions in general as distinguished from those in particular, he is generally on the right side of the great questions. We object to his free trade; we think he was unduly sudden with Minister West, but with the bulk of the recommendations of his message, we are in harmony.

A MINISTER IN BANNING.

A communication in last week's HERALD calls attention to the fact that we are without a regular minister in this place. We want to assure everybody who is not acquainted with our people, that this fact does not arise from any lack of Christian sentiment among us, nor from any want of generosity on our community's part. Indeed, the last two weeks has witnessed one of the most liberal and Christian acts on the part of our people that we have ever seen. No worthy charity has presented itself here that has not been supported with a free and open generosity. Whether we have a minister or no, the people of Banning are a God-fearing and man-loving people. None the less is it desirable that we have among us a minister of the Gospel, who shall preach the teachings of Christ, and exemplify them in his life, for the benefit of us all. In considering how this may be attained, we have some suggestions to offer.

Our town is young and small. The means available to support a minister are limited. The united resources of the entire place are necessary to maintain a pastor. We cannot support a Baptist minister and a Methodist minister and a Presbyterian minister. One is all we need. We have but one church building, and that is amply sufficient. Moreover, we must have the support not only of the church members, but of the people who belong to no church. Any movement, therefore, to secure a minister should be a union movement wherein everybody is represented. We have in our mind two towns, whose religious experiences are in wide contrast. One is a suburb of a large city. Its people are made up of business men who like a country home life, while they pursue a city business life. They are a fine cultivated people. There is but one preacher in the place. All denominations and classes unite. They maintain a large and well equipped church, a good minister and splendid services. The church is easily supported, the pastor is well paid, and a healthy religious life prevails. The other town is about the same size. It has five churches and four regular ministers. The services are miserable, the ministers are wretchedly paid, and intellectually, they are not respectable. The whole religious outfit is beggarly. And all because an unholy denominational zeal insists upon dividing the resources of the place. Now denominations are good enough in their place, but it is the easiest thing in the world, and the commonest thing, for a man's

Christianity to shrivel up into a bigoted sectarianism that is no more like religion than pasteboard is like ivory.

We want the best talent that we can secure for our pulpit. Because a man professes to be a minister, don't make him a sacred thing. There are poor professed ministers who are not fit to preach, just as there are poor doctors and poor editors. We are confident that the people of Banning will do their whole duty toward supporting a good minister, if they get a chance.

SAM BLACK'S ACQUITTAL.

We had occasion a few weeks ago, to recount the sad story of Mr. Sam Black's eviction from his little canyon home. That was an act resulting from the well meant but disastrously mistaken Indian policy of the Government as instigated by the New England pulpit. We have now to record a misfortune of Mr. Blacks that has no well meaning cause about it. The administration of Grover Cleveland lately sent into this section a professional detective whose business it was to discover and arraign persons guilty of taking wood from Government lands. We believe it was the purpose of the administration to pose as over zealous in the protection of the public domain. At any rate this agent was more zealous than just, and the result of his labors hereabouts has been much annoyance to some of our good law-abiding citizens, and no earthly benefit to the government. One of the fruits of his mission was the arrest of Sam Black for cutting wood from the government land. Now we, in this community, know that Mr. Black is an honorable, law-abiding man; so is George Cassidy. No charge should be made against them that is not well grounded. This charge against Mr. Mr. Black was entirely uncalled for. The government's own witnesses established his innocence. They didn't even establish the probability of an offense on a preliminary examination. None the less is Mr. Black out of pocket and out of time, and as a citizen of this community has been grossly outraged in the name of the government that he once braved death for. We are infinitely weary of this trifling on the part of the government officials. Why, if an Indian had been subjected to a tithe of the indignities which Mr. Black has suffered, all Massachusetts would be in arms, and the pipings from clarionet voiced preachers in Eastern pulpits would have tormented the national atmosphere. We congratulate Mr. Black on his release, and we condole with him with all our heart. We confess, though, our spirit goes halting when we think that he voted to keep in office the very administration that is persecuting him.

We have read and heard some severe strictures on the San Bernardino Index for the disclosures it made about Sheriff Cole in the campaign. There is such a thing as being too squeamish and tender for this earth. If an officer's public record is not legitimate matter for a newspaper, we do not know what is. A refusal for a newspaper to investigate an officer's record and publish the results of the investigation, if it disclose anything improper, is a betrayal of its trust. The people look to the press to ferret out corruption in office. Criticism of official conduct is not mudslinging. Attacking a man's private life and showing