

side of his nature, I have often been reminded of him by the quaint, delicate humour, the superficial intolerance, the deep springs of pity, the peculiar mixture of something pathetic with a sort of gay scorn, entirely remote from contempt, which distinguish the Ellesmere of Sir Arthur Helps's earlier dialogues. Perhaps we recall such natures most distinctly, when such a remembrance is all that is left of them. The character is not merged in the creation; and what we lose in the power to communicate our impression, we seem to gain in its vividness. Erasmus Darwin has passed away in old age, yet his memory retains something of a youthful fragrance; his influence gave much happiness, of a kind usually associated with youth, to many lives besides the illustrious one whose records justify, though certainly they do not inspire, the wish to place this fading chaplet on his grave. —I am, Sir, &c.,

J. W.

MR. CONKLING AND GENERAL GARFIELD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—It is not to be supposed that the details of American politics are of sufficient interest to English readers of the *Spectator*, to admit of any continued discussion by correspondence in your pages. But, as one of many American readers who believe that "A Yankee," in his letter of July 5th, has not accurately represented the political situation in the United States, I beg the favour of space for a few words of criticism upon his letter.

It is, indeed, true that the nomination of Mr. Garfield was a surprise to him and to the Republican party. It was, however, more so to him than to a large section of the party, who hoped that the unexpected might happen. This section had no particular choice for the Presidency. They only hoped that a man might be nominated who would not revive the methods of General Grant's administration, which had been in part broken up by President Hayes. Having secured the defeat of General Grant, they were more than satisfied with the outcome of the Chicago Convention. A man was nominated who had received the best training of one of the best American colleges, who had served with distinction in the war of the rebellion, and who had had a long experience in the National Congress. Besides this, General Garfield had been a warm supporter of the administration of Mr. Hayes, an administration which Mr. Conkling had lost no opportunity to revile. One of the reasons for this opposition to General Grant was the belief that if elected he would be in his new term, as in his last, largely under the influence of Mr. Conkling. The distrust of the latter as a safe guide in the management of the affairs of the country, whether justified or not, was and is widely spread. After the nomination of Mr. Garfield, the three hundred and six delegates who, under the leadership of Mr. Conkling, Mr. Cameron, and General Logan, had held out to the last for Grant, endorsed the successful candidate with great unanimity and good-feeling. Not so Mr. Conkling. He, as in the canvas of 1876 (Hayes against Tilden), and as in some minor canvases, when the men nominated were not to his liking, held aloof. He was silent for some weeks, and was said to be sullen. At last, and when General Garfield's prospects of election were good, and not bad, as your correspondent intimates, he was induced by the pressure of his friends, represented by the candidate for Vice-President, to join in a campaign that was being everywhere vigorously carried on. Ever since Mr. Conkling thus came reluctantly into the field, we have been told, just as your correspondent has repeated, "It was the New York machine that made Mr. Garfield President." Waving all other answer to this audacious proposition, it is sufficient to say that it was the united Republican party that made Mr. Garfield President. If the 15,000 Independent Republicans of New York—"scratchers," not "half-breeds"—voters who would never have cast their ballots for General Grant, had withheld their support from Mr. Garfield, he would not have been elected. Thus we might also say of the Independent Republicans in such States as Ohio, Indiana, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. General Garfield was elected because his nomination made it possible to secure these essential ballots. The overthrow of the third-term scheme, so carefully nursed for four years, with its unit rule and its "bosses," made this possible. All that we can say to the credit of Mr. Conkling in that canvas is that, judged by his own standard of party fealty, he only tardily did his duty. An opponent of the machine, as your correspondent claims to be, who "confesses" that "in New York this party organisa-

tion works reasonably well," must take a rose-coloured view of New York politics since Mr. Conkling has been the leader of the Republican "machine." Governor Cornell, whom "A Yankee" eulogises as its product, owes his reputation of being a fair Governor to his refusal to practise machine methods in his official position. It is widely believed that there is no *entente cordiale* between him and the now discomfited leader of that system, since he failed to use his position as Governor of the State in securing Mr. Conkling's return to the Senate, by bringing pressure upon Members of the State Legislature. Moreover, it is notorious that the machine has driven out of State politics such men as Mr. Evarts, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Morgan, and Mr. Wheeler, to replace them by ignorant and unscrupulous ward politicians, who are vulgarly known as "heelers." When Mr. Conkling was at the height of his power in the State, when a word from him would have sent a statesman to the Senate, a second-rate politician was elected, whose final exit from political life was hastened by a scandal that scarcely has a parallel in any political history.

No; the reign of the machine in New York and in General Grant's last term did not produce reasonably good results. It produced men who neglected official duties to engage in the nefarious work of stifling public opinion by the packing of caucuses and conventions, men who enriched themselves at the expense of the State, who did not assist nor originate plans for reforms in any departments of the Government, men who so conducted themselves as to turn the country over for a time to the Democratic party. One other charge to be made against them is that they imitated Tweed, of infamous memory, in the formation of unholy alliances with the corrupt wing of the opposing party.

Finally, in contradistinction to your correspondent's eulogium of Mr. Conkling, I quote a description of him given by Dr. Woolsey, late President of Yale College:—"He has originated no great measures in Congress, so far as I know, nor has he revealed any profound views on finance or the statesman's office. His great influence could not have existed, but for the spoils system." Fortunately for our country, it seems as if the machine were overthrown. Its first repulse occurred at Chicago, its Gettysburg in the President's victory in our National Senate in securing the confirmation of his nominations, and its Appomattox in the refusal of the New York Legislature to return Roscoe Conkling.—I am, Sir, &c.,

KNICKERBOCKER.

SIR BARTLE FRERE'S PAMPHLET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—I have read with great interest your article on Sir Bartle Frere's pamphlet, and especially that portion of it in which you comment on his extraordinary statement that "it was not we who made war on Cetywayo, but he who made war on us." You naturally characterise this as an "astounding assertion," seeing that Cetywayo had no more to do with what Sir Bartle calls "the two armed violations of British territory by armed bands," than the ex-High Commissioner himself. The capture and killing by Sirayo's sons of that chief's two fugitive wives who had committed adultery—a crime punishable among the Zulus with death—were wholly unknown, either to Cetywayo or to the aggrieved husband, until after these occurrences had taken place. Cetywayo, in the letter which he wrote to Sir Hercules Robinson on March 29th last, states that Sirayo was with him in the lower part of Zululand when his sons committed the rash act. You say, "For this offence Cetywayo apologised, and offered what, according to Zulu custom, he considered an ample atonement." This is perfectly true. He was anxious to get off by paying a fine in cattle; and he might well be excused for supposing that we should abstain from pushing matters with him to extremities, seeing that Sir Henry Bulwer, the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, did not actually "demand" the surrender of Sirayo's sons, but was careful to use a much less peremptory word, for in each of the two messages on the subject which he sent to Cetywayo he merely "requests" him to give up the offenders. The ex-King's narrative shows that he found it very difficult to realise the fact that the English intended, after all, to refuse the fine, and to insist upon his surrendering "the two boys." His answers to Sir Henry Bulwer were most respectful, as will be seen from the account which the bearers of the first message gave of their interview with him. "Cetywayo," they say,—

"Spoke to us; he was kind; he said he did not wish to quarrel