

he exclaimed, "We have been left far behind in the race." I suggested, that if, twenty-six years ago, a period had been fixed upon by law for the emancipation of their slaves, Virginia might, ere this, have been relieved of nearly all her negro population, so great has been the migration of negroes to the south. "It is useless," he said, "to discuss the practicability of such a measure, while the majority of our legislators, having been born slaveholders, are not convinced of its desirability." While my companion was absorbed in admiration at the improvement of "the Empire State," my thoughts and feelings took a very different turn, when I learned that "the Helderberg war," which I have alluded to in my former "Travels,"* is still going on, and seems as far from a termination as ever. The agricultural population throughout many populous counties have now been in arms for eight years, to resist payment of rents due to their landlords, in spite of the decisions of the courts of law against them. Large contributions have been made toward an insurrectionary fund—one of its objects being to support a newspaper, edited by a Chartist refugee from England, in which the most dangerous anti-social doctrines are promulgated. The "anti-renters" have not only set the whole militia of the state at defiance, in more than one campaign, but have actually killed a sheriff's officer, who was distraining for rent! If any thing could add to the disgrace which such proceedings reflect on the political administration of affairs in New York, it is the fact that the insurgents would probably have succumbed ere this, had they not been buoyed up by hopes of legislative interference in their favor, held out to them by popularity-hunting candidates for the governorship, and other official places.

In the newspapers of the day, a scene described as having occurred at the close of the legislative session in Albany excited my curiosity. One of the members of the House of Representatives moved a vote of thanks "to the gentlemen of the third house for the regularity of their attendance and the courtesy with which they had conducted themselves." The motion was seconded, read from the chair amidst great laughter, and then

* Vol. i. p. 68.