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Democratic Watchman

Bellefonte, Pa., Dec. 15, 1899.

OLD AGE PENSIONERS.

Startling Scheme Projected by the English Government—To Allow a Granting of \$1.25 to \$1.75 a Week to Everybody Over Sixty-five Years Old.

There is every reason why the United States should keep an eye on the really momentous agitation in England over old age pensions.

It is rather startling, when you come to think of it, this idea of granting a pension to almost everybody 65 years old who wants it. And yet, stated on its broadest lines, that is what the British government seems committed to tackle at the next session of parliament. If the powerful agitation for this plunge into state socialism succeeds in England it will be a question of only a little time before those who would be benefited by such a policy will be bringing it up in the United States, despite the fact that labor there is better paid and that pauperism is not proportionately so extensive.

Every argument now being urged in behalf of old age pensions in England naturally applies to the United States, and if the protests of many British statesmen against the principle of the thing prove powerless against the united voices of British labor, the implication is, to put it mildly, that the American cousin might do well to keep an eye on the progress and the outcome of the debate.

When the select committee appointed by parliament to consider the subject of old age pensions made its surprising report recently it was supposed generally in the United States, to judge of the tone of editorial comment, that the committee's positive and emphatic endorsement of the idea, and its opinion that the state should make the attempt to put it into operation, was simply a bit of harmless philosophizing, put on paper and published in a blue book for political purposes, and intended to rest eventually in the parliamentary burying ground.

But there is plenty of evidence now that this view was a mistake. Old age pensions will be the most important national topic, aside from war questions, to be considered at the next session of parliament, and if a bill providing for some scheme of old age pensions is not passed it will be only because no agreement could be reached on the extent to which the principle should be applied and the way the \$50,000,000 or so could be raised annually.

BECOMING A CRAZE. The increase in the demand for old age pensions in the last few months has been remarkable. Some plan of the sort has been before the British eye ever since Canon Blackley embodied the idea 20 years ago.

Charles Booth, who is generally admitted to be the foremost sociologist in England, and perhaps in the world, probably is responsible more than any one else for the present agitation. He gathered facts and figures with untiring patience, and the tabulated results rather startled the public and caused one former member of parliament to break in upon the rejoicings of the queen's jubilee by this public question:

"Does not her majesty reign over more paupers than any other sovereign or government in Europe?" It was estimated that on one particular day in 1892 one person out of every five in the United Kingdom who had reached the age of 65 years was in receipt of public charity, and that one person out of every three of this age had applied for relief in the course of the year. More astonishing yet, it was found that one working man and woman out of every two in the country were more or less dependent on public charity in their old age.

A LEADING POLITICAL TOPIC. At the last general election the subject of old age pensioners became a leading topic in every political address, and many candidates for parliament had to pledge themselves for it more or less definitely before they could hope for election. The dividing line, if it could be drawn anywhere, seems to have been generally between the working people and the wealthier element rather than between Liberal and Conservative.

THE GOVERNMENT SCHEME. After long deliberation Mr. Chaplin's committee recommended that a pension of not less than \$1.25 or more than \$1.75 a week, according to the cost of living in the locality, should be given to "any person who satisfies the pension authority that he is a British subject, is 65 years old, has not within the last 20 years been convicted of an offense and sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment without the option of a fine.

PENSIONS FOR EVERYBODY. Let the chancellor of the exchequer kick as he will, the agitation in favor of Charles Booth's plan to give pensions to everybody who wants one and has reached the age of 65 or 70, is growing mightily. Government clerks are figuring out what it would cost. At present the best guess is \$80,000,000 a year, making due allowance for those who, although entitled to a pension on account of age, do not need it and will therefore be expected to decline it. Even so conservative a man as Cardinal Vaughan has caught the prevailing fever. "Surely," he says, "the rich are bound to tax themselves or to be taxed for their poorer brethren. I am always at a loss to understand why the colossal incomes should not be taxed at a higher rate than, say, the average net income of the upper classes. It is fitting that the surplus and extravagance should be more heavily taxed than ordinary and legitimate expenditure."

In view of the glaring frauds in Philadelphia Chairman Reeder, instead of rejoicing over the result of the recent elections, must feel more like a man who has been aiding and abetting crime. Every man who opposes a constitutional amendment to prevent election frauds is in a sense an aider and abettor of the crimes committed against an honest expression of public opinion at the polls.

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Treason Rewarded.

A Democratic Deserter Gets a Fat Job From McKinley.

From Shenandoah News.

The announcement that President McKinley has appointed William D. Bynum, of Indiana, a member of the board of general appraisers, at a salary of \$7,000 a year, possesses special interest to Democrats throughout the country, and may even interest some Republicans.

The name of Mr. Bynum is familiar to active Democrats everywhere. He served five terms in congress as a Democrat from Indiana, but did nothing during his service in the house to attract public attention or make him famous. It was after the Chicago convention, in 1896, broke the fetters that had for more than a quarter of a century held the Democracy in bondage to the money power, that Mr. Bynum came into prominence. He was a leading spirit in organizing the gold Democratic convention subsequently held in Indianapolis, which nominated Palmer and Buckner, the decoy ducks that were intended to draw away Democrats from Bryan and Sewell, and thus elect McKinley and Hobart.

Mr. Bynum was chairman of the national committee of the gold Democratic organization, and as such labored zealously for the election of Mr. McKinley. All the gold Democrats in the Palmer and Buckner organization advised to vote the Republican ticket straight, while those who were simple enough to be gulled into supporting the decoy ducks, but would not swallow McKinley, were left to vote for Palmer and Buckner.

That there was a perfect understanding between the Republicans and the gold Democrats no longer admits of a doubt. President McKinley recognizes the value of the services rendered the Republican organization by Mr. Bynum and those associated with him in the Palmer and Buckner organization, and rewards the treachery to Democracy by the appointment of Bynum to a place where he will receive \$7,000 a year from the public treasury for nominal service.

Treats Bar Young Men.

So Declares Ex-Senator Washburn, of Minnesota.

While Senator Hanna and his henchmen, who advocate the cause of the trusts solely because their hands are in the trust grab bag, and because they are fed on the stock of these combinations as a bonus for such advocacy, as proclaiming far and wide that trusts are a necessity, that the public would be wiser to tolerate them, and that the country cannot hope to be prosperous unless they flourish, one feels an air of genuine relief when he reads such utterances as those recently made by ex-Senator Washburn, of Minnesota, who speaks from an honest and unbiased point of view. In a very recent interview the senator said:

"The present situation, to the good citizen, the good Republican and the man who loves his country, is really alarming," said Mr. Washburn, "and it is largely owing to the rapid formation of what is called the trust, and any other agency. This trust craze has changed the nature of things. "When I was a young man—I am now 68—I had the world before me, and there was an absolutely fair field for me. Take all of our most successful business men and their experiences were like mine. They entered the race without a handicap, and their grit and capacity won. Now this building up of trusts puts a stop to fair and equal opportunities for the young men of today. The young man just out of college has no opening, as a rule. He cannot begin business on his own account against organized capital. He just joins the procession. He must content himself with being a mere clerk, and the chances are that he will never get any further, because there are so many in his class, and the situation is a serious one, and I am sorry for the young man of today. He comes out of school bright, eager and enterprising and runs against economic conditions that are too much for him. I can't help feeling that if he had the same chance that I had when I was a young man it would be a great thing for him. He hasn't got it. I've studied the situation and I'm sure of what I'm saying."

How to End the War.

From New York World.

Who began the war in the Philippines is a matter of less consequence than how to end it. But when the president says, as he did at Pittsburgh, "The first blow was struck by the insurgents," and the newspapers denounce that statement daily, it is well to remember the contrary statement made by General Otis in a report to the president dated Feb. 4, 1899. He said: "Firing upon the Filipinos and the killing of a woman by the American leading to returning fire. The chief insurgent leaders did not wish to open hostilities at that time." A letter from an American volunteer has been published, in which he claimed the honor of firing the shot on our picket line which brought on the first engagement. But be this as it may, the stopping of the war, which Admiral Dewey and General Ludlow unite in deploring, is now the main concern of all true Americans. A way to do this with honor is suggested by an army officer in Manila in a letter to The Evening Post, which vouches for him as one who "fought all through the civil war and the Cuban campaign." He says of the conflict in the Philippines: "This war is a wicked war, and is being waged in a wicked way. All the blood that has been shed since May 1, 1898, is on the head of some one, and will rise up in the judgment against him." And he advises that we say to the Filipinos: "We destroyed the Spanish fleet and drove the Spanish army from Manila as a war measure against Spain; that having been accomplished, we became responsible for the protection of life and property on these islands. We did not then believe you were capable of doing this. We have since learned that Admiral Dewey was right when he said you were far superior to the Cubans and capable of self government. We desire that you shall establish a government that will protect life and property. We will aid you in doing this, and when you have accomplished it we will withdraw."

AMERICAN CITIES.

Some Facts About Them that are Interesting—The Oldest is Albany—But Three Have Populations Running Into Millions. Milwaukee, Pa., is the Healthiest—Saloon Statistics.

Acting on instructions from congress the department of labor at Washington issued in its September bulletin statistics relating to all the cities in the United States of a population of 20,000 or more. It was found that there were 140 such cities, and the statistics collected throw much interesting light on their status and development.

The oldest city in the United States is Albany, N. Y., which was incorporated in 1686. Philadelphia dating 15 years later, New York, Chicago and Philadelphia are the only American cities whose population runs into the millions. Some odd contrasts are presented in the tables which give the area covered by the different cities. It appears that Taunton, Mass., occupies a territory greater than that of either Boston or Baltimore. New Orleans, a city of 285,000 inhabitants, covers 125,600 acres, while Newark, N. J., with a population of about the same size, occupies less than 12,000 acres. One expects to find the manufacturing districts of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Illinois closely packed, but it is surprising to notice that Richmond, Va., covers only 6,520 acres, and Louisville, Ky., 12,800 acres, as compared with Duluth, Minn., and Des Moines, Ia., which, with much smaller populations in each case, cover respectively 40,360 and 34,560 acres.

The second table in the bulletin deals with saloons, police force, and the number of arrests from drunkenness. Judging from the arrests made, it seems that Davenport, Ia., is the most sober city in the United States, while San Francisco and Boston suffer most from drunkards. Several papers tried to find in this table some light that would help to elucidate temperance problems, but found the figures so confusing as to be of very little practical use. The New York Evening Post, for example, commenting on this part of the report, says:

"It casts darkness rather than light upon the question. For example, Springfield, Mass., Manchester, N. H., and Utica, N. Y., have each about 60,000 inhabitants. Utica is under the Raines law, Springfield under the high license system of Massachusetts, and Manchester under nominal prohibition. The New Hampshire city has no legal saloons, while Springfield has 47 and Utica 252. But Manchester has had 1,456 arrests for drunkenness during the past year, while Springfield had 1,431. Still more remarkable is the record of only 765 arrests in Utica, or only about half as many as in Springfield, although there are more than five times as many saloons. Almost as anomalous is the showing of only 333 arrests in Dayton, O., with 400 saloons and 85,000 people, while Hartford, Conn., with 77,000 people and but 213 saloons, reported 2,460. There is no possible way of reconciling such extraordinary differences, except upon the theory that the police in some cities enforce the laws much more strictly than those of others, and 'run in drunks' when men in the same condition elsewhere would be passed by. The health statistics show that Manchester is perhaps the healthiest city in the country. Its rate of deaths from consumption is only 1.09 per 1,000, as compared with 12 in Boston and New York, and 26 in Denver, Colo.—due, of course, to the fact that consumptives resort to Denver from all parts of the country. The rate of 13.80 deaths per 1,000 from old age (considerably the highest on the list), is accredited to Salt Lake City, a condition to account for which no theory has yet been brought forward. In Pittsburgh and Chicago deaths from old age are only 2 per 1,000.

At a time when the extension of municipal functions is occupying public attention, it is interesting to note the figures which relate to city ownership. Ninety-six cities own their own water supply, among the exceptions being Indianapolis, New Haven, New Orleans and San Francisco. Four have municipal gas works—Duluth, Richmond, Toledo and Wheeling—and 13 own and operate electric light plants.

The Election Frauds.

From Senator Magee's Pittsburgh Times.

The frauds alleged to have been perpetrated in certain election precincts of Philadelphia are of a character so startling and serious that stern duty to the people and to the Republican party demands their thorough investigation and the meting out of swift and severe punishment to the guilty ones should such an investigation establish the truth of the charges. The developments at the preliminary hearing, which have been set forth in The Times, were of the most sensational character, and the exposure of the methods pursued by these repeaters was so complete and convincing as to leave little, if any, room for doubt. Nothing can be justly advanced in extenuation of such crimes against the ballot box. They are a blow struck directly at the liberties of the whole people, and in this case they are also a crime against the Republican party. That party has always stood for "a free ballot and a fair count," and it cannot defend such deliberate and wholesale violations of right as these charges cover. The investigation of these alleged crimes should be prosecuted by every agency of the law, and if they are proved to be true the perpetrators and all those responsible, directly or indirectly, for them should receive, without any mitigation, the punishment an outraged law provides. The sanctity of the ballot box is the supreme importance to every citizen and no matter how close their alliance with the continuous support of those in control of the party organization in the state the sternest punishment is none too severe for those who would thus bring discredit upon Pennsylvania and upon the Democratic party.

Go into Training Now.

And when, at last, the midnight guns A New Year's dawn have thundered, We'll all burn midnight oil to learn To write it 1900.

Current Comment.

The prosperity of which we hear so much from our Republican exchanges is confined mostly to those who needed it least. Manufacturers and trusts are getting the lion's share. The price of nails affords a good illustration of the whole case. In 1898 the price of nails was \$1.50 per keg; now they are selling at \$4.35, or an increase in cost to the consumer of 190 per cent, while the increase in wages is but 10 per cent. The manufacturer had a profit at the price of \$1.50, but at the price of \$4.35 he has a profit of 190 per cent. The price of the trust has an enormous profit now. Fully 90 per cent of the increased cost on most articles is clear profit to somebody else than the man who does the work to produce them.

McKinley professes to be satisfied with the result of the recent election in Ohio as an endorsement of his imperial vote for almost the entire endorsement given him by his own state? The majority against Mr. McKinley, as shown by the combined vote of McLean and Jones, is 60,000, while Mr. Bryan was endorsed by a clear majority of 15,000 in his state of Nebraska.

The voting machine at the recent election in Buffalo worked to the satisfaction of everybody. It was absolutely correct, no man could work it for more than a chance to vote at a time, and the result was known all over the city within an hour after the polls closed. The Philadelphia machine was not so generally satisfactory, though it did work that pleased its advocates. It dumped 200 ballots into one ballot box to start with, in order not to be obliged to have so many to put in later in the day. The result is, the honest citizens of the state are disgusted, some of the perpetrators of the fraud are staring at penitentiary doors, while the instigators of the crime are going King in the next few months there will be other nations above at this time, in business and industry. Labor is very scarce in that country, owing to the wave of prosperity which has swept over the land, and there is talk of importing negro laborers from Jamaica. The Mexican Herald says that within the next few months there will be great activity in the way of railroad building and the construction of port works. Fully 20,000 laborers will be required, and as most of this work will be done in districts affected with yellow fever the problem becomes more acute. It is almost impossible to procure men from the north to go down into the hot country.

The republic of Mexico, although friendly to silver to the extent of making it the basis of its currency and financial system, is prospering as all other nations are at this time, in business and industry. Labor is very scarce in that country, owing to the wave of prosperity which has swept over the land, and there is talk of importing negro laborers from Jamaica. The Mexican Herald says that within the next few months there will be great activity in the way of railroad building and the construction of port works. Fully 20,000 laborers will be required, and as most of this work will be done in districts affected with yellow fever the problem becomes more acute. It is almost impossible to procure men from the north to go down into the hot country.

The Democrats of the state are pretty well out of patience with the so-called Democratic organization of Philadelphia. About the only time the Philadelphia leaders show any activity is at state conventions; but unless they make more of a showing hereafter toward repressing ballot box stuffing and general political crookedness instead of seeming to wink at it, they will not be permitted to have so much to say in conventions. All reasonable allowance should be made for the political sins with which they are charged, but when it goes without contradiction that they hold after precedent in Philadelphia held election after election without a single qualified officer on the election board, and that, too, without a protest from anybody, there is something in Denmark that stinks. Philadelphia Democrats are not expected to poll votes they do not have, but they can make such a protest against open and flagrant election frauds as will make Ben Franklin's statue on city hall smile an approval.

PAID DEAR FOR HIS LEG.—R. D. Blanton of Thackerville, Tex., in two years paid over \$300.00 to doctors to cure a running sore on his leg. Then they wanted to cut it off, but he cured it with one box of Bucklen's Arnica Salve. Guaranteed cure for piles. 25cts. a box. Sold by F. Potts Green druggist.

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