

The Dispatch.

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PITTSBURGH, SUNDAY, JAN. 25, 1903.

THE PARALLEL COMPLETE.

In commenting upon the bill to loan \$100,000,000 of the Government credit to the Nicaragua Canal scheme the other day, THE DISPATCH remarked that if the bill should become a law "it will be a modern miracle if the familiar feature of inside construction companies and profitable wheels within wheels be not evolved out of this scheme, throwing wholly into the shade the enormous private fortunes which were similarly coined at public expense out of the famous Pacific Railroad subsidies."

It now appears that we have to tender an apology to the promoters of this project for failure to properly appreciate the speculative energy and the promptness with which they adopt the modern method of absorbing all the profits of the enterprise which is to be pushed with Government funds. An interview with Colonel Andrews, published elsewhere, brings out a very direct intimation that the promoters of the canal project have already made a contract with themselves for its construction; that this contract was made without competition, and at a price of \$100,000,000. Government funds or credit is obtained for the enterprise, we need not fear that the undertaking will be an exceedingly prosperous one—for the contractors who obtained the contract under their own capacity as directors.

This completes the parallel between the new project and the famous Pacific railroad jobbery. With the legislative provisions so nearly identical there can be little doubt that the methods of carrying them out will be the same. If Congress makes this remarkable grant of \$100,000,000 of Government credit to the Nicaragua canal in remote districts, in preference to furnishing our own nation with interior water-communications, it will be easy to write its history in advance. The construction company will take the bonds of the Government and the stock of the company at valuations yielding a hundred per cent profit on the work. When it is completed—and even completion is not necessary to the profit of the contractors—the question whether the promoters whose canal was built for them by the Government credit ought to operate it or not will be decided as in the case of the Pacific roads by the chance to make money by inside manipulations. The ultimate result, if the canal property is worth holding on to, will be a reproduction of the present plan in the case of the Pacific roads that the Government must in justice to its beneficiaries give them an indefinite extension of the debt for a century or two at a nominal rate of interest.

Such a proposition, for the use of Government credit entirely outside the territory of the United States, with such a faithful reproduction of the Pacific Railroad legislation, could hardly be expected to receive any toleration except upon one hypothesis. It might be interesting to inquire whether another feature of the Pacific Railroad jobbery is not reduplicated by the handing around under the surface at the national capital of blocks of stock in the construction company that is to absorb the profits of the enterprise, and placing the shares of the enterprise under the classic policy of the late Hon. Oakes Ames, "where they will do the most good."

DIRECT PROCESS STEEL.

Pittsburg is still at the front in iron and steel manufacture and likely to remain there indefinitely. The success of the Adams direct process for producing open hearth steel seems now to be demonstrated conclusively. This process, first announced in THE DISPATCH, exclusively about a year ago, promises to revolutionize the business. Results are claimed that were at first not thought to be possible, significant among them being that a grade of material superior to the famous production of Sweden. Experiments have been going forward since the first announcement of the discovery, with such success that plenty of capital is offered to put the process in operation on an extensive scale. The location of a new large mill in this city is a matter for congratulation, while at the same time it shows the good judgment of the parties interested in availing themselves of unrivaled facilities.

AN ATTACK ON THE ARISTOCRACY.

Reform is rampant at the Metropolitan Opera House. Not only have the declamatory strains and discordant orchestrations of Wagner been replaced by the flowing and passionate melody of the Italian school, but a more remarkable change has been made by the display of a disposition that the people shall have a chance to hear the opera. Other words of radical and revolutionary spirit were taken at the performance of "L'AFRICAIN" the other night of posting up

a notice informing the occupants of the boxes that "many complaints have been made to the directors of the Opera House of the annoyance produced by the talking boxes during performance, the board request that it be discontinued."

This is even a more radical departure than the change from German to Italian opera. The way of German opera at the Metropolitan Opera House was mainly due to the idea in the minds of the leaders of the Four Hundred, produced by the ardent labors of the Wagnerians, that it was the correct sign of musical taste to revel in the outbursts of the former and to eschew the meretricious strains of the latter. But such an impertinent request as that the boxes should be discontinued is one which the audience with an accompaniment to the opera of their own spicily conversation, strikes at the very root of vested rights. It has been fully set forth heretofore that this opera house is the special property of box owners; that it exists for their special exploitation. How can they manifest their leadership in culture and manners except by entertaining the more common and vulgar element of the audience with their brilliant remarks on nothing in particular? To attempt to curtail this privilege of these models in polite finish, is to strike a deadly blow at that theory which has been advanced that the real attraction for the public at this shrine of fashion is the inexorable pleasure of witnessing the members of the Four Hundred, and of listening to their intellectual comments on the last Vanderbilt reception or the Astor engagement.

Of course, the occupants of boxes at the Opera House, when this unwarranted request was laid before them, passed it over with lofty disdain. They were well acquainted with the duty of upholding the high privileges of fashion to pay attention to the wishes of the vulgar herd who go to the Metropolitan Opera House for any such retrograde purpose as hearing the performance. Nevertheless, the fact that a request has been made that those who can afford boxes should bring themselves down to the level of common politeness that applies to mere pebbles in the stalls, shows that the haven of socialism is at work which threatens to reduce the awful sentence of the New York aristocrats to the dead and uninteresting level of the undistinguished populace.

A GREAT STRIKE THREATENED.

President Rogers of the American Federation of Labor, leaves no doubt that the miners will demand an eight hour working day all along the line, and says they are prepared for a fight, if they must fight, to get what they demand. The sympathy of the public will be with the miners in the hope that they may lessen the hours of their toil, though a great strike must be deprecated. Nevertheless, the mine operators will regard the demand as a most natural advance the price of coal by decreasing the supply. In the end the operators may yield, if they think they can keep prices up enough to pay the difference. In this view of the case it would seem possible to effect the necessary change in prices by a partial suspension of work by mutual agreement, if such change must be effected at all.

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE REPUBLIC.

On another page to-day will be found the views of eminent and representative men on the durability of our republican institutions, the perils which may weaken or destroy them, and the possibility of foreign control by the industrial enterprises by foreign millionaires or syndicates. The widest variety of opinion is expressed, from Mr. Powderly's open assertion that pure republican government cannot last if power is permitted to drift into the hands of plutocratic and monopolistic organizations, to the optimistic views of the eminent Senators, who cannot see but that every political prospect pleases and all laws are enacted and administered by the people and for the people.

Mr. Sherman's somewhat stern reference to the decision of the subject to the newspaper editors makes it pertinent to say that, while the optimistic view is the most correct in its forecast, the pessimistic view recognizes most clearly the existing situation. While this may be paradoxical, it may be explained by stating it conversely. The optimists do not sufficiently recognize the perils involved in the pending problems; while the pessimists do not place sufficient faith in the corrective force inherent in a country where the power rests in the hands of the people, as determined by intelligent discussion. The perils which threaten like Mr. Powderly and Bishop Potter perceive are not more incongruous with and destructive of free government than the system of human slavery which prevailed for more than three-quarters of the first century of the republic. They can be reformed without any such expenditure of blood and treasure as that which entailed. A nation which has triumphed in the first order can certainly cherish a firm faith in its ability to solve the problems presented by the growth of monopolies and plutocratic forces.

But the firmest adherents to this faith should recognize that there is a clear perception of the present and the incident danger. The note of alarm sounded by Mr. Powderly in such plain language is more pertinent and intelligent than the optimistic disposition to regard everything as all right. It is true, as Mr. Powderly declares, that there are features of development to-day which are absolutely inconsistent with the permanent principles of our institutions. It is even true that the prevailing tendencies to-day are ignoring and nullifying the principles of constitutional free government. If these are not reformed the inevitable result will be ruin to republican institutions; and that they may be reformed it is necessary that the perception of them shall be widespread and distinct.

To that end it is well to give the peril a wider and more inclusive definition than any of the gentlemen whose views are quoted elsewhere. The abuses which threaten our democratic organization, and the failure to maintain intact the letter and spirit of the constitutional enactments on which our popular liberties are founded. This evil permits alike the whole range of corporate abuses, the practices of partisan aggression, and the corruption and indifference of the voting masses. Only two illustrations are needed to show how far this nullification of the constitutional standards has already gone. The keynote of our political system is established by representatives whom the people shall choose; and the country is familiar with the spectacle of controlling legislative bodies by deciding contested elections not in accordance with the testimony as to who was honestly elected by the people, but in accordance with party dictation. Nothing is more essential to democratic society than the control of all its elements by constitutional law; yet the spectacle has long been presented in this State of a corporation which holds themselves superior to the Constitution, and a Governor

who eight years ago set forth the necessity of maintaining the Constitution, and the other day by repeating his words called attention to the fact that nothing has been done, is only met in certain quarters by jeers upon his poverty of language and barrenness of ideas.

Illustrations of the departure from the constitutional standards would be multiplied; but that is not necessary. It is evident that if the republic is to be maintained in its strength and pristine vigor all classes must be made to respect the principles underlying its Constitution. When the people assume themselves to this necessity the problem will be solved; but the sooner the work is commenced the easier will be the task.

HELPING PROFESSOR KOCH.

Whether Dr. Muddorff can give any valuable pointers to Professor Koch on the treatment and subjugation of the various varieties of villainous bacilli or not, his effort is worth a trial. There is, at least, much to commend his plan of making his suggestions to the man who has already done so much, in preference to setting up a new line of experiment. Professor Koch may be able to make good use of the suggestions; they may be the very thing he has been looking for to make his remedy altogether efficacious. Of course they may be of no value to him. In a latter case, good as the idea is, the former case great good will be the result.

THESE UNOUTH RUSTICS.

The idiosyncrasies of agricultural Legislatures furnish a subject which is evoking sarcastic comments from the lofty organs of financial and monetary centers; and the Kansas Legislature is no exception to the rule. A caustic New York journal has found in the London Times a description of the Serbian Skupstina, or legislative body, which is composed largely of peasants, and proceeds to discover points of resemblance between the rural members of the Serbian Skupstina and more "cultured" than that of the Kansas legislators, "though we have recently been assured that nearly all of the latter wear turn-down collars and black neckties," though one of them is sockless. "The points of resemblance are enlarged upon as follows: The Times tells us that the peasants of the Serbian Skupstina see no necessity for applying any other standards than the ones advanced for the relief at Johnston; but since the transaction was a private one, the formality of a thorough and careful audit becomes necessary when it is to be ratified by the Legislature and made good by the public treasury."

It seems that if any information is to be got about that silver pool it will have to be from people who were outside of it. All the fellows who are inside of it unite in testifying that they know nothing about it. This prevalence of ignorance is alarming.

It is interesting to learn that a member of the New York Board of Aldermen recently expressed his indignation at being out short in the stock market. The speaker assumes some of the reports of the inebrity prevailing at the passage of certain measures in Congress might rank those measures in the "Jag" list. It is not at all surprising that the members of the Board of Aldermen, who are so much interested in the "Jag" list, should be so much interested in the "Jag" list.

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have succeeded in utterly abolishing competition. If it is the granger statesman who is responsible for this new spirit at Harrisburg, he has not entered the halls of legislation in vain.

It will be time enough when there is evidence of the contemplated injustice in the terms proposed to begin criticism. The Legislative Committee will give a hearing upon the facts and figures of all concerned, and then the public can judge whether there is not just grounds for some procedure on the lines now mapped out.

AFAIRS WITH THE WESTINGHOUSE Electric Company would seem to be very much simplified during the week by the assurance that Westinghouse has succeeded in getting up a preferred stock of the \$2,000,000 company to a sufficient extent to enable the company to continue to pursue its business, which, relieved of the embarrassment, is represented as large and thriving. If the Pittsburgh subscribers who voluntarily pledged themselves to \$300,000 subscriptions to relieve the company now come forward, the condition made by the Eastern subscribers that \$2,000,000 in all be taken, would be pretty near fulfilled. The original financing and methods of capitalization of the electric company are by means to be made good by the company's success in making of attempting a great business very largely on water and credit. But that is not the issue now. The question is to re-establish it on a cash basis, and to keep an important part of it in the hands of the public with well to the new plan, and also to Mr. Westinghouse, whose enterprise and energy have certainly in many conspicuous particulars been of benefit to the industries of the city.

It is stated that a robust artificial rain storm would cost the Government \$20,000. If the rain storm can be successfully and adequately produced for that sum, at the right time, it would make a very good thing for the Government. It is especially amusing to those who know Cody that he would not make a bad thing out of it. It is especially amusing to those who know Cody that he would not make a bad thing out of it. It is especially amusing to those who know Cody that he would not make a bad thing out of it.

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MATTERS OF MOMENT.

A Budget of Short Talks With All Sorts of People on All Sorts of Topics Gathered by THE DISPATCH'S STAFF Correspondent in NEW YORK CITY.

THE LAWRENCE, Librarian State Senator, the war correspondents at the seat of the Indian difficulties have been doing good work. The greatest war correspondents in this country ever saw, in my opinion, were Richardson, Willard and Redpath. They saw more battles than any other war correspondents of the Rebellion, not excepting army officers.

BILLY DEUTSCH, insurance agent and manager of the Westinghouse Electric Company, is a man who has succeeded in getting up a preferred stock of the \$2,000,000 company to a sufficient extent to enable the company to continue to pursue its business, which, relieved of the embarrassment, is represented as large and thriving.

THE bill to reimburse William H. Kemble, of Philadelphia, for the \$400,000 advanced by him to Governor Beaver to perform necessary State work at Johnston, but since the transaction was a private one, the formality of a thorough and careful audit becomes necessary when it is to be ratified by the Legislature and made good by the public treasury.

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He will allow them to have guns for hunting purposes only. Each Indian is to receive a stock of cartridges, a gun and a rifle. A hunting rifle, a gun and a rifle. A hunting rifle, a gun and a rifle. A hunting rifle, a gun and a rifle.

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STORIES OF STATESMEN.

Experience of T. P. O'Connor, the Famous Irishman, as a Newspaper Correspondent.

ABILITY TO KILL ENEMIES.—T. P. O'Connor, the world-famous Irishman, who is now visiting America, has done much newspaper writing and at one time he was the cable correspondent on Irish topics of a syndicate of industrial American newspapers. An amusing incident of his connection with this syndicate was told me recently by the gentleman who used to manage it.

THE LAWRENCE, Librarian State Senator, the war correspondents at the seat of the Indian difficulties have been doing good work. The greatest war correspondents in this country ever saw, in my opinion, were Richardson, Willard and Redpath.

BILLY DEUTSCH, insurance agent and manager of the Westinghouse Electric Company, is a man who has succeeded in getting up a preferred stock of the \$2,000,000 company to a sufficient extent to enable the company to continue to pursue its business, which, relieved of the embarrassment, is represented as large and thriving.

THE bill to reimburse William H. Kemble, of Philadelphia, for the \$400,000 advanced by him to Governor Beaver to perform necessary State work at Johnston, but since the transaction was a private one, the formality of a thorough and careful audit becomes necessary when it is to be ratified by the Legislature and made good by the public treasury.

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