

The Scranton Tribune

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May be Mr. Gladstone isn't entitled to smile now!

A Mistaken Policy.

It will be a mistake if the Democrats in congress shall seek to make a partisan issue over the president's message asking for funds to apply to the relief of the destitute Americans in Cuba.

When the European powers deliberately play with fire they must be prepared to expect a scorching. We are beginning to think better of the Turk.

An Important Undertaking.

The convention of the National Slavonic society now in session in Wilkes-Barre is interesting by reason of the opportunity which it affords to native Americans to familiarize themselves with and extend co-operation to a most laudable work that is being performed under this society's auspices among a large alien element in our citizenship.

The National Slavonic society, as its worthy president, Mr. P. V. Rovnianek, explains, was organized six years ago in Pittsburgh, for the purpose of bringing together the scattered communities of Slavonic immigrants in the United States for their mutual aid and protection.

Secretary Sherman's opinion that the government will survive Hon. John W. Wainwright's disengagement is doubtless well-founded.

The United States will deliberately sanction such an inexcusable policy of carelessness, perfidy and dishonor.

It would be cowardice for the United States to assume that it owes no duty to morals when, on an island almost within the shadow of its shore, thousands of innocent men, women and children are being massacred in wholesale by a worse butcher than the Turk.

American Degeneration.

When the massacres broke out in Armenia and the Christian powers of Europe permitted them to go on until thousands of lives had fallen forfeit to Islam, there was indignation protest throughout the length and breadth of the United States.

A condition of affairs has arisen in unhappy Cuba which differs from the Armenian massacres mainly in particular respects. The Turk butchered those whom he regarded as infidels and traitors; but Weyler is starving to death or condemning to the slow torture of wasting disease nearly two hundred thousand pacificos who worship the same God as His Christian Majesty, the King of Spain.

When the Turk started to butcher the Armenians, the powers of Europe were in a situation that each was afraid to intervene. Russia was jealous of England, France feared Germany and Austria lay between the Kaiser and the Czar.

In Scriptural days such a spectacle of man's inhumanity to man would have drawn from the heavens an avenging bolt of God's consuming wrath; but in this plighting time of stock speculation and pink teas, apparently the most that it nowadays does is to cause the good citizen to talk a little more fluently in favor of arbitration, and to inspire in the seats of the mighty an increased subservency to the spirit of profit and loss.

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A Starchless Civil Service.

The memorandum attached by Governor Black, of New York, to his signature of the "starchless" civil service bill opens up an interesting theme of discussion. The bill in substance provides for two kinds of examination for applicants to office.

By this means it is hoped to secure men not only bright mentally, but also possessed of tact, experience, good habits, pleasing manners and other qualities not to be discovered by a routine examination, according to the plan heretofore in vogue.

"If a public officer having the power of appointment is forced to be dishonest, why would not a public officer having the power of examination be dishonest as well? Both are public officials; both are indebted to some political party for their places.

whatever and runs no risk. He may certify to the qualifications of his incompetent and low-bred friends without limit, and send them to the different departments. He pays no penalty for their inefficiency or misdeed, while, on the other hand, the head of every department is responsible for the conduct of its affairs.

It remains to be seen how the plan which Governor Black offers as a substitute will work in practice. It appears on its face somewhat cumbersome, but we dare say it is not more so than the old plan which it supersedes.

The way civil service "reform" worked under the Cleveland interpretation is shown in the statistics of the government printing office. Here during the last administration, two Democrats were appointed to each Republican, and one Democrat reduced to three Republicans.

The Democrats in the senate decided wisely when they determined not to frame an antagonistic tariff bill. Their record is against them.

Gossip at the Capital

Washington, May 17.

A proposition to increase the tax on beer and at the same time to reduce the tax on whiskey seems a somewhat novel one but is not unlikely to be accepted by congress before the new revenue bill becomes a law.

"Do you think, senator," was asked, "that the high rates of taxation on whiskey which have existed since the law was enacted have not been the cause of the reduction in the amount of whiskey consumed in the United States or the amount manufactured?"

"No," the revenue from the tax on distilled spirits has fallen off and of course the first thought would be that a reduction in the amount of revenue collected would be a reduction in the amount manufactured by the people and the amount manufactured by the distillers. But this is not the case.

"How does the increased rate encourage fraud?" "Simply because there is more profit in making and putting upon the market whiskey of alcohol upon which the tax has not been paid than when the tax is under the old law.

"Then it is the fact that the market has been supplied to a great extent with spirits in which the tax has not been paid that accounts for the small quantity of tax paid spirits withdrawn for consumption?"

"Undoubtedly. The figures of the treasury department show that in other lines of this general character the consumption has not fallen off, nor has the revenue fallen off. The revenue from both beer and tobacco has kept up steadily since the enactment of the Wilson law, while that from distilled spirits has fallen off. For instance, the receipts from tobacco in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1894, were \$28,617,238 and in the year ended June 30, 1896, were \$30,711,629.

"Then it is the fact that the market has been supplied to a great extent with spirits in which the tax has not been paid that accounts for the small quantity of tax paid spirits withdrawn for consumption?"

"You think, then, that by going back to the former rate of taxation the amount of crime in the matter of illicit distillation will be reduced and the revenues of the government increased, do you?" "Yes, I think there is no doubt of that. It is believed by those who have studied

the question that more revenue can be obtained by putting the rate of taxation at about 70 cents per gallon than at any other figure, as this rate would probably reduce still further the amount of illicit distillation. The report recently sent to congress by Secretary Gage in answer to a resolution of inquiry introduced by myself expressed the opinion that the most successful method of curtailing illicit spirits is 70 cents per gallon. But if we go back to the old rate which existed for so many years, 50 cents per gallon, we should get our former revenues from this source back again and reduce the illicit distillation to a minimum and this I think we ought to do. If we can put a stop to fraud upon the government and at the same time increase the revenue without increasing the actual consumption of distilled spirits, it seems only a reasonable thing to do, and I think an effort in that line will be made when the bill is taken up by the senate."

One of the most remarkable statements yet made to the committee of the senate in investigating the operation of the civil service law was made by Chief Clerk Collins, who has been an employee of the government printing office for thirty years. In 1882 he was appointed to membership on the board of examiners. He had received his commission when one day he was visited by the private secretary of Public Printer Gage, who requested that he be removed from the public printer. Being a man of experience and wisdom he took the hint and never present at a meeting of the board.

The proper deduction from this astounding statement is that Mr. Benedict, a favorite of Cleveland, and public printer during both of the Cleveland administrations, was the board of examiners himself. He did not want the assistance of any one of experience and of non-partisan disposition to assist him to make his appointments. This throws a lot of light on the performance of Cleveland and his friends in the matter of the civil service law. It shows that he had performed his work and reached the end of his string in the business of removals and appointments, and that he had spread his hands in devout thanks and solemn prayer over the whole charming arrangement of the blanket of the civil service law.

There does not seem to be any substantial reason for the report that has gone abroad that these disreputable tortions of the civil service acts in both spirit and letter will result in a report from congress in favor of any material modification of the law or of its execution. The broad testimony that has been given by any of the witnesses against the law is that heads of bureaus should be permitted to appoint their immediate assistants. A member of the investigating committee, Mr. Kelly, assures us that this is merely in the interest of opening such places for party use as can be secured without exciting the antagonism of those who believe in a stable and non-partisan civil service. Congressmen demand all the places they can get without bringing odium upon themselves. These are the places which should be released from the operations of the law they dare ask, and the most the committee expects to report in the direction of a modification of the law will be in line with the testimony referred to. There is considerable doubt whether they will even go so far as this. They may do no more than report upon the gross maladministration of the law under the late Democratic administration.

GOOD BYE TO STEAM.

From the Providence Journal. Travelling by rail will be better worth than the dirt and noise of the steam locomotive has been done away with. The discomforts of a summer ride will give place to the genuine enjoyment which now attaches to a trolley ride into the suburbs, only the pleasure will be increased proportionately with the greater variety of scene the longer ride will give and the speed at which the car will move. The passing of the stage coach had more than a sentimental effect upon men and manners in the United States, and the disappearance of the locomotive before the electric motor will involve far-reaching changes in our commercial and social relations.

"BOHEMIA."

From the New York Sun. Improvidence and self-indulgence, billings and rattling are the "genius" of that imaginary realm (Bohemia). Its literature seems to consist of the French of shabby table and the life in an effort to find happiness in being down at the heels, unkempt and disreputable. There are still persons who delight to style themselves "Bohemians" and who wear clean shirts and pay honest debts. These Bohemians deserve a certain pity, although they are humbugs, and they practice a kind of life so wearisome and frowsy that their voluntary punishment seems almost more than befits natures essentially weak and second-hand.

SOUND AND JUST.

From the Washington Star. The Dingley bill, as originally drawn, was a sound and just measure. It provided for the raising of enough revenue for the support of the government, and for a reasonable protection to American industries. It was a national bill, in that all sections were remembered in it and would benefit by it. The men who drafted it were not in any way contemptible for their work, but enjoyed a very high reputation before the country.

FOR REVENUE ONLY.

From the Times-Herald. Rudyard Kipling's poem on the tariff undoubtedly was written for revenue only.

A LIFE LESSON.

There, little girl, don't cry. They've broken your doll, I know, And your tea set and blue and gold, And your toyhouse, too, Are things of the long ago; But childish troubles will soon pass by, There, little girl, don't cry.

There, little girl, don't cry: They've broken your doll, I know, And the glad world ways Of your schoolgirl days Are things of the long ago; But life will give you new things to come by; There, little girl, don't cry.

There, little girl, don't cry: They've broken your doll, I know, And the rainbow gleams Of your youthful dreams Are things of the long ago; But life will hold all for which you sigh; There, little girl, don't cry.

There, little girl, don't cry: They've broken your doll, I know, And the rainbow gleams Of your youthful dreams Are things of the long ago; But life will hold all for which you sigh; There, little girl, don't cry.

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