## THE SCRANTON TRIBUNE-SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1898.

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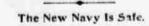
The Tribune's telegraphic news is from three to five hours fresher than that of any Philadelphia or New York paper circulated in its field. Those papers go to press at midnight; The Tribune receives news up to 3 a. m. and sometimes later. All the news in The Tribune while it is new.

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SCRANTON, FEBRUARY 26, 1898.

In another place in this issue appears a clear and comprehensive review of the Malue disaster, reproduced from that enterprising and well-edited society journal, Town Topics. It surrounds the subject in a manner worthy of high admiration.



Had the Maine blown up in any other harbor than Hayana there would un. doubtedly have been an instant and general clamor in this country against the expenditure of more of the nation's money in unsafe warships. It had been difficult at best to get sufficient autherization from public sentiment to cuable the naval experts at Washingtoo to make what little progress they have made toward the development of a modern mavy. Money for the new war craft had been voted by congress. from time to time, grudgingly and with a considerable minority alleging

throwing money away The first thought which suggested itself to many of us upon receipt of the news of the Mnine disaster was that it signified an abrupt halt to further caval progress along present lines. We are glad that that foreboding has not been justified, as we embrace this early opportunity to confess our mistake. As Captain Mahan, the greatest living authority on naval matters, "The disposition said at the time: to condemn the battle ship offhand as \* fighting machine, whether the assumption be that the Maine perished from internal causes or from external, can proceed only from ignorance of the facts of battle ship construction in general and consequent mistaken inference as to the results of future naval battles. Professional men knew before that such ships had a narrow margin in stability, and they knew also that the narrow margin, quite sufficient for safety under ordinary circumstances, might under unusual conditions cause what then happened. But that narrow margin of stability constituted a necessary risk. Ships of that character sway with easier movement than those which are stiffer. They are therefore better gun plat. forms; give better shooting, and to shoot straight to the mark is an end so primary in a ship of war as to

justify some risk to attain it." Captain Mahan went further. In his

that he had not made up his mind treasury and the banks during the whether to accept the invitation or not. past eighteen months that it is becoming a burden and the officials are en-It is possible that the foregoing excerpt from the News-Dealer, which is undeavoring to get rid of a portion by derstood to be, under its new manageplacing it in circulation whenever an ment, his official organ, was meant to opportunity is offered. This seems to indicate to the people of Lackawanna be an advance spike in Billy Bryan's that Mr. Leisenring had decided to go 1900 gun.

into an anti-Connell pool. If so, it is in the nature of news and therefore Various Phases of worth reprinting. While on this subject it may not be

imiss to extend to Mr. Leisenring. Colonel Stone or anybody che who may desire to contest for the delegates in this county a cordial welcome. They are welcome singly or in conjunction; in fact, the more the merrier. To defeat a man who has never declared his candidacy for governor, who thus far s a candidate wholly by grace of popular rumor and newspaper gossip, ought oot to be didicult. And then, too, what a famous victory it would be! How proud it would make the friends of Mr. Leisenring or Colonel Stone or both to know that their paid chamcions-in-arms had succeeded in putting to rout an enemy which had existed wholly in their own imaginations!

It is re-assuring to know that should the worst come to the worst, we would have little to lose in the way of trade with Spain. Our imports from that country have during the past few years averaged only about \$4,000,000 and our exports to her only about 12. country of year. There isn't a country of any consequence in Europe that we have had less to do with in a commercial way.

Keep Cool. It were futile to attempt to deny so palpable a fact as that the war spirit in the United States is rising, Such a denial would meet with contradiction on every hand and therefore fall in screnuous fashion that it was simply unheeded. But it requires to be understood that it will take more than mere excitement to plunge a sensible people

into war; and at bottom Americans are a sensible people Exasperation at Spain undoubtedly prevails. It is the outgrowth of much provocation and it will demand satisfaction before it shall subside. But this by no means necessitates nor implies war. Spain must get out of Cuba. That is certain. American opinion, goaded by prolonged and steadily emphasized annoyances arising from the rottenness of Spanish rule in Cuba, has determined upon this as its ultimatum. Still, Spain's exit from Cuba need not require us to go to war. She is fast starving herself out; a little time and the Cuban insurgents will do the rest. The loss of the Maine, too, must be accounted for; but neither does this require a war. The jury is still out and Americans are not going to interrupt their deliberations. But if prevalent suspicions are confirmed by its verdict, spain will promptly indemnify us and there will be no war.

ioats.

Let everybody, then, keep his thought-bunker cool and avoid spontaneous mental combustion. It will be time to explode when all milder methods have failed.

The Binghamton Leader after a long search makes the announcement that a hat factory at Reading has been obliged to suspend operations on account of hard times brought on by the McKinley administration. The Democratic organs find it very difficult just now to secure material necessary to make any kind of a showing in keeping up the calamity howl.

accident should be the one directly be-neath the Maine. A Spanish authority has claimed that had a submarine mine exploded the harbor would have been strewn with dead fish, which was not the case. To this I may say, an inter-nal explosion of the force exhibited would have shocked them marks as much have shocked them nearly as much.

The explosion of a small mine or a tor The explosion of a small mille of a lor-pedo against the vessel's hull would, of liself alone, not cause damage of the marghitude actually observed. It would merely blow a big hole in the bottom, causing the vessel to sink at once, no doubt, but it would not have rent the hull so tremendously as the actual explosion the Maine Disaster

doubt, but it would not have rent the hull so tremendously as the actual explosion did. But it might have had co-operation from the vessel's own ammunition, which it might have exploded. In considering this phase of the matter certain proper-ties of gun-cotton, which was the high explosive used on the Malne, are to be remembered. Gun-cotton, when dry, burns harmlessly in the open air, but develops great expansive force when burned in confinement. When we it can-not be ignited in ordinary ways, and is as safe to handle as so much sail codfish. Ordinary and even quite severe blows will not discharge it. It can only be exwill not discharge it. It can only be (x-ploded by detonation. Accordingly, a high explosive exploding on contact with, or close to, the Maine's wet gun-cotton would probably explode the latter and bring about the disaster. Whether or not there was any gun-cot-ton stowed well down below forward 's not yet deputiely known so this theory not yet definitely known, so this theory must be held in abeyance. The explo-sion of a torpedo could likewise have exploded one of the magazines; but here again surmise comes in. It is probable that, if any magazine exploded, it was not the one containing the 10-inch amou-nition, for this would have created even greater damage than that which occurred.

The same reasoning that applies to the explosion of a torpeda or small submar-ine mine may be used in the considera-tion of an infernal machine, time bomb maintain the outward appearance of friendship. Under these conditions Cap-tain Sigsbee was compelled to assume his or something of the sort inside the ves-sel. Unalded by the vessel's own am-munition, it could hardly have wrought ship as safe from molestation in Havana as if she were in Southampton, Cron-stadt, Cherbourg or even New York, well the destruction that took place, but, like a torpedo, it might have exploded either the gun-cotion or a magazine. The sponknowing the while that such was not the

the gun-contion of a magazine. The spon-taneous-combustion theory has about as many objections to it as recommenda-tions. Fires have started spontaneously in coal bunkers very often, but they have hitherto soon been discovered. If a tree of this nature should have gained head-way next to the Maha's magazine the This naturally suggests the all-impor-tant subject of the precautions that could and should have been taken to protect his vessel from harm from without. The recognized precautions to be taken by an anchored vessel against the attack of moving torpedoes are outlying picket boats, torpedo nets surrounding the ship and due vigilance on the part of those on board. In the case of the Maine it would have been discourtcous for her to have surrounded herself with picket boats; such a step would also have neg-atived the avowals of mutual friendship between the two countries; it is never taken in time of peace. Here the point his vessel from harm from without. The way next to the Maine's magazine, the explosion of the latter would have been likely, notwithstending the fact that the charges of powder in the magazine are kept in tightly scaled separate metallic canisters. That such a fire though should have progressed sufficiently, without discovery, to ignite the contents of the mau-azine is difficult of belief. Every coal bunker has its automatic fire alarm, which at once gives notification when the temperature of the bunker has exceeded fessedly a time of peace. Here the point is to be taken that whatever picketing and patroling was to be done devolved, a certain degree. These devices have proved satisfactory in the service, but even if one should refuse to act, excesby courtesy at least, upon the Spanish authorities, just as the safety of the Spanish cruiser Vizcaya was insured sive heat in the bunker affected would be communicated to the adjacent compari-ments, the alarms in which would give w an efficient patrol of the the signal when the safety point was inited States and New York city passed. Again, the vessel was thorough-oats. Spain was delinquent in this ly inspected at 8 p. m. and all was found particular, although, of course, the old comparison of hindsights and foresights is here applicable. Torpedo nets mix be eliminated from the quessecure. The suggestions that short-cir-cuiting of electric wires or ignition of paints and oils caused the disaster are deserving of little attention; the former, because there are no wires within the magazines; the latter, because the paints and oils are remote from the magazines and their ignition could be quickly discov-ered. Regarded at this distance, and with the add of the limited information at tion, as the Maine did not carry them. They are not in use in our navy and are falling into disrepute abroad, as they hamper a vessel's movements, and tor-pedges of recent pattern can pierce them the aid of the limited information at present available, the indications point to the discharge of a submarine mine as or dive under them, besides being of such great power that their explosion even at the net would, in all likelihood, fatally the most likely cause of the explosion This could have been brought about by injure the vessel within. Even had the ill-fated vessel carried them their use would not have been justifiable, for the same reasons applied to the picket-boats. accident or design.

As for the vigilance on board, there is not the slightest evidence that it was re-The consequences of the disaster now onfront us. If the investigation of the As for the slightest evidence that is not the slightest evidence the many is a man as careful and is creet, down to the junior officers, were an unusually efficient and intelligent to the incompetence or negligence of anyone in the navy, such will be reported and the only consequences will be the adoption of steps to prevent its recurrence. If anyone is blamable, a court-martial will at once ensue. In either

case, Spain will be eliminated from the

question. If, however, it he found that



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From Town Topics. SIDE from its terrible features of death and destruction, the blow-ing up of the Maine was an incl-dent unique in the naval history of nations. No precedent or par-allel case can be recalled. In view of these aspects of the affair it well de-serves a careful, unemotional and un-blased consideration, free from the reck-less statements, absurd speculations and general sensationalism which have been accorded it in the daily press. The our-cumstances under which the Maine was anchored in the barbor of Havana were peculiar. Both the United States and Spanish governments emphatically pro-claimed hat the battleship's visit was a friendly and the battleship's visit was a

friendly one. In the nature of a social amenity from one nation to another, with which it was at profound peace; a step intended to jublish and to ement the existing cordial relations. On the other hand, no one is so stupid as to fail to cumprefield the Malacia real mission and omprehend the Maine's real mission and comprehend the Maine's real mission and to appreciate the sentiments toward her entertained by her ostensible hosts. The strained relations actually existing be-tween the two countries and the latent hostility between their representatives in Havana and on the Maine respectively cannot be gainsaid, and it required the exercise of extreme tact on the part of the superior officers on both sides to maintain the outward appearance of

address at the banquet of the Sons of Cincinnati at Princeton, N. J., on Washingtin's birthday, from which the above quotation is made, he also said; 'Consider, however, the number of war ships that are analogous in character if not in particular detail to the Maine which are traversing the ocean and having on board coal and powder year

in and year out without accident, and you will realize at once how preposterous it is to assume that because the effects of explosion are fearful the danger of explosion is great. I assure you, speaking as a seaman and as a neval officer, that any man that crosses the ocean in a passenger steamer undertakes in a week greater risk from collision than any seaman on board a ship of war does from explosion in the course of a year." The common sense embodied in these and similar utterances made an immediate impression on the public mind, and we believe it is not out of the way to affirm that even should the court of inquiry into the Maine disaster bring in a verdict unreservedly acquitting Spain and placing the whole responsibility upon accident there would be intelligence enough among the American people successfully to withstand the onslaught of those who oppose our navy and want to see its development arrested. In that case there would undoubtedly be a demand for the avoidance in future construction of the weak points disclosed by the Maine, but with this provise the command from the people would continue to be to go ahead.

On the contrary, a finding that the Maine was sent to her doom by mailce or by the negligence of those not connected with her navigation and man. agement would make imperative the taking of measures to replace her and incidentally to carry onward the work of navy building to the limit of our necessities. So that in either event it new seems assured that the new navy is safe.

If Cuba is to be purchased at this stage of the game, the buyers should insist that all the discounts be allowed.

Come One ; Come All.

The assertions quoted below are made by the Wilkes-Barre News-Dealer, a paper reputedly conducted in the political interest of ex-Congressman Leisenring:

A determined effort will be made to do-at Congressman Connell for the detegates in the Lackawanna districts. W. A. Stone's followers are there now. They are setting up the local delegates and raising the A. P. A. and secret so-ciety cries. His Lackawanna opponents will have every assignance from outside sources, a number of candidates being likely to pool with Stone to divide the delegation. Men will be put up for Con-self, but in reality they will be for Stone.

It was stated some months ago in one of the papers--at present we forget which one-that Mr. Leisenring had received assurances that he could carry Lackawanna county in the delegate elections against Mr. Connell. The gentleman from Upper Lehigh, in fact, -a quoted to this effect, he adding The Wrong End First.

An interesting publication has been ssued by a committee of the national onference recently held in New York city to consider the subject of purifying primary elections. It is in the form of a pamphlet of 150 pages containing a stenographic report of the proceedings of the conference, with the complete text of the papers read and the addresses made before it. The conference numbered among its attendants a majority of the more prominent American advocates of cleaner municipal and state government, and its minutes therefore crystallize the best thought of

the day upon this great problem. It is evident from the contents of this namphlet that there is little hope of an early agreement among primary reformers upon a specific plan of ac-tion. All agree that the primaries ders. I know the man. should be honest and representative. but there are almost as many ways proposed to reach this condition as there are primary reformers. This fact, o often true of professional reformers, whose hold upon public attention largely depends upon their ability to keep public opinion divided, simply reinforces our helief that entirely too much stress has been placed heretofore upon methods of reform and too little upon the reform of the man. That present

systems of primary elections are open to abuse and fruitful in scandal may readily be admitted without it followng as a necessary corollary that a change in systems, with no change in the character of the men back thereof, would bring perceptible and permanent relief. On the contrary, human experience no less than physical law aches that the fountain cannot rise higher than its source.

In other words, there is no cross-cut to cleanliness in politics. It is a goal to be reached only by a proper enforcement in political activities of the best character and conscience of the community. Given, in any election district, under any primary system, a majority of men of voting age who are

brave and honest, you may be sure that you will have clean primaries and good government. Given, under the best primary system known to man, an election district in which the majority is indifferent or corrupt, you may just as certainly expect crooked primaries and bad government. Changing the system without bettering the sentiment is like clothing the pig in satin. At the first mud-puddle the pig will

wallow.

Some of the New York banks have some of the New York banks have recently been tendering gold in pay-ment for checks presented at their counters. The explanation given for this proceeding is the fact that gold has been accumulating so rapidly in the been accumulating so rapidly in the marvel that the one mine sprung by

nalman, as usual, keenly on the lookout and several sentrics scanning the water for approaching or passing boats, besides everal of the anchor watch lounging

Against fixed submarine mines there are only two precautions: dragging-or countermining-and avoidance of the spots where their presence is suspected. Of course, Captain Sigsbee could not have undertaken dragging or countermining. which would have been a hostile act not to be tolerated. Always remembering the "friendly visit" aspect of the circum-

stances, he was virtually compelled to moor to one of the buoys in the man-of-war anchorage. This is the custom in all civilized ports and is generally accompanied by the designation, by a port official, of the buoy to be used. This was done in the case of the Maine, and there was no plausible reason why the buoy point-ed out should not have been taken. Nor ould he have sent divers down to examine the anchorage. This would have been an impertinent prying into government secrets. It will thus be seen that Captain Sigsbee cannot be justly charged with neglecting precautions. He did precisely what he should have done in the premises. In time of war he would assuredly have acted differently. It was peace, and he had to act accordingly, even though he appreciated fully his danger, and of this he had been warned. But Sigsbee possesses an iron nerve and dauntless ourage. He would have sailed into the

All familiar with the Maine, her officers and crew, agree that the discipline on hoard her was admirable at all times. Her people could have been at quarters nd her guns commenced firing in less than two minutes from the sounding of the call to general coarters to battle. The colness of all the survivors when the xplosion had occurred, and the forti-ude of the maimed and dying, testify to the stuff her officers and crew were mode of. The explosion came, as the world knows, like a thunderboli from a clear sky. The incidents connected with are matters of record, and most of hem are familiar

There are a variety of agents that might have caused the tragedy. If pro-duced by design, the most likely of these were a submarine mine of great explo-sive power, which could have caused the explosion directly; or one of relatively small explosive force, or a moving tor-pedo, or an infernal machine smuggled n board, any one of which could have caused it indirectly by exploding the ves-sel's own amnunition. If produced by accident the number of agents multiplies, Deterioration and chemical changes in explosives carried on board; spontaneou ombustion of paints, lubricants or fuel

combustion of plants, indexing of filer, short-effectivity of electric wires; or the accidental discharge, from shore, or by the ship herself in swinging at her mooriogs, of the or more submarine mines beneath her, are but a few of the possible causes. Their relative probability is another matter.

Let us first go upon the assumption that the vessel was blown up by a sub-marine mine of great power. That such were planted in Havana harbor is not to be defined. The mine could have been ex-ploded by an electric current from shore turned on al will, or else automatically. by the vessel striking the mine; but the latter only in case the electric circuit were closed, which could only be effected from shore. Therefore, in either event, the explosion could not have been brought about except by a shore operation. Here is an important point, careless attendant or operator in mining casemate, or one irresponsible

the Maine was blown up, either internal-ly or externally, by design, the aspect of the case will be exceedingly grave. Th results will depend largely upon the dis-covery of the author or authors of the THE MODERN HARDWARE STORE. act. If the explosion should be traced to the panish government, war-fierce and imnediate-is inevitable. If it should be hown that the deed was the act of an individual, or a few individuals, the Spanish government could not be held strictly accountable unless it were proved that it countenanced the act or did not take reasonable measures to prevent it. It is to be noted that there is danger here, for, unless Spain promptly pun-ished the culprits to the fullest extent, a mere disavowal and expressions of regret or apology would not satisfy the United States. If it be proved that the explo-sion was due to design the first act of the United States government would be to discover the perpetrators. If this were impossible there would still be grounds for a demand upon Spain to show how such a thing could be possible, as the Maine, on a friendly visit in a Spanish port, was dependent upon the protection of her host. Spain would have to show that the disaster was not due to any lack f vigilance of other shortcomings on her of vigilance of other shortcomings on her part, and unless she did so an ample apology and ample indemnity could rightly be demanded of her. Her refusal to grant these and to punish the of-fenders, if located, would be a casus belli. RANTED. Here is an important point. Suppose that it was a submarine mine that exploded, and suppose that Spain proved that the explosion was due to an accident or to the carelessness or crime of an irrespon-sible person. Spain would still have to





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despite the fact that of all possible causes of the disaster the most prob-able, from present indications, is a submarine mine. If such was the case, a grave duty devolves upon Spain. If she is delinquent, the deaths of the courageous, talented Jenkins, sturdy young Merritt and the other brave fellows hurled unwarned to their awful fate. will be avenued with certainty, celerity and completeness. Haviland China..

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