

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, DECEMBER 14, 1898.

While giving orders regarding the cleaning of sidewalks the street commissioner should include advice against sprinkling salt upon the snow, a practice that is unwholesome to man and destructive to shoe leather.

Give Him a Chance.

There is an evident agreement among the Wamamakee organs throughout the state to do what they can to discredit in advance the administration of Governor Stone. Although throughout the recent campaign they fought him and misrepresented him with ingenious industry they are now beginning to give him impossible directions as to how to conduct the affairs of his office.

Fortunately, among the masses there is an indelible love of fair play. This was shown by the emphatic refusal of the people to sacrifice Colonel Stone at the polls. He went among them with candid and honest words, and he kept his temper in the face of outrageous abuse, and they gave him at last a flattering testimonial of their confidence. These same quiet, thinking people, who were not misled by the misrepresentations and slanders of a desperate campaign, will not be hoodwinked now. They elected Colonel Stone to the office of governor and they will unmistakably sustain him so long as, in their opinion, he shall prove worthy. He made them no rash promises. He did not say he would special-ly try to placate the men who had introduced malice and venom into the campaign. He did not promise that he would go to John Wamamakee or the Wamamakee retainers for advice. He did promise that he would strive to deal faithfully and fairly with the whole people without regard to politics or faction; that he would be honest and try to enforce honesty among his official associates and subordinates; that, in brief, he would do conscientiously, from day to day, his duty as he saw it, and with the redemption of this pledge the plain people will be satisfied.

In spite of the howling chorus of professional dissenters, the people will give Colonel Stone a free field and a fair chance, and they will respect him the more if he shall prefer friends to enemies. They do not want a factional administration full of little bickerings and petty jealousies, and this would be the last kind of administration that William A. Stone would think of giving them. But they want him to go ahead, to use his own judgment, to select his own appointees and shape his own policy and not to be in the least disturbed by the snapping peck of little cur dogs that are already pecking him the honor to bark at his heels.

Canal Bills.

There are two Nicaragua canal bills now before congress. The Morgan bill reorganizes the Maritime Canal company by putting the United States in control through overwhelming representation on the board of directors, and puts the government guarantee upon this company's bonds. It also provides that the canal shall be closed to the ships of any country with which the United States are at war. The objections to this bill are that it gives Nicaragua and Costa Rica a minority representation on the board of directors and sets the bad example of letting government backing to what was originally and would still be nominally a private enterprise. Besides, there are many who believe that the compensation provided in the Morgan bill (\$7,900,000) for the stockholders of the Maritime Canal company in return for their surrender of rights, property and concessions, is unduly generous.

The other bill is known as the Hepburn bill and is decidedly preferable. It provides that the United States shall acquire ownership, jurisdiction and sovereignty over a strip of territory across the Isthmus sufficient for the construction, operation and defense of the canal. That this ownership and sovereignty having been acquired the president shall direct the secretary of war to construct the canal and that \$10,000,000 be appropriated for the work, to be paid out of the treasury from time to time, as the work progresses. There are no "ifs" and "ands" about this measure. It goes straight to the purpose. If we are to put our good money into a canal, Mr. Hepburn thinks we ought to own it unconditionally and he is right. How to get possession of "ownership, jurisdiction and sovereignty" over the required amount of Central American land is a matter for negotiation and purchase. The canal is something we must have and where there is a will there is usually a way.

It is possible that the Hepburn bill is too clean and concise for the schemers who are seeking to feather personal nests by means of canal legislation. It may not succeed in displacing the Morgan bill, which is a compromise

measure framed with a view to conciliating various factions. But it is the bill which embodies the plain common sense of the matter, and it ought to be passed.

The Cuban general, Luis Rivera, who has just been liberated after two years' confinement in Spanish prisons, says he would like to see Cuba one of the states of the American Union and fancies that will be its ultimate destiny. "But ever since I came of age," he adds, "I have been fighting for an independent Cuban republic and I should like a chance to try how I will work it." The sentiment is natural and creditable. Honest Americans will respect it.

The Tables Turned.

Senator Quay's petition alleging a set-up of the Philadelphia common pleon court against him has already put his assailants flatly on the defensive. The Wamamakee organs are now printing columns of gush designed to establish that Judge Gordon is too sweet and pure a man to conceive a spite against Quay or any other citizen. Unhappily for this theory, Gordon's recent correspondence with Colonel McClure is freshly in evidence against it. That correspondence exhibited a cast of temperament and a capacity for vindictiveness almost suggestive of mental derangement. Gordon's treatment of the Norristown insane asylum case two years ago is equally damaging to this hypothesis. It will be recalled that he then charged upon the management of that institution almost every known crime up to and including murder but failed to bring forward a shred of proof. Even his own expert witnesses directly contradicted him on the witness stand, and he withdrew from the case discredited.

Although the argument upon the motion for a writ of certiorari did not come up until Jan. 7, which will be the proper time for the prosecutors of Quay to state their case before the Supreme court, District Attorney Graham has already prepared a public statement, defensive of his attitude in the matter. The publication of this statement at this time strengthens the contention of the defense that the whole legal attack upon Quay is part of a carefully matured plan to involve him in the shadow of a manufactured criminal prosecution until after the election of a United States senator so as to contribute to his defeat for reelection. The idea presumably is that if he can be stigmatized by court processes until after the senatorship is disposed of it will then make no difference what becomes of the case against him. This is a form of sleuth-hound politics which, if successful in this instance, could hereafter be used with obvious unfairness against any candidate for any office in the land. But Senator Quay evidently does not propose to be caught in such a trap. He intends to have a fair hearing before a court free from malican influences and to get rid of the charges against him in plenty of time to enter the senatorial caucus, receive its endorsement and win easily on joint ballot.

There is no reason why Mr. Bailey would not make a good leader for the Democratic minority in the house. The ability to stand grief is about all that is required.

Army Reorganization.

The testimony given by Major General Nelson A. Miles on Monday before the house committee on military affairs touching the subject of army reorganization, only a part of which was reported through the Associated Press, was interesting in the extreme. We quote from the New York Sun report: "The question was asked, 'Do you think that some of the mistakes of the last war could have been avoided if the secretary of war had consulted more freely the heads of the army and had confined his attention principally to his ministerial functions as the administrative head of the department?' 'Certainly do,' General Miles replied. He said he considered it impossible for any civilian to jump into the seat of minister of war and properly understand the tactics and appliances of war which the officers of the army had spent all their lives in studying. It was too much to expect. It would have been perfectly simple, he said, if the secretary at the outbreak of the war did not like the general in command of the army, to pass him by and take the next officer in rank by preference, the commanding officer at home on waiting orders; or, if he did not like the second in rank, to send him home on waiting orders, and so on down the line, until he found the man whom he believed to be the proper man for the place. But to pass over the heads of the commanding officers and go so far down the line as to pick out a subordinate, simply because he was a favorite and had some political influence, could not be tolerated. 'I do not think it is according to the constitution,' he said.

In arguing for his bill to give the commanding general the full title of general and to name two lieutenant generals so as to conform to the practice in military countries and clothe the commanders of our army with proper dignity, General Miles expressly disclaimed any intention to bid for personal advancement. He was willing, he said, to have the bill take effect after his retirement, but he thought it should be adopted out of fairness to the army, which had never received its deserts from congress. The report in the Sun continues: "An interesting feature of the hearing was the proposition which was advocated by both General Schofield and General Miles, to include in the bill some arrangement whereby the president of the United States could choose his own commanding general in the same manner as he chooses his other cabinet officers. This proposition came up during the discussion of what both generals termed the fundamental trouble which has always existed between the administration and the commanding general. To obviate this General Schofield gave it as his opinion that some provision which would enable the president to select his own commanding general was absolutely essential. This would be the best way to select the officer in whom he had the most confidence, and would do away with the friction which has always existed. General Miles favored the scheme and declared that he was willing to retire and give place to a successor whenever the president of the United States might express such a desire. He, as well as General Schofield, expressed the opinion that such a measure is absolutely essential to efficient administration of the army.

These recommendations from our military experts are worthy of thoughtful consideration. The personal phases of a controversy between General Miles, for example, and Secretary Al-

ger, or General Miles and Adjutant General Corbin may not be of widespread and serious public interest, but it certainly is of the highest public interest and importance to have the military service so re-adjusted as to give the trained soldier at the head of the army, whether he be Miles, Corbin or some other, virtually full swing in time of war, regardless of the jealousy or vanity of transient politicians, and to make him directly and unquestionably responsible to the president, the ex-officio commander-in-chief. In no other way can our army be made compact, coherent and effective.

South Dakota is going to try the dispensary liquor system. The liquor will be bought by the state at wholesale prices, tested as to its purity and sold to local dispensaries or saloons, which are conducted according to regulations established by the state. The profits above the cost of the liquor and the necessary expenses will be divided between the state and the counties according to a fixed ratio. This is the Tillman plan now in vogue in South Carolina. It is by no means an unqualified success there.

It cost us \$11,063,350 last year to maintain our warships. This includes the heavy war expenses and the auxiliary navy. The costliest ship of all is the New York, which cost \$38,872,000. The Oregon, counting in its long journey, cost only \$37,269. The monitors cost, on an average, about one-third as much, but even then it is doubtful if they were a good bargain. The best ships cost money but Uncle Sam must have them.

Representative Hepburn wants the constitution amended so as to provide that no new state, the territory of which was not a part of the United States and under its jurisdiction and sovereignty on the 1st day of January, A. D. 1898, shall be admitted into the Union unless three-fourths of the members elected to each house of congress shall vote affirmatively for such admission. Mr. Hepburn is borrowing trouble.

The objections to the admission of Representative-elect Roberts of Utah to congress do not seem well taken. It is not denied that he was regularly and fairly elected according to the forms prescribed by law. Hence there is nothing for congress to do but to admit him. If he has violated any law the place to proceed against him is in the courts of Utah.

The brewers are protesting against the war tax of a dollar a barrel on beer. There is probably no way that the brewers can be satisfied unless the tax is removed and placed on flour.

Spitting at Piquart will not alter the facts in the case. Salivating Frenchmen had much better economize on expectation and pray heaven for common sense.

General Ludlow is to be military governor of Havana city and General Lee of Havana province. Success to the firm of Lee and Ludlow.

Gideon Marsh doubtless begins to realize that the prodigal son business in Philadelphia has its serious side.

NEWS AND COMMENT

There is an article in the International Medical Magazine on the subject of water filtration, which while it does not apply directly to Scranton, thinks to the wise foresight and enterprise of the Scranton Gas and Water company, is nevertheless interesting. It says: "A rough calculation based upon statistics given in a new book by John W. Hill, shows that typhoid alone in the year 1900 caused upward of 5000 deaths in thirty-five American and Canadian cities, saying nothing of the deaths from the same cause in the smaller towns and country places. For every fatal case there were at least four that recovered, which would make 20,000 convalescents a long and trying illness with persistent fever in many or them, and there must, in fact, have been a considerably larger proportion of recoveries under our improved modern methods of treatment. But the striking one might even say startling—fact demonstrated by Mr. Hill's book is that the death rate from typhoid fever, instead of ranging from 22 to 45 in each 100,000 of population, as it did in Philadelphia from 1890 to 1896, or from 31 to 39 in each 100,000, as in Chicago from 1890 to 1896, need not be over 4 or 5 in the 100,000, if only our municipalities could be governed on business principles, with the help of the best sanitary science of the day. In Berlin the mortality from typhoid has, by such filtration, been so reduced that in each of the years 1885 and 1886 it fell to 2, while in 1887 it was only 1, in every 100,000 of the population. In Amsterdam the rate was 19 in 1890, and came down to 3 in 1896. In Hamburg the proportion was 28 in the 100,000 in 1890, an epidemic of cholera compelled the institution of radical measures for the purification of the polluted Elbe water (which, however, is the typical death rate shows, was not half as filthy as the Schuylkill river water furnished to Philadelphia), and, in consequence, the typhoid rate in 1894 had fallen to 6 in the 100,000." The article concludes with this pertinent question: "If some fierce barbaric hero, like the Goths and Vandals of old, were in the habit of swooping down every year upon the civilized regions of North America, killing our people by tens of thousands and wounding from 50,000 to 100,000 more, for lack of adequate defenses, which would cost a few beggarly millions of dollars, what a howl of indignation there would be! The press and platform, and even the pulpit, would ring with denunciations of the criminally apathetic authorities who permitted such an unnecessary loss in battle by any more deplorable or any more criminal than permitting the death or serious injury annually of the same number of people by means of typhoid, and even the pulpit, would ring with denunciations of the criminally apathetic authorities who permitted such an unnecessary loss in battle by any more deplorable or any more criminal than permitting the death or serious injury annually of the same number of people by means of typhoid, and even the pulpit, would ring with denunciations of the criminally apathetic authorities who permitted such an unnecessary loss in battle by any more deplorable or any more criminal than permitting the death or serious injury annually of the same number of people by means of typhoid, and even the pulpit, would ring with denunciations of the criminally apathetic authorities who permitted such an 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