

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, DECEMBER 24, 1898.

It is pleasing to contemplate that the United States is responsible for the fact that there is more peace on earth this Christmas than a year ago.

The Bond Ordinance.

If the new bond ordinance is submitted to the people in the form as last amended by common council it is possible that some of the items of proposed expenditure may be approved. A good deal will depend upon the character of the men nominated by the two parties for mayor and controller. If these command public confidence for integrity, firmness and the ability to administer the affairs of the city economically, an increase of indebtedness might be viewed as a necessary preliminary to much needed public improvements.

The time for Spain to "move on," so far as this continent is concerned, is almost here.

Coming to the Point.

An exceedingly sensible suggestion is that of General O. O. Howard, that the president be empowered to recall to active service all retired army officers in time of war. Had such discretion been vested in the executive at the outbreak of the war with Spain, there would have been fewer appointments of inexperienced civilians to staff positions and a decidedly more soldierly aspect to camp life and work.

His other suggestion that a college should be established for the special education of a general staff, with entrance and promotion guided largely by examination as to fitness, is equally to the point. The war investigation has evolved a tremendous lot of personal testimony mainly of the narrative order, but it has by no means been as fruitful in practical information for future guidance as was fairly to be expected in view of the criticisms recently so plentiful throughout the country. Take the evidence of Roosevelt, Howard and Miles, concerning our military past, present and future, and you have about all there is of practical value in this long and patient quest for public enlightenment.

What is past is past. It cannot be recalled. The objective point of this inquiry should be to safeguard the future.

Advice from the Plains.

To men gifted with a sense of humor there is no crisis so serious as to lack some ray of the ludicrous. One great failing of the Latin race, one of the traits which is going greatly to complicate our work in constructing stable government in the islands taken from Spain, is the fact that the Latin cannot, as a rule, see the humor in things. An incident is narrated by Charles M. Pepper, the newspaper correspondent, which illustrates this point and exhibits the natural contrast between the Latin and the American.

Mr. Pepper, a learned Cuban lawyer and a western cattleman were in Havana, discussing the political future of Cuba. We give the report of the conversation in the former's own words: "Like all others, the lawyer had his theory of the Latin race in the temperate zones and in the tropics. It was not a bad theory. He thought the Latin civilization was better adapted for the tropics than was that of the folks who start the missionary out into the heathen land, where they see trade and flank him with a jug of rum, and a Gaiting gun. When it came to Cuba his views were tolerably clear. The Latin race must prevail, but its supremacy must be through the guidance of the United States. It is an exorable race. The blood mounts to its head quickly. Then comes the period of calm, when it sees the folly of starting excited so easily. The United States must moderate these transports of anger or folly; cool its blood and not let it dash its head into a cactus fence too often. Then, with the American nation sitting on the safety valve, the Latin race may work out the future government of Cuba. The phraseology in which his opinions were clothed were more ornate than I have given, but the idea was the same. The western cattleman grasped it. When a pause in the talk finally came and he was appealed to for his opinion he gave it, with incisive deliberation. 'You Latins,' he said, 'want the United States to keep putting ice on your head every time you flush up. We can't do it. That would bother us and wouldn't do any real good. The way for you Latins to keep your blood cool is to put your feet in cold water.'"

It is not stated whether the Cuban saw the point; being a Latin, probably he didn't; but the fact remains that the cattleman, with his quick sense of humor, revealed the heart of the problem. The Latin character must be worked over and alloyed with some stiff Yankee element before it can be trusted absolutely to experiment with democratic government. The closing of the polls on election day in the United States restores everybody to good humor; voters are vanquished

and cease to snort and howl and become again peaceful and loyal citizens. That is the quality which the Latins lack; that it the quality which must be supplied ere a Latin republic in Cuba can be a safe next door neighbor.

Complaint is expressed at the peculiar sub-division of authority in the police department which removes jurisdiction over burglaries and other serious crimes from the acting chief and hands it over to the embryo and inefficient detective bureau. A vigilant and efficient detective bureau is not an impossibility, but as things have been going of late there are many citizens who would prefer to take their chances of protection under the regular police force, with the detective annex held subordinate to the proper and natural head of the department.

The Regular Army.

It would appear from the attitude taken by the Democratic minority on the house committee on military affairs that a portion of the country either did not learn any lesson from the war with Spain or that the lesson has already been forgotten. In that war, thanks to our superior navy, we were successful in spite of the inferiority in numbers of our regular military equipment. The navy at the very beginning gave us command of the seas and the regular troops under Shafter completed the navy's work. In this instance it so happened that a small navy and a small regular army were sufficient to give us a swift and unbroken victory, with results of stupendous magnitude and importance. We do not refer to the volunteers in this connection because, however anxious they were to fight, circumstances kept the great majority of them from having any fighting to do. The few volunteers who did get a chance to fight fought well, everything considered; but it was the regulars who bore the brunt of the battle line and won the decisive victory.

Every sensible man knows that war is always a possibility. The reputable merchant insures his merchandise against fire, not because he expects a fire or wants a fire but because he knows that a fire is a possibility which it is simple prudence continuously to guard against. For the same reason we bar our doors at night, not because we want burglars to come or believe in the ethics of burglary but because we know that burglary is a contingency to be kept in mind. A regular army and navy is a nation's insurance both against the occurrence of war (that is to say, it helps to ward war off) and against the frightful losses to property and life which would result if war were to be waged without adequate preparation.

We whipped Spain and did incalculable good to humanity with a handful of an army and navy, but if instead of Spain our antagonist had been England, France, Germany, Russia, or even Italy, then we should have found out how desirable is a regular army organized on a modern basis and representing at least one trained soldier to every thousand of our population.

The proposition of the Democratic minority is that the regular army shall not be increased permanently beyond the limit of 20,000 men, or one regular soldier to every 2,000 civilians. This is about the relative strength of the present police force of Scranton, a force admittedly insufficient effectively to patrol even a compactly populated area. A national regular army based on the strength of the police force of Scranton and distributed throughout the states and territories, even though not a regular were sent to any of the new dependencies, would be little more than a nominal army, the attenuation of which would prevent effective annual manoeuvres, render impossible the assemblage for mass drills of brigades, divisions or corps, and in case of a sudden outbreak in one of the newly acquired islands beyond the power of the resident volunteer force to quell, would preclude the swift dispatch of reinforcements in adequate numbers and thus be responsible perhaps for appalling disaster.

Nor is the Democratic proposition of a volunteer army of occupation in the new dependencies any less objectionable. Of the volunteers now in service only a fraction would offer to enlist. This fraction would be made up of the younger, more adventurous, possibly more turbulent class; a class requiring in a new country rigid and effective discipline, both for its own sake and for the sake of the success of American military government. If these men were recruited into the regular army, alongside seasoned troops, they would soon become the equal of the veterans in soldierliness and discipline; but organized temporarily into regiments of their own, with new officers away from home and without any ballast from the regular wing of the service, it would be exceedingly problematical whether they would become first-class soldiers or a chronic source of annoyance and disturbance.

The United States does not need a standing army on the European basis, as a buttress for decaying monarchisms; but it needs one large enough and good enough to cope with probable emergencies whether from riot within or menace without; and for such an insurance of the greatest nation on earth the 20,000 limit is foolishly narrow.

The uneasy man who has exhausted every other foolish theory can now become an anti-imperialist.

An American Lake.

One jealous foreign critic, noting the trend of the Spanish-American war, recently warned the European powers that if they didn't watch out, the upstart Americans would grab all the strategic points in the Pacific ocean and convert that great theater of the world's future commerce into a "Yankee lake."

Between San Francisco and Manila, and giving us in a certain sense command of the commerce of the North Pacific. The completion of this plan will mean that in future our merchant and warships will not be at the mercy of foreigners but can find easy asylum in any part of the world's greatest ocean under conditions which will assure their protection and fair treatment.

The navy department is quick to see the importance of such a condition of affairs. It knows, if some of our distinguished citizens don't, that the only way for a nation to grow in power, wealth and safety is to take intelligent advantage of its opportunities. It realizes the plight that Dewey would have been in had he lost the naval battle at Manila or been forced by other circumstances to seek a port of refuge. It is determined to profit by the lessons of recent history and to lay the foundations broad and deep for future American security and supremacy in the great eastern ocean.

The sentence of court generally determines whether one has been guilty of stealing or is afflicted with the disease called kleptomani.

Our Shipping Loss Illustrated.

We hear much of late about our favorable balance of trade, but there is an adverse balance of transportation about which nothing is said. It may be illustrated by the returns for October, as follows:

Table showing shipping statistics for October, including imports and exports of various goods, and their respective values and percentages.

Thus we see that over 28 per cent. of the great apparent balance of trade is cancelled by an adverse balance of transportation; and that our apparent favorable balance of commerce is in considerable part paid already with specie. If, now, we had shipping of our own, and a favorable balance of transportation, like all the other maritime nations of consequence, the chances of our becoming a "creditor nation" would be vastly increased. In Europe no nation is so badly off as to have, annually, a balance of ocean transportation against it. Even Turkey does its own proper share of carrying in its own commerce. It is left to the Great Republic to waste its wealth in the hire of foreign shipping.

In the wake of whiskey trusts, beer trusts, etc., comes the announcement that a big syndicate has cornered glass bottles. Stupidly and surely the combine of optics is extending its tentacles towards the humble can that is utilized by the modest citizen who seeks relaxation in closer acquaintance with the "growler."

After experience in front of smokeless powder at Santiago, it is not likely that General Joe Wheeler will retreat before the variety used by objector Bailey.

A blizzard trust is evidently forming.

NEWS AND COMMENT

At the New England dinner in New York the other night Governor-elect Roosevelt, offered some timely thoughts upon the subject of expansion. Said he: "I have scant sympathy with that mock humanitarianism which is alien to the spirit of true religion, to the spirit of true civilization, which would prevent the great order-loving, liberty-loving nations from doing their duty in the earth's waste places because there is a need of some such surgery at the hour of this. That heaven that we, who were denied a part of that struggle (the greatest struggle for righteousness this world has known) of the time of our fathers have had the chance to see a struggle in which our nation is taking part in the world movement going on around us. Of course it is partly in our own interest. It is a good thing to have interests outside our own border. It is a good thing that we must look outward. It is a good thing that we must consider something beyond exports and imports. It is a good thing that we should have brought before us that your ancestors owed their greatness to the fact that they paid heed to their own greatness comes second to righteousness. I am glad we have seen the American flag flying over the American navy drive the Spaniard from the western world. I am glad for our own sake, but more glad because they fought to free the people of those islands and make them better. I have told you why I am glad. Now we have driven out the Spaniards, and it was not for us a very anxious task. Now we approach the really serious task. Now we are to prove that we can do well what the Spanish did so badly. We have assumed a heavy burden and a heavy responsibility. We do it if we do not immensely improve it. I have no sympathy with the man who cries out against our assuming the burden. If this great nation—contemplating the vastness of its domain, its history, the memory of its soldiers and sailors, of its statesmen, commonwealth soldiers, and commonwealth widowers—is afraid and stands back cowardly before this task, we may well believe the decadence of our race has begun. The task is high, but all the more let us give our souls to do it well. Let us approach it not in a spirit of levity nor in a spirit of sentimentality (nor saying 'universal suffrage

must be given to the people of the Philippines, although they are not fit for it). We have got to show our practical common sense, and the fervent religious spirit characteristic of the majority of the Puritans. If any one of those islands is not to be self-governed, then we can't govern it according to the principles of a New England town meeting, then we must find out the principles according to which we can govern it and apply those."

If we may believe the Bulletin, prosperity has struck Philadelphia like a tidal wave. That journal says: "In the past eight months it is estimated that the profits made in stocks and bonds in this country amounted to nearly two billions of dollars. Some idea of the great appreciation of value may be gathered from the statement that the advance in the issue of Pennsylvania railroad stock alone was over \$12,000,000. In the past week and a half and investors have never had such a year. Everything seemed to expand and grow in value under the dignified stand assumed by the United States before the world as a power that must be reckoned with. All records were broken on the stock market, and American securities generally developed a strength that has placed them prominently in the foremost rank of gilt-edged investments. The volume of business done by the stock brokers has exceeded anything the horde that crowded them and even at this time, with the holiday season almost at our door, they are doing a greater business than ever. During the past week one stockholder in this city cleared as high as \$5,000 shares through his office in a single day on commission. All admit that they have never seen anything like it."

An American woman who recently visited Spain writes: "On arriving in Madrid we expected to see some signs of depression and mourning as the result of the Spanish defeat, but the Spanish people generally speaking seemed to be quite unconscious of the conflict that cost them so much. Faces of amusement are crowded; the people seem to be happy; they are well dressed; there are few beggars and one not to be seen. The theaters are well attended, and at those places of amusement I observed no outward evidence that the people are groaning under a national misfortune. I have concluded that the apathy of the Spanish people in the present crisis is due to ignorance. About 60 per cent. of the people cannot read nor write. I wonder, then, that they regard the war as a sort of far-off story—a story that only remotely affects them. Besides, many of the facts known to the world generally have been kept out of the Spanish papers, a censor having been appointed to revise them before publication. Thus in the whole of Spain only the comparatively few people who read English and French papers are likely to know the whole truth about the Spanish-American war." She adds: "It has been pleasing to us to observe the kindly feeling there is for the Americans. The returned soldiers have nothing but good to say of the way in which they have been treated by their countrymen."

TOLD BY THE STARS.

Daily Horoscope Drawn by Ajaxchus, The Tribune Astrologer.

Astrological Cast: 12:01 a. m. for Saturday, December 24, 1898.

A child born on this day will wish that he had stockings a yard long.

The man who thinks his thoughts is more apt to be popular than the one who speaks them.

The individual who can be happy on prospects always makes the best candidate for mayor.

It takes more than a green Christmas to make a fat graveyard.

A Song of Christmas.

At glad christmastide the maiden of Guam, Far away from the blizzards and snow, Sports in tropical bower 'neath the sheltering palm

Where the mango and pincapples grow, In displaying her charms by no garments concealed.

This primrose maid free from guile— Will astonish old Santa, as they are revealed.

And she—stockingless—hangs up a smile!

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At 10c Silver and China Pin Trays, Silver Mugs, Celluloid Novelties Silver-Top Vaseline Jars, Easel Mirrors, Etc., Etc.

At 15c Cut Glass and Silver Inkstands, Venetian Vases, Glove Boxes, Handkerchief Boxes, Necktie Cases, Etc., Etc.

At 25c Cigar Jars, Smoking Sets, Silver and Bronze Ink Wells, Metallic Puff Boxes, Celluloid Novelties, Bon Bonneire Boxes, Children's Silver Sets of Knife, Fork, Spoon and Mug in Boxes, and a great line of Medallions.

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