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PAR AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 26, 1898.

The Tribune wishes every patron, friend, foe and neutral a merry Christmas and many returns thereof,

Concerning Prison Labor. A commission appointed by the last legislature to consider the prison labor problem, comprising several close stuannounced, report to the next assembly strong recommendations for an amendment of the existing law forbidding the employment of convicts. The commission has collected information which convinces it that idleness in prisons is an economic as well as a moral waste, It is impressed with the legislation upon this subject in vogue in New York state and it has drafted a bill which in substance permits the manufacture by convicts, without limitation, of any article that will not conflict with outside industries.

The proposed law authorizes the manufacture of any article in the prisone that will be used in the state gov- habit of the person to be intoxicated, or ernment buildings, county jails, workhouses, or the educational and charitable institutions that receive an annuad appropriation from the state. The operation of steam power or any power other than hand or foot power machincry is prohibited. No restrictions are made upon the variety, quality or quantity of the goods manufactured, as long as the goods are directly received | gree; crimes against patrons and crimes ized person from the prison where they | to persons who had special reasons for are manufactured. The articles which may be made in the prisons include furniture, carpers, woodwork, engraved or molded, mechanical devices, clothing of every variety, printing, and in fact, any article which is used by the giate government, save supplies for the military organizations. The New York state prison labor act provides for a board of prison inspectors, consisting of five persons, whose duty it is to make a quarterly investigation of the affairs of the penal institutions of the state. This clause has not been included in the proposed Pennsylvania statute, the question of inspection being left open. Among persons who believe that if

the state takes proper care of the vicious and the unfortunate the lawabiding citizen can best take care of himself the theory that prisoners must be kept idle rather than be put in competitior with free labor is not regarded as embodying the highest wisdom. The idle convict is more of a tax on free labor than the self-supporting convict would be, even though a nominal competition should ensue. Especially is much, however, as the condition of pubhe opinion does not as yet fully recogcan be provided for only the partial em- | a basis for stable independence, a gain to humanity.

According to the Walker commission the Nicaragua canal will cost in the should cost twice as much we would have to have it. Indispensable necessities outweigh considerations of econ-

Difficulties.

Admiral Sampson's opinion as to the unpreparedness of the majority of Cubans belonging to the poorer classes for republican government as Americans understand the term is corroborated Mr. Carmichael, a highly intelligent journalist now representing at Havana the interests of the Chicago sympathetic standpoint, but he pera speedy reorganization of Cuban incuil from a recent letter by him points which are of interest to every American auxious for the successful termin-

ation of our task in the Antilles. "In dealing with the Cuban situation one of the important considerations which must be constantly borne in Barber, who was an assistant of M. P. mind," says he, "is the fact that only Handy in the bureau of promotion and one-fifth of the regidents can read or publicity during the World's Fair, and write. The others not only have the prior to that time was press agent for ignorance of illiteracy, but in most Buffalo Bill's wild-west show. Major cases they do not associate with those Barber has charge of the street-cleanwho read or write, and the dissemina- ing and sanitary matters at Santiage, tion of classified intelligence is naturally a very slow matter. The people com- done a great work in purifying that prised in this illiterate four-fifths pest hole. He has swept and scraped understand that under Spanish rule every street, sidewalk and alley and they had but few rights, but they have no knowledge of what their rights to a place in the suburbs, where it has should be now or will be under a republic or a wise liberal government, teaching the people cleanliness and the Most of them naturally expect an extension of personal liberties, but have about their households. His regulano ideas as to what changes are necespary in the laws to define and establish great that whenever he finds a nuistheir legitimate rights as citizens. Of ance either in a public or private piace the vast majority who are illiterate he not only undertakes to abate it himgort of a government that will be more ployed by Barber in cleaning the acceptable than the one now perishing. was unable to find any Cubans who do. He was given a second order, thought that it was necessary for their with a limit of time, which he still igfreedom that there should be laws which made it imperative that an ar- a posse of men, went to his residence. rested man should have access to counsel and a speedy trial."

Under the Spanish penal code, when under the Spanish penal code, when a person is arrested he is put in prison and may remain there seventy-two Governor Wood, who sentenced him to under Spanish control, and that when the hours before anything is done with the case. Then or at any time previous gang. The proud hideigo at first was inclined to be amused at the proceedfore the official known as the judge of ings, then he became indignant, and The calculations are based upon the instruction. When first arrested the finally reared with rage, but Barber amount of imports prior to the revolution. prisoner is a "detende." If the judge explained that the 'Yankees' who were but it is believed that under the new of instruction decides that there is sufcleaning that town meant business and that the receipts from this source during the respiratory to the receipts from this source during

The Scranton Tribune | sequented with the evidence against cleaning a street the Spaniard begged him. It may or may not be given in for mercy, and was released with the tofore," says Mr. Carmichael, "when a a race between the man who made the arrest, the jailer and the judge of instruction as to who could first get to the man's friends. If these friends had supply food for thought. An era of money the one who got there first took the money and the prisoner was released. If the crime was serious his first duty was to put the prosecuting as mayor a man who will fearlessly witness out of the way. Sometimes he had to do murder to accomplish this. and there were men who made a profession of disposing of obnoxious witnesses. Their trade was assassination. They worked for a very low rate. If a prisonen under Cuban law is so fordents of punitory subjects, will, it is tunate as to get a trial the prejudice of the court is against him. He is deemed guilty and must prove that he

is innocent." As showing peculiarities in the Spanish law which sharply distinguish it from Anglo-Saxon jursprudence, the same writer adds: "In the Spanish code is a long list of 'extenuating circumstances.' It is an extenuating circumstance to be under the age of 18 years to commit a crime without in tent, to act under threat or when avenging a wrong done to self or spouse. It is an extenuating circum stance to be intoxicated when commit ting a crime, providing it is not the providing the intoxicated condition was not acquired after the crime had been planned. It is legal to make a plea for mercy, citing that the accused acted under powerful excitement. The code names twenty-six kinds of crimes which must be considered as aggravated offenses. A few of these are: Crimes against relatives up to the fourth deby the government through an author- that constitute treachery to patrons and trusting the criminal; crimes for price, recompense or reward. The crimes are also considered to have aggravating circumstances if accompanied by fire, heavy damages or explosions; if premeditated or if fraud is used in the commission. It is considered especially reprehensible if the offender takes advantage of greatly superior physical strength or adds to the natural consequences of his misdeeds ignominy and humiliation to the victim. It is also especially offensive in the mind of the Cuban judge to commit a crime in a lonely or a sacred place."

Thus the judge, under the Spanish ode, is virtually omnipotent save in so far as he can in turn be ruled by influence or fear. We shall have to bear in mind that the great majority of the inhabitants of Cuba know no other form or theory of justice and will have to be educated in the very alphabet of Anglo-Saxon principles. True, there are intelligent individuals in Cuba who know better and these will doubtless be our allies in the work of recasting the whole substance and tenor of the this true if as a result of enforced idle- | island's penal code. But how far or ness the convict degenerates into an how fast their help will go remains to incorrigible criminal whose life will be be seen. It may take until a new gendevoted to preying on society. Inas- | eration is reared under the influence of American teachers and examples before the work of instruction will be nize this truth, if an acceptable way sufficiently well grounded to serve as

Attention is called to the exceedingly interesting resume on another page of the perations of the Pennsylvania in- esculatory performances have been very surance department during the vigilneighborhood of \$135,000,000. If it ant and effective commissionership of Colonel James H. Lambert. It shows how by honest enforcement of the law in letter and spirit the welfare of the public can be safeguarded; and it sets a pace in this respect which Colonel Lambert's successor, whoever he may be, will have to follow or suffer by

The Military Method.

Military government is not generally supposed to be the form best adapted to a stable civilization; yet when honestly and intelligently administered it Record. This gentleman occupies a is not without strong advantages. A circumstance is narrated concerning ceives great difficulties in the way of the military administration of municipal affairs in Santiago de Cuba which stitutions to fit American ideas. We suggests the reflection that a little of the same wholesome absolutism in Scranton would not come amiss. We quote from the Washington correspondence of the Chicago Record;

"One of the most efficient of the new officials at Santiago de Cuba is Major and during the last six weeks has has carted thousands of loads of filth been burned. Major Barber is now observance of sanitary precautions tions are so strict and his power so very few have any knowledge of what | soif, but hauls the owner of the propciections meen. The ignorant Cubans erty before Governor Wood, who imseem to have some vague notion that poses a heavy fine or sentences him to the more intelligent will furnish some work in the chain gang which is emstreets. The other day the residence of Under the Spanish law a person charged one of the richest and most aristocratic with a crime is guilty until proved in. Spaniards in Santiago was found to be nocent. Under the Spanish law there sheltering a very offensive noisance. is no habeas corpus. After persistent Major Barber politely ordered the ownquestion in the interior cities the writer | er to remove it, which he neglected to

nored; whereupou Major Barber, with They found him in bed, although it was 11 o'clock in the morning, and did not even give him time to dress, but

acquainted with the evidence against cleaning a street the Spaniard begged are being based upon desired receipts of \$5,000,000 a year, which will make a minimum total of \$15,000,000. The estimated court. If held he is sent back to prison, understanding that he should set a cost of running the government, not inand it is at the pleasure of the officials good example to his neighbors, which as to when he shall have trial. "Herehe did. He not only cleaned up his own of an equal amount for military purposes place, but he has kept it clean ever person has been arrested there has been since. A few examples of this sort have taught the Spaniards a lesson."

A few such examples in some of our highly civilized American cities would military rule is not probable in the parts; but there is nothing to prevent the citizens of Scranton from electing and fully enforce the law.

In 1800 the population of the United States was 5.300,000, and we had a for eign commerce valued at \$162,000,000inclusive of both imports and exports. At that time the tonnage under the American flag engaging in that trade amounted to 667,000 tons-within less than 75,000 tons of being as large as our tonnage in the foreign trade is today. Our tonnage in the foreign trade almost a century ago was eight-ninths as large as it is today, and yet, during the same time our foreign commerce has increased more than eleven times regard to the necessary extension of the agont and among the large and among the l Our tonnage in the foreign trade alwhat it was a century ago. The failure of American shipping to keep pace ing to offer suitable encouragement to native shipbuilding.

NEWS AND COMMENT

Admiral Sampson advances these inter-esting opinions: "The average Cuban is not capable of self-government, There are lots of smart lawyers among the Cu-bans, but as a whole the people have no conception of our form of government. They lean rather to a dictatorship. The wealthy Cubans and Spaniards want an exation, but with those exceptions th Cubans want a taste of power. As I said before, they do not thoroughly understand the theory in our government, and for that reason, in my mind, it will be a long time before they can be expected to establish one on any such principles. I don't think our government under any condition should allow them to assume ontrol of the affairs of Cuba, unless the vernment that they propose to establis is patterned after ours. It will be difteen months at least before anything in this direction is done. In regard to the policy of expansion, personally I am in favor cepting everything we have taken. If i found we are unable to govern our new ssessions it will be very easy to dis pose of them; but I should like to see this country at least try the experiment of overging alien races, and I for one be

The navy department has received re-ports from nearly all the war vessels which took active part either in the battles or the bon bardments of the Spanish-American war. These reports show in detail the number of rounds fired from every gun on board, from one-pound rapid ares up to the big thirteen-inch rifles, and the ordnance bureau experts have examined them with much interest to note the condition of the guns before and after firing in order to estimate the probable deterioration resulting from the war ser-vice. Captain O Neill, chief of the ordnance bureau, informs a writer in the Iron Age: "Our reports show that our ordnance, from the smallest guns to the largest calibers, developed the highest de-gree of efficiency and little if any deteri-oration. I speak especially of the large caliber guns when I say that no evidence whatever has been found that the ord-nance has developed any weakness. So far as I am advised, not a single gun has shown any bad effects from the firing tests to which so many of them were subjected, and there has not been even a sug gestion of drooping muzzles or other evi dences of structural weakness.

"Lieutenant Hobson has tel Record: much exaggerated and the telegram will go on record. Hobson is a very queer per-son, and this kissing business, as well as speechmaking, is a new trick for him. He has never been a lady's man. He has been credited with bushfulness. He never seemed to find enjoyment in society, al though his egotism is so great that when he once overcame his diffidence he always insisted upon talking of himself. He is one of those geniuses who will not work in harness. There have been a dozen occurrences since the Merrimac affair which might have made Lieutenant Hob-son a defendant in court-martial proceedings, but Secretary Long and other of his superior officers have overlooked in him what any other officer in the navy would be held responsible for. He has been sent to the Philippine islands to raise the Spanish ships that Dewey sunk in the harber of Manila, because the sec-retary of the navy did not know what else to do with him. He is so erratic as to worthless for the ordinary duties of an originality and egotism make him the object of constant surveillance in the con-struction bureau. If Hobson were in-structed to draw the plans and specifications for a ship on certain lines Commo-dore Hichburn, the head of the bureau, would be compelled to keep an eye on him constantly for fear he would introduce some new feature or make some depart-ure from the conventional rules of ship ure from the conventional rules of ship building that would cause great risk and much trouble. Hobson never did any-thing in the way the same thing is done by other people. His mind, as well as his methods, is decidedly original, and while there is no more question of his ability than there is of his courage, his ideas are frequently impracticable."

ideas are frequently impracticable. What is the smallest income on which man may live in New York? was the question the Philadelphia Ledger's Gotham correspendent asked the other day of a noted banker, whose income cannot be less than \$100,000 a year. "Well," he replied, "my household expenses alone amount to \$25,000 a year, and I do not see how I could possibly live on less than that." Then a reminiscent smile began to cross his countenance, and, heaving a little sigh, he said: 'But the happiest time of my life was when my wife and I and two children lived here on \$2.500 a We kept two servants, and feluite rich. After all, happiness doesn't was quite intimate with William It inderbilt when he was considered the chest man in the country. I met him as day in Fifth avenue, and said to him that he ought to be the happiest man in the world. "I sm not," the great million-aire replied. "My health is shattered, and ill the money I possess cannot restore it. cannot even drive one of my line horses it is painful for me to sit down. My only dbie exercise is to walk down the ave I receive threatening letters daily and my nerves are so unstrung that I am constantly afraid that some assassin will waylay me, I am overrun with people who want to get my money. I am the nost wretched man in New York, and I tell out that after a person has accumulated nough to secure him ugainst poverty and gratify his reasonable wants, every do-ar in addition is a burden and weighs him

ficient instruction to hold him he be-intended to convince the people of that the next year will reach \$12,000,000. The comes a "processados." He is not made fact. After spending two days in

and public works.

In 1730 the population of the United States was a triffe under four million. At that time the foreign commerce of the country-imports and exports—had a total value of about fifty millions of dollars. value of about fifty millions of dollars, while the tonnage under the American flag engaged in that trade was one-half of that of today, or 355,000 tens. During the one hundred and eight years that have elapsed since 1790, our foreign commerce has increased in value more than thirty-six times, while our shipping engaged in carrying it has only doubled.

FOOLISH OBSTRUCTION.

from the Philadelphia Times. Never was the want of intelligent lead ership more conspicuously shown by the minority in congress than at this time The army bill reported by the minority of the military committee of the house is an example. In face of all the obvious lessons of the war, these gentlemen proarmy, and amendments to the house bil might properly be urged in the interest of conservative economy. But experience with American commerce is the direct has fully demonstrated the superiority of result of legislative stupidity in declining to offer suitable encouragement to ment over much larger bodies of amateur soldiery, even if the amateurs could be expected to undertake foreign service, as they cannot. And at this time to prate about the army as a menace to liberty is still more absurd. The country will no listen to such talk with patience, and in stead of helping to influence legislation these mossbacks are merely helping to extinguish themselves.

STRICT CONSTRUCTION.

rom the Philadelphia Record. It is held that the provision of the fed ral constitution which forbids the United States or any state from assuming of paying any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion would make null any attempt to open the national soldiers homes to Confederates But it may be doubted whether charitable provision for the hodily needs of a crippled soldier could be classed as a debt sbligation that would come within the ban of the constitutional inhibition, construe the letter of the constitution so strictly would make illegal the home upported by some of the southern state

AN OBJECT LESSON.

From the Philadelphia Record.

or disabled Confederate soldiers.

Considerable elemental, old-fashione Anglo-Saxon vigor is displayed by the military authority in Santiago in enforceing sanitary regulations. The fifth in the streets has been dug up and carted away. The streets are no longer used as conduits for sewage. Householders who persist in the old habit of defilement are either horsewhipped or compelled to work upon the streets for thirty days. Under this system of compulsory cleanliness Sautiago will soon be transformed from one of the most dirty and disease ridde cities in Christendom to one of the mos inviting.

NOT DANGEROUS.

From the New York Sun. What drug of stupefaction, or what sudden stroke of hopeless hebetude, has paralyzed the perceptions and the un-derstanding of the remaining leaders of he Democratic party in congress? the fight against the army of the United States proceed under the leadership of

Realism Not Sustained.

Hixon-What did you think of the play Dixon-Didn't like it at all. It wasn't realistic enough to suit me. Hixon-Why, what was the trouble? Dixon-You know that Spaniard that was killed in the second act?

Hixon-Yes.

Dixon-Well, I saw him down at the h el this morning.-Chicago News.



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