

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, JANUARY 19, 1899.

REPUBLICAN NOMINATIONS.

Mayor—JAMES MOIR. Treasurer—THOMAS R. BROOKS. Controller—F. J. WIDMAYEL.

It is unlikely that the outcome of the senatorial struggle will be long delayed. With things at their present tension something is bound soon to give away.

Lackawanna at Harrisburg.

The appointment yesterday of Fred W. Flett, esq., of this city, as deputy attorney general supplies a sufficient contradiction to the silly story printed on the subject in a recent issue of the Scranton Republican and is another evidence of the prominence which Lackawanna county has gained at Harrisburg in recent times.

Mr. Flett in the few years that he has been a resident of this county has taken an active and an influential part in its public affairs and has attained state and even national prominence through his energetic work in behalf of the Republican League.

The Governor's Cabinet.

The new man in the premier gubernatorial cabinet is the "premier," W. W. Greist. His appointment as secretary of the commonwealth is doubtless in part a tribute to the staunch and sturdy Republicanism of the county which he represents; a county that has never wavered in its party allegiance and which in its steadfastness through good and through evil report stands as a model to the other counties of the state.

In another way the new executive has fulfilled the expectations formed of him. We refer to his appointment of John P. Elkin as attorney general, whose nomination and appointment to the office of attorney general represents; and it is safe to predict for him a brilliant and honorable official career.

The remaining selections are equally creditable. It is unnecessary to say this for adjutant general "Tom" Stewart, whom everybody knows and respects; Israel W. Durham, the new insurance commissioner, won his political spurs in Philadelphia, where he has twice defeated the strongly entrenched Martin organization, and the new private secretary, C. E. Gerwig, served in that capacity for Colonel Stone when the latter was a member of congress. Altogether the new cabinet is strong in character and ability and especially strong politically.

The inventor of a key to the Harrisburg deadlock ought to get a liberal royalty.

General Wood's Testimony.

To the gentlemen of the Union League club of New York who gave a dinner in his honor on Tuesday night General Leonard Wood gave testimony as to the inherent capacity of the Cuban people which is corroborated by much which has been said in these columns. General Wood admits that when he took hold of the affairs of Santiago city and province he was almost persuaded that the task set before him was a hopeless one. But he went ahead, doing his duty fearlessly and openly, and the result is almost magical. Says he:

"We started in by having no secrets of any kind, shape or description. Everything that was done was done down there as an open book. The secretaries and clerks at department headquarters in civil departments were all Cubans and all men who had been in the Cuban army, and all financial transactions were carried out through Cuban clerks, so that everywhere they are now satisfied that as far as the interest of the country went it was all right. I have tried to draw the army out of the situation at the earliest possible day and tried to impress upon the people that the first thing they had to do down there was to learn to govern themselves, and that the underlying principle of self-government was thorough respect for civil law, and that we did not want any lawlessness. We only had the army there as a balance

of power to overcome any lawlessness. All the public places were filled by representative Cubans without exception. They have filled them so satisfactorily that up to today I have not had occasion to remove a single person recommended by them. There has been a good deal from our standpoint which was not satisfactory, and which I think could be attributed to the fact that these people have hardly got in the way of trusting themselves, but the perfectly open policy that we have pursued has disarmed them to a certain extent, and today, as far as I know, the respect for the American flag and the American people and American good faith is all right. If we go slowly and take plenty of time and patience we can certainly put these people on their feet, and they would be compelled to say that the United States gave them an opportunity to test their capacity. I believe it is a good plan, for if they fail the strong argument is ours, for we have kept our promise. If they succeed the chances are that under the trade conditions and the many interests which draw them to the United States, they will come to us more quickly if we want them, which I think is an open question, for the present at least. At any rate, they will come to us, if at all, cheerfully and without any unpleasant recollections of compulsion."

This kind of talk has the right ring to it for it is candid, honest and manly. It also shows, what has all along been known to students of the Cuban character, that while you can lead the Cuban people anywhere by first winning their confidence and preserving their self-respect, you cannot drive them at all. Spain tried the driving policy for upward of fifty years, only to fail disastrously. The policy outlined by General Wood succeeded in the worst part of Cuba in less than six months. After such a contrast there is no room left for argument.

Time will fully show that William A. Stone is no man's man but the people's. His is a reputation that grows.

A Constitutional Fine Point.

Into the merits of the divorce case of McComb vs. McComb it does not become a newspaper to enter, but in the interesting reply of the defendant, as set forth elsewhere, there appears one paragraph to which it is hoped the honorable court of Lackawanna county will give analytical consideration. We have in mind the excerpt which follows:

I did not surrender my manhood nor renounce my independent individuality when I became the husband of Ida Eugenio Hunter. Neither did I acknowledge my mother-in-law as a censor of my conduct, nor my wife a dictator of my actions. By arranging to themselves the functions of censor and dictator, respectively, they assumed more than the prerogatives of a mother-in-law or wife, and encroached on my right, inherent and constitutional, of having representation as well as taxation.

Here is certainly a point for constitutional lawyers.

The Cincinnati man who is endeavoring to gain fame by remodeling the design of the American flag is wasting valuable time. "Old Glory," as now recognized around the world is good enough for all purposes and no attempt to alter its appearance will ever become popular.

The appointment of Judge Peter S. Grosscup to the circuit judgeship in the new Illinois district is a promotion resting on most palpable merit. Judge Grosscup ought to be on the United States supreme bench.

It is said that Secretary Alger will resign as soon as the war investigation commission turns in a report exonerating him from blame. Such a course would undoubtedly simplify matters.

The appointment and confirmation of John P. Elkin as attorney general is a vigorous blow at vindictive personal politics, and there will be others.

If there is a two-thirds majority in the senate for the ratification of the peace treaty it should begin to assert itself.

The best thing that the present session of congress has done yet is its passing of the naval personnel bill. Judge Jenks will find that throwing his votes to a Wanamaker bolter will be more easily said than done.

EUGENE FIELD ON THE GRIP

Eugene Field, on recovering from the grip, wrote: The gods let slip that fateful grip Upon me last week Sunday— No longer storm that ratched my form Ever swept the bay of Cundy; But now, good-bye To drugs say I— Good-bye to gnawing sorrow; I am up today! And, whoop, hooray! I'm going out tomorrow!

What aches and pain in bones and brain I had I need not mention; It seems to me such pangs must be Old Satan's own invention; Albeit I Was sure I'd die, The doctor reassured me— And true enough With his holy stuff, He ultimately cured me.

As there I lay in bed all day, How fair outside looked to me! A smile so mild old Nature smiled It seemed to warm clean through me, In chattered mood The scene I viewed, Inventing, sadly so, Fantastic rhymes Between the rhymes I had to take a bolus.

Of sultry slugs and other drugs I guess I took a million— Such drugs as serve to set each nerve To dancing a cotillon! The doctors say The only way To rout the grip instant, Is to pour in— All kinds of sin— Similibus curantur.

'Twas hard, and yet I'll soon forget Those hills and cures distasteful; One's future lies 'neath gorgonian skies When one is convalescing! Be now, good-bye To drugs say I— Good-bye, thou phantom sorrow! I am up today, And, whoop, hooray! I'm going out tomorrow!

PORTO RICO'S VALUE.

Correspondence of the Associated Press.

San Juan, Porto Rico, Dec. 12.—The value of this island to the United States should be estimated. Various and many representations concerning Porto Rico are being made daily; some originate from men who have things to sell, but the majority are statements that arise from ignorance and carelessness. In considering the Porto Rico of today and the Porto Rico of the future it would be well to set down these facts. The island has an area of 3,530 square miles; that of the state of Connecticut is 3,580 square miles, that of New Jersey is 8,250 square miles. The population of Porto Rico is less than 1,000,000; there are various estimates of population ranging from 700,000 to 1,500,000. A Spanish census of about ten years ago puts the population at 800,000, which is less than that of the city of Brooklyn.

According to Bulletin 13 of the United States department of agriculture, "Trade of Puerto Rico: the annual average exports of this island from 1892-1896 to all countries amounted to 18,114,302 pesos, which amount is equivalent to \$3,488,094 American dollars, and the annual average of exports for the same five years is given at 16,984,489 pesos, or 35,700,000 American dollars. The island is densely populated and closely cultivated, the population per square mile being 223. Its commercial output can certainly be increased and its agricultural products and merchandise will augment with the development necessary to bring about this first condition. Great quantities of sugar and coffee are produced. The Porto Rico could then supply about 10 per cent. of what the United States requires in sugar and coffee. The island would be a market for about 2 per cent. of our yearly exports. When these facts are considered one reaches a fair idea of the commercial value of this new possession."

As a winter and health resort Porto Rico would have a great value. The beautiful country to be seen, tropical and strange. The climate is delightful in winter and when we obtain the results of army statistics we know the dangers thereof. There is much evidence to indicate that this climate is a healthy one. The life expectancy is not as yet. There are a few beautiful drives on the island, though the greater majority of the roads are wretched, and there are good mountains well suited for comfortable hotels. The advantage of the island as a naval outpost is great. To our country at large this is probably its most valuable feature. The establishment here of a first-class navy station and supply depot is a question of time only. The United States has a training ground for the American soldier who will find himself as a policeman in the land.

There are always a number of adventurous spirits to follow armies, ready to group all advantages arising from the economic changes that follow armed intervention. There has been no lack of such men to follow the American army into Porto Rico. Some of them were experienced in the expedition that led to direct their efforts through the confusion resulting from the radical political changes occurring here daily or threatened for the near future. They have also been many who could not be content with these conditions, whose small capital was soon exhausted by heavy traveling expenses and who were glad to get home as best they might. Porto Rico has not been an easy field for the amateur adventurer. Newspaper reports have been misleading and read up north through rose colored glasses and with a few hundred dollars young men have started down here, only to find that for the golden opportunity which has not yet been found. Yet there are opportunities for profitable investment here. It requires a cool head and a clear mind to seek them out and recognize them when found, and then it takes capital to work them. This is no new country where the value remains to be done. It is an old country where everything has been done.

When we speak of seventeen and a half million dollars' worth of imports into Porto Rico it must be borne in mind that that amount represents the island's business with all the world, and while it is a fact that under free trade with the United States the larger proportion of this money will be expended for American goods, yet a certain portion, which is estimated at two and a half millions a year, will be spent in foreign markets, notably in Spain, and for articles we do not produce and which the islanders want and will have. The foreign trade of Porto Rico has been in the past conducted chiefly with Spain, the United States, Cuba, Germany, the United Kingdom and France. Eighty-five per cent. of the merchandise imported and exported during the years 1888-1898 was exchanged with these countries. Spain received the largest share of this trade her portion amounting annually to \$3,888,674, or 20 per cent. of the total value. The trade with the United States during this period was second to that of Spain; our share amounted to \$6,845,253 annually, or 38 per cent. of the total value. Those same years Spain sent to Porto Rico a yearly average of \$5,705,337 worth of goods, equal to 32 per cent. of the island's imports, and in return this the United States furnished 23 per cent. of all that the islanders bought in foreign markets. For the United States to enjoy the best advantages in this new market, her commerce with our country must be free and there must be prohibitive duties on the productions of other countries.

It is interesting to consider what this new possession offers to the American who wants to invest from five to fifteen or twenty thousand dollars here. Agriculture is the basis of wealth; the prosperity of the year is measured by the success of the various crops. There follows the amount of agricultural exports during the year 1897 set down in pesos. The peso is the silver dollar of the island, its intrinsic or bullion value is about 38 cents gold, and the rate of exchange is today at 165. That is, you are paid \$1.65 in pesos for an American dollar. This is a commercial valuation which differs largely from the bullion value and from the arbitrary rate of exchange of two for one established by the American military authorities in Porto Rico. The records of the Spanish bank in Porto Rico for the last ten years show that the average rate of exchange during this period has been at 140 per cent.

Porto Rico exported in 1897 coffee to the value of 12,222,389 pesos, tobacco to the value of about 4,000,000 pesos; molasses valued at 40,519 pesos; coconuts at 31,000 pesos and corn to the value of 97,200. There can be added to this list 71,552 pesos worth of sugar, 30,383 worth of cattle all of which latter was shipped to other West Indian islands. There were, of course, various other products exported of great value and of single one amounts to 25,000 pesos for the year. When estimates are made today as to what Porto Rican crops will prove profitable in the future, it is at once seen that much depends upon the development of the island, such as transportation, and the growth of the island's products in the American market. In the latter respect it must be remembered that Cuba will be Porto Rico's most active rival. It can generally be stated that Cuba will produce everything that Porto Rico and the former island, if eventually accorded equal privileges with the latter on the American market, holds a geographically and advantageous position than does Porto Rico, and is capable of a much larger and consequently cheaper production.

Land is expensive in Porto Rico, this because the population is dense. Today, in the face of the expected influx of Americans eager to buy, prices on lands

are advancing unduly. The measure of land surface here is a cuerda, equal to six tenths of an acre. Lands are divided into four classes. First class lands are those suitable for sugar; they are found in the belt of low flat land running around the island between the foot hills of the mountains and the sea. In good prosperous times in the past, first class sugar lands have brought as high as \$100 a cuerda; today they can be had for about \$150 a cuerda, at which price they should be drained and ditched and ready for planting for local consumption, produce good cattle fodder. These are the most expensive lands in Porto Rico today and cultivation of sugar because of the expensive machinery required to treat the cane, calls for more capital than any other industry on the island. Second class lands are those in the valleys and on the hillsides in the interior. They are largely suitable to the production of coffee and their prices vary. If they are already planted with good bearing trees they are considered to be worth \$100 a cuerda. Young coffee trees need shade, and lands already wooded are sometimes regarded as better for planting trees suitable for coffee planting, though not already planted, could be brought today for from 10 to 25 pesos a cuerda. I know of a good farm for sale at 6,000 pesos. It contains in all 500 cuerdas, 40 of which are already set out with promising coffee trees and 100 more cuerdas are under the hands of the owner. There are others. The balance of 300 cuerdas are woodland and pasture, part of which would grow fruits and vegetables. This is a very fair criterion of the values that for such lands pertain today.

The black sandy loam lying adjacent to the sugar lands is called third class. Their values vary. Some are well suited for local consumption, but others can be bought from 10 to 25 pesos a cuerda. The value of these lands for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables for local consumption is increased if they are located near seaports or large towns. The fourth class comprises the sandy beach lands. This is a very fair criterion of the values that for such lands pertain today.

There is said to be a profitable future in the production of pineapples, vegetable in Porto Rico. The orange and guava of the island are of fine flavor and juicy, and the pineapples and bananas are excellent. The exports of oranges amounted in 1897 to 2,810 pesos and that of pineapples to \$10 pesos. Here is a field that needs development and the advantages of free trade with the United States, thus making quick and certain returns, the industry might give good returns. Here, as in other cases, Cuba will be Porto Rico's rival. The growing of vegetables for the off season in the American market could also be developed. This will likewise require rapid transportation and there must be a considerable amount to be thus transported before certain rates that admit of profit can be obtained. We have no data as to how this climate and soil will produce certain northern vegetables that today do not grow here. We are told that the soil is wonderfully rich and will produce "anything" that the experimenter will show. In how far this asserted ability has a commercial value and the profitable future of such industries is largely a question of development and study.

The profits in sugar raising depend largely on duties; upon whether sugar is transported to the United States or taxed. The profitable growing of sugar in the West Indies has for long been a question for statesmen to ponder; sugar has been a political question, attempting to bring this industry in the colonies back to the profits of former times. In the profitable production of sugar the Cuba crop will be this island's greatest danger.

Porto Rican tobacco is said by many to be of excellent quality. It seems to be badly harvested and cured, however, and if improvements were made in this respect its value would be increased. Much has of late years been sent to Cuba, where it has fetched good prices.

Before Porto Rico can enter upon that steady march of development, education and improvement, which constitute her future prosperity, several conditions which at this hour hang heavily over the island will have to be removed. Porto Rico's status will have to be determined; she must be legally admitted as a territory or colony of the United States and she will have to enjoy free trade with our country. The question of her present depreciated currency will have to be straightened out and the business uncertainty and confusion resulting from whatever measures are taken to this end solved. The islanders themselves must be united in their efforts to enter upon a new era of good fellowship and unity of purpose. The exceedingly high rate of taxation on property in force today must be cut down to a reasonable assessment. The American military authorities are now collecting the Spanish taxes by occupation, the Spanish navy and the Church of Rome, three features of insular politics that are non-existent since Oct. 18 last. This taxation on farming lands in the majority of cases amounts to 20 per cent. of the lands' net earnings per year.

The United States received from Spain the title to various government lands in Porto Rico. Where these lands were available for farming purposes they have been to a great extent taken up, and while many of them may not now be under actual cultivation, their titles are apt to have been compromised under Spain and they are today subject to various claims resulting from the corrupt system of Spanish land registration. Only when these existing conditions are righted will Porto Rico really be able to take upon herself the labors which should lead her to the degree of prosperity and peace and security which rightly is her due and which her past political relations have thus far prevented her from enjoying.

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RIPONS



ETHEL. The English people are reaching out in every direction to discover methods for prolonging life. They have generally determined that the road to longevity leads through the stomach. This causes fantastic notions in regard to diet, as changeable as the fashion in gowns. Almost every physician of note makes himself responsible for some dietetic formula to accomplish the object in view.

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