

The Scranton Tribune

Published Daily, Except Sunday, by The Tribune Publishing Company, at Fifty Cents a Month.

New York Office: 150 Nassau St., R. E. WHELAN, Sole Agent for Foreign Advertising.

Entered at the Postoffice at Scranton, Pa., as Second-Class Mail Matter.

When space will permit, The Tribune is always glad to print short letters from its friends bearing on current topics, but its rule is that these must be signed, for publication, by the writer's real name.

TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, NOVEMBER 15, 1899.

From present indications Aguinaldo may be expected within a few days to remark, "Amigo," and make his final bow as a dictator.

Extraordinary Powers.

THE EXTENT OF THE power of the president of the United States in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the army and navy exercising authority under military rule in subject territory has been a recent theme of discussion in view of the announced intention of the president soon to substitute civil for military government in Cuba and Porto Rico. The following has been offered as the law upon the subject: "The president, as commander-in-chief of the army, stands in the position of the conqueror of territory. As a conqueror he has undisputed authority, under international and all other laws, to prescribe whatever form of government he decides upon. It may be a government by the bayonet and it may be a government without a bayonet in the whole territory. The foundation of the president's power in Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines is the law of military government, but this does not mean that soldiers are essential to the government. The president, in his position of commander-in-chief of the United States, exercises absolute control over all territory held through military occupation, and under the laws of this country he will continue that control until Congress, with his consent, prescribes some other government."

In an opinion rendered on July 16, in the case of Lindy & Co., as to the construction of sewers and pavements in Havana, Attorney General Griggs said: "Cuba is now under the temporary dominion of the United States, which is exercising there, under the law of belligerent right, all the powers of municipal government. In the exercise of these powers the proper authorities of the United States may change or modify either the form or the constituents of the municipal establishments; may, in place of the system and regulations that formerly prevailed, substitute new and different ones. Upon this line the same authorities, exercising sovereignty over the island, have the power to provide the methods, terms and conditions under which municipal improvements which relate entirely to property belonging to the municipality or held by it for public use, may be carried on. The old provisions of the Spanish law may be entirely dispensed with, and a new system set up in their place. The municipal authorities of Havana, in the matter of engaging in the construction of public works, may be permitted to proceed under such law as is now applicable, if that be adequate, or they may, at the will of the military commander, be restrained from engaging in any such works, or from permitting any such works to be carried on, although inchoate or even completed contracts therefor have previously been entered into."

The absolutism of the president, in other words, under the war power of the constitution, exceeds by far any other absolutism in the history of earthly governments. For the time being he is literally the czar of 10,000,000 alien human beings, with power over property and life bounded only by the restraints of precedents and conscience. Yet, taking into account the magnitude, the complexity and the necessity of the responsibility centering suddenly upon one man only a short time before a common citizen, was ever power more benevolently and beneficently wielded? Was any mistake made when this power was entrusted by the people to William McKinley, the mature, experienced and self-possessed veteran, and denied to the volatile, volatile boy orator from Nebraska?

For a state boasting so many good orators, Ohio is very slow with the official returns. They are not in yet.

Coals of Fire.

TO PLEASE the yellow journals, Admiral Crowninshield has modified the phrases in his official report which spoke of Dewey's victory as having been won in a "more propitious hour" than Sampson's. As amended, the reference reads "in an hour more propitious for reward"; which, of course, was what Admiral Crowninshield meant in the first place. He was endeavoring simply to emphasize the humiliating and disreputable fact that, owing to the deadlock in the last senate effected by Admiral Schley's friends, not a captain who fought at Santiago, much less the commanding officer who planned this decisive naval battle of the Spanish-American war, was promoted or rewarded, whereas every sailor who participated in the battle of Manila promptly got a special medal of honor and every officer with equal promptness got substantial promotion.

The injustice of the senate's treatment of the Santiago heroes is a subject quite apart from the controversy which has revolved around Rear Admiral Schley. It reflects on Schley only to the extent that he refrained from using his influence to cut the deadlock so as to enable the president's nominations for promotion to be ratified. While he was reticent that there "was glory enough to go around," the fact was that his immediate friends in the senate, in their eagerness to punish Sampson for having been made commander-in-chief of the North Atlantic

fleet instead of Schley, an assignment which, whether fair to Schley or not, Sampson had no option but to obey, were preventing the boasted glory from going around; and there is no scrap of paper to show that Schley ever tried to restrain them. If he was unwilling to deprive Captains Cook, Taylor, Philip and Evans, and Commander Walworth of their indisputably merited promotions for gallant service in successful battle, he gave no audible sign of that unwillingness at a time when senators were using his alleged unfair treatment as a pretext for holding up all of those promotions, including Sampson's. If Dewey's promotion had been included in the same bunch of nominations, what reason is there to believe that he would not have been held up along with the rest? He was simply more fortunate than these Santiago heroes in the timing of the vote which secured senatorial ratification to the promotion tendered in both cases with alacrity by an appreciative and generous president.

This gross injustice remains for rectification utterly irrespective of the official character of Winfield Scott Schley. The nation is shamed by the fact that the Schley cabal in the last senate worked this outrage; and it will be doubly shamed and this time conspicuously guilty if it shall permit a similar cabal in the next senate to effect a similar conspiracy. The country needs to be told until the truth sinks deeply into its conscience, that leaving Schley entirely out of the case, it owes to William T. Sampson for his faithful and official work as commander-in-chief of the largest naval force ever assembled under the American flag fair and just recognition and reward; whereas, he has had absolutely nothing of this kind. His promotion from captain to junior rear admiral came without reference to his war service. It came through the natural order entirely, in precisely the same way that the colonel in the regular army becomes in course of time, if vacancies occur quickly enough, a brigadier general and finally a major general. For his extra work connected with his war assignment, work that from the time of the explosion of the Maine down to a few months ago kept upon his shoulders the weightiest load of executive responsibility held by any officer of our navy, Dewey alone excepted—for all the weary hours of vigil and sleepless anxiety that culminated in the decisive battle at Santiago and, more than anything else, brought Spain in subjection to her knees, Admiral Sampson has had the legislative branch of the United States government, not a penny of extra money nor a syllable even of perfunctory thanks. He, his gallant captains, and the brave men who served in varying subordinate capacities in the circle of operations of the North Atlantic fleet—and all have been held up, not by masked footpads in a dark alley, but by United States senators, and robbled of the honors fairly promised them ere the war began.

And the man in whose ostensible behalf this gigantic outrage was planned and consummated; the man who, with this work of his officious friends staring him continually in the face, has made no effort to prevent the bouquet-throwing multitude from considering him the martyr which they allege; the man who stands convicted on the records of the navy department over the steno-graphic of his honored chief, not alone of disobedience of orders and unreliability of official conduct, but also of having falsified the correspondence of a brother officer; this "chief hero of Santiago," as his friends delight to acclaim him, is on Saturday morning next to take a flag command in the United States navy by grace of the very secretary whom the Schley clique reviles and threatens. We question the logic and the wisdom of Secretary Long's magnanimity; but Schley and Schley's friends certainly ought to feel intensely grateful for it.

As the days pass, Hon. Billy Mason seems to be more and more thoroughly convinced that the props of an anti-expansion platform would be too weak to hold up a heavy weight for re-election.

Breakers Ahead.

LET NO MAN think that the task of establishing civil government in Cuba and Porto Rico, which the administration is about to undertake, is a simple one. The problems, for the most part, are both new and difficult; and it will be several years before our authorities, even if unexpectedly successful, can hope to present a permanent balance sheet of results. They will not have, under a civil regime, the glory and glamor of militarism to help them to keep in touch with the imaginations of their friends at home; their will be the hardest of hard and prosiest of prosy work, to be accomplished patiently and slowly, a little at a time, in face of difficulties not easily appreciable at a distance. The red fire period having passed, the era of minute details is at hand and it is this which will afford the real test of the American people's fitness for semi-tropical responsibilities.

An idea of some of the kinks which will have to be unraveled in these new island territories if they are to have civil government on the American plan is conveyed in a statement of conditions presented in the Washington Star by a careful student of the subject who modestly withholds his name. For one thing, ecclesiastical relations are likely to prove bothersome at best. Although the clergy in Cuba and Porto Rico no longer receive pay out of public funds, they still remain in control of church property, schools and all the cemeteries on the islands. Under the law cemeteries have been paid for and improved with public money, and all persons, according to the American idea, ought to be entitled to equal burial privileges, but notes the writer in the Star, "the grounds have been all 'consecrated' and none but good Catholics are entitled to be buried in 'consecrated ground,' so there is no place but the sea for a Protestant. A heavy burial tax is also imposed, and many are too poor to pay it. This tax is kept up even after burial, and if not paid each year the bones are dug up and piled in the 'bone yard' in one corner,

or thrown over the wall, and another body is placed in the grave, provided the friends of the deceased can pay the tax." This law and these practices are still in vogue, and how to change them without exciting rancorous denominational prejudice will be a problem.

The recasting of the tax system is another labor calling for infinite patience. A particular feature of it in Porto Rico requires non-resident property owners to pay double taxation. This applies to Americans as well as foreigners and even to native Porto Ricans who live elsewhere than on the island. Discriminations of this character, it is obvious, cannot be permitted in American territory. Other conditions are thus summarized: "The courts do not possess the confidence of the people. The judges are openly charged with favoritism and corruption. They are dilatory in trying cases. Judges and even other officials can order arrest without charges, and can hold at pleasure without trial. The jails are full of prisoners who have been held for months and years with no attempt to try them. At the pleasure of the judge or committing officer a prisoner can be held in solitary confinement, and no one allowed to see him, and he is allowed to see or communicate with no one. A sentence for a term of years or for life may, and sometimes does, include being chained down and shackled. There is no such thing as the writ of habeas corpus, and with the legal right vested in a single judge to imprison at his pleasure without giving his reasons, no other judge could release if a writ was authorized. "A prisoner has no compulsory process for witnesses. The theory of the Spanish law is that every man charged is pronounced guilty, and he must prove his innocence. There is no uniformity in the decisions of the courts, the laws are not codified, they are made up of various 'royal decrees,' and are hard to understand, and it is difficult to tell what is the law now in force. The supreme court decisions are not published, but are filed away without any index or subjects, so each judge decides for himself and the supreme court decides each case without reference to what has gone before. Such a system would work utter confusion in this country. None but 'notaries' can make deeds or mortgages; they are very few, and charge excessive fees. The whole system of recording titles is defective and extortionate. Marriage has been so expensive that over half the children are born out of wedlock and parents live together in disregard of all form of marriage. There is no divorce law at all except for adultery, and on the part of the husband that must be accompanied with scandal to be a cause for divorce. There is no redemption from the judicial sale of lands and no minimum limit. The property can be sold by the sheriff for what it brings, and that is the end of the matter. They have been in the habit of taxing the necessities of life, bread, meat, milk and all kinds of provisions, giving a monopoly to some favorite of the city markets."

These errors, omissions and excesses will all yield, in course of time, to patient and intelligent American treatment; but they will yield more quickly in Porto Rico, where the native mind is not distorted by the mirage of an impossible independence, than in Cuba, where American intervention, by premature pledges, has foolishly given to every half-baked Cuban the opportunity to dispute our right to amend the evils of a country not our own.

The surrender of the Irish Fusiliers at Nicholson's Nek was caused by a timid member of the regiment who held up a flag of truce without authority and placed his comrades in a position from which they could not retreat with honor. A good many unauthoritative spokesmen in the "anti" class would like to get this nation into the same fix.

Immediately following the battle of Manila, Admiral Dewey demonstrated that he was one of the most patient men upon earth. He may soon have another opportunity. Mrs. Dewey owns a parrot.

The Russian-Japanese war situation has been rendered less threatening through the difficulty experienced by the czar in pawning his overcoat.

PERSONALITIES.

Siam's Crown Prince having completed his education at Harrow, his brother, Prince Bupphit, has now been sent to England to school.

Henry Clews says: "For one who looks little after the original investment, good health, a clear head, work and economy will declare big dividends."

Charles E. Littlefield, who succeeds Nelson Dingley in congress, will be the tallest man in that body, being 6 feet 5 inches in height.

The Earl of Yarnmouth will act under the plain name of Eric Hope. He will make his debut in a farce entitled "Make Way for the Ladies."

New York has a new negro poet who is said to be making a name for himself. James E. Corrothers is his name, and he is a clergyman and an athlete of mature powers.

William Bonny, the hospital steward, who was the last survivor of Stanley's white companions in the Emin relief expedition, is dead in the Guards' hospital in London.

ENGINEERS HEARD

PROF. H. E. STONE

HE SPOKE LAST NIGHT IN THE ALBRIGHT LIBRARY.

Told of the Advantage to Be Derived from Joining the National Association of Stationary Engineers the Principal Purpose of Which is the Education of Its Members—Said That Steam Engineering is One of the Greatest of Professions and Showed the Necessity of a License Law.

Probably one of the most entertaining and practical lectures of the kind ever heard in this city was the one delivered last evening in the lecture room of the Albright library by Herbert E. Stone, professor of stationary engineering in Harvard university, to the local members of the National Association of Stationary Engineers and their friends on the benefits to be derived from membership in that association.

R. J. Foster, president of the International Correspondence Schools, introduced Mayor James Mott as the chairman of the evening. The mayor made a few happy remarks in his usual characteristic vein and introduced as the first speaker Dr. John E. Coffey, of the International Correspondence Schools, who spoke admirably upon "The Value of a Technical Education."

Dr. Coffey has a truly wonderful flow of language which cannot be classed as "flowery." He emphasized the fact that thorough men are in demand today and that the cultivation of the best in man can only be achieved through education and especially technical education.

The next speaker was J. W. Lane, Jr., of New York, the manager of the National Engineer, the official organ of the association, who spoke on the wonderful progress made in the last few years in the publishing of technical papers for engineers and the necessity of the engineer reading these to keep in touch with the progress of engineering.

MR. STONE INTRODUCED. Mr. Stone was then introduced by the mayor. He is a tall, erect, open-faced, blue-eyed man, who has served his time in the engine room and who, although he now occupies an honored position, says himself that he's always glad to mingle with the "boys." He has an easy, conversational, good-natured method of speaking which carries force with every word. He dwelt principally with the benefits to be derived from joining the association and upon the necessity of self-improvement along technical lines by the engineers.

He spoke, in part, as follows: "The advantages to be derived from becoming a member of the National Association of Stationary Engineers cannot be overestimated. The organization is primarily and above all devoted to the education of engineers in their own profession. This is the cornerstone, basic principle and the principal purpose of the organization. If this world of ours has made great progress in this nineteenth century, it has made it because the individual men who have lived in this century have made progress.

"I speak of stationary engineering as a profession and such it is just as much, and perhaps more so, than law or medicine. I know of no profession which gives such an opportunity for aggressive educational improvement from day to day as does engineering. "Twenty-five years ago the engineer of a large building didn't cut much of a figure. He stayed down in his engine room and drudged. But it has changed now. Go into one of the New York skyscrapers and you'll find that the engineer of the building is an important personage and that he cuts his four feet thick. He has a private office of his own and he's in touch with all the surveys to a great extent.

IMPROVEMENT NECESSARY. "I cannot impress too fully upon you the necessity nowadays of keeping in touch with the changes in the profession. We are only in a probationary period now and who knows the changes the twentieth century may show. "The national association doesn't offer a plan by which you can open your mouths and have technical knowledge shoveled in from a bucket. It does offer you a plan, however, by which you can dig it out for yourselves. It offers an opportunity for you to gather with a number of others of your profession and exchange practical ideas regarding your work.

"It is a lamentable fact that you have no license law in Pennsylvania for licensing engineers. It took us 14 years to get one in Massachusetts but we've got it now and the improvement in the personal and general efficiency of the engineering profession in the state has improved 40 per cent. as a result. Not only this but the danger of serious explosions in schools, hotels and other large buildings is greatly minimized because the engineer to obtain a license must pass an examination and incompetents are thus prevented from holding responsible positions.

"The national association is not a labor organization in any sense of the word and interferes in no way between the employer and his employee. Its principal aim is the better education of its members in the art and science of steam engineering and to protect the interests of competent engineers in their vocation.

"We never call a strike and I desire to state here that I am a firm believer in the statement that 'better qualification inevitably brings better compensation.' The man who is compelled to take his employer by the throat to obtain something is not a man in my opinion who is an honor to any trade.

the municipal campaign, there were lots of would-be politicians on board the New York with him. The same ridiculous offers of assistance were made to him on the steamer. One man, who said his name was Gross, told the Tammany boss that he controlled no less than 10,000 votes in New York city.

"I have them right here in the palm of my hand," he said. "They are all yours for the mere asking." Mr. Croker gravely thanked the man.

"Will you keep those 10,000 votes in mind?" persisted Gross.

"Yes," replied Mr. Croker, with a twinkle of his eye and a wink at a friend, "I'll have those 10,000 votes in my mind, just where you have them now!"

There is a story going about town just now concerning a famous man of letters who visited Washington recently and was fairly deluged with invitations to breakfasts and luncheons and dinners and suppers, says the Washington Post, during his stay. He accepted almost none of them, and appeared at but one dinner party. Then he sat next to the young daughter of a noted naval officer. Her vocabulary is of a kind peculiar to very young girls, but she rattled away at the famous man without a moment's respite. He for his part wanted to talk to his hostess on the other side of him, but the talkative girl didn't give him a chance. She asked him all sorts of questions. It was during a pause in the conversation that she said to him: "I'm awfully struck on Shakespeare. Don't you think he's terribly interesting?"

Everybody listened to hear the great man's brilliant reply, for as a Shakespearean scholar he has few peers.

"Yes," he said, solemnly, "I do think he is interesting. I think he is more than that. I think Shakespeare is just simply too cute for anything."

He Knew by Experience. In a rural district of Scotland an old farmer had been elected a member of the school board. He called at one of the schools and asked if he would be allowed to put a question to the class, says a writer in Pearson's Short Stories. On receiving permission, he thought he would severely test their intelligence by asking: "Noo, boys, can any of you tell me what nothing is?"

Then a small boy in a back seat got up on his feet.

"Noo, my lad," said the farmer, "ye seem to be the dunce o' the class, sitting awa' doon there; but ye're mebbe noo. Let's see foo ye can answer, and tell me what nothing is?"

"It's what an old farmer gie's ye for haudin' his horse," replied the boy, with the sad air of experience.

Married and Settled Down. Ernest McGaffey, an American poet, is accredited with a fairly good bon mot, says the Scottish American. A lady said to him—"Oh Mr. McGaffey, I have just seen your wife for the first time since your marriage. But I had supposed she was a taller woman. She seems shorter than when I saw her last." "Certainly," replied the poet, solemnly, "she has married and settled down, you know."

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