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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 21, 1899.

Admiral Dewey has transferred to his wife the home presented to him by popular subscription.

Personal Registration.

SAYS THE Philadelphia Press:

"In one of the Scranton newspapers a writer declares that no statute of constitutional provision would prevent the stuffing of the ballot box before the election begins, as is done in this city."

A provision for personal registration would do very much to prevent such a crime.

It would make the padding of the voters' list practically impossible.

There would be no margin of names against which to mark ballots for the purpose of stuffing the boxes.

In hundreds of divisions names of non-voters, many fictitious, are put on the assessors' list for the use of repeaters and ballot-box stuffers.

Personal registration would prevent this.

The reference here is to the recent letter of Mr. Hannah published in The Tribune.

It is possible that the Press underestimates the ingenuity of the men who make a practice of perpetrating fraud at elections.

A personal registration law prevails in New York city. Does that prevent Tammany from colonizing voters and voting them on fictitious registrations at precinct after precinct?

It is not more difficult to impersonate before registration boards than before election boards.

If the corrupt intent exists at the one place it will probably appear at the other place also; and where there is a will to be crooked there is usually to be found a way.

We do not oppose personal registration; on the contrary, we favor it for the reason that it tends to make the average voter less forgetful.

But it is not a panacea. It will not revolutionize human nature.

The announcement made by Chairman Jones to the effect that Mr. Bryan will be the next Democratic presidential nominee, does not seem to have created much of a stir.

Our Merchant Marine.

LAST YEAR, according to the commissioner of immigration,

American vessels carried a fraction less than 9 per cent. of our exports and imports, the smallest percentage in our history.

Meanwhile the tonnage operating under our coasting laws, amounting to 1,015,592 gross tons, was the largest in our history and greater than the coasting tonnage of any other nation.

In sea-going tonnage the United States has dropped from second place to sixth, ranking below Norway and Spain, but in coastwise tonnage it stands at the head of the list.

This shows that the American people have not lost the knack of seamanship. Their gigantic coastwise business is an eloquent testimonial to the contrary.

But other nations have the advantage over them in sea-going tonnage, and it is worth while to inquire why.

The coasting trade is restricted to ships built and owned by Americans and the competition therefore is among Americans exclusively.

But the initiative an American wishes to engage in the international carrying trade he is confronted by the fact that ships made in England are 30 per cent. cheaper than American ships.

On this basis, if he buys an American-made ship, he must not only invest as first capital, \$150 to the foreign ship owner's dollar, but must charge up each year a larger sum for depreciation and interest.

Then the labor cost in operating a ship with American sailors is on the average 25 per cent. greater than that of the foreign ship; so that it has been demonstrated through actual experience that, on a net basis, two-ton freight tonnage of say, 4,200 tons burden, one under American registry, the other under British, the British ship can take in during one season's work \$36,000 less in gross receipts than the American ship and yet yield 12 per cent. profit, or, to put it differently, the fixed charges of the British ship are \$70,000 less than the fixed charges of the American ship, which explains why the British ship does the business.

The new ship subsidy bill about equalizes this difference and makes it possible for the American ship to bid successfully for a growing percentage of the world's carrying trade.

It is probably well for the commonwealth of Kentucky that Governor Bradley and not Mr. Goebel has charge of the guns.

The Morals of Congress.

WHAT A conservative paper like the Washington Star should feel impelled to sound a note of warning to congress upon the Roberts case, in the direction of admonishing its membership that they do not themselves violate the anti-polygamy law in force in the district of Columbia and thus tempt the partisans of Roberts to make reprisals, is far from flattering to the moral tone of congress.

The Star thus concludes a long discussion of the Roberts case:

"The Edmunds anti-polygamy law in force in the District of Columbia and the territories, and there have been several convictions in the district courts, though none extending to persons of prominence. The law comprehends violations of the marital obligations which in the courts would be termed infidelity, as well as a plurality of actual marriages, and if the violation of this law is formally recognized by the house as ground for expulsion from membership in congress, it will be expected to have a beneficial influence upon the moral tone of congress, if it does not deprive both houses of a quorum before the necessity for obedience of the law is fully appreciated. A strict enforcement of the law, with the expulsion from congress as the penalty, would soon result in great care being taken in congressional districts in the selection of candidates for congress and in a very strict regard for the propriety on the part of members after getting in congress. This congress having to deal with the Roberts case will probably feel compelled to preserve a moral record such as no congress before has done and such as no legislative body in the world is believed to have reached. The expulsion of Roberts is almost certain to be followed by many prosecutions and some expulsions if the moral indifference of past congresses should prevail in this."

If the agitation against Roberts shall be the means of cleansing only partially the national capital of scandal it will not have been vain. But congressmen are seldom as black as they are painted.

The fact that the new head of the firm of Harper & Bros. has been editor of the New York World and also of the North American Review, and succeeded in both positions, indicates in Mr. Harvey the versatility which wins.

That Bond Purchase.

THE RECENT action of the secretary of the treasury in offering to buy \$25,000,000 worth of government bonds has been variously interpreted.

Some critics have professed to see in it a Wall street device to affect the speculative market. Others have regarded it as having been intended as an object lesson to illustrate to the country the need of a more elastic currency system.

The fact that the government's offer to buy bonds has not brought forward any general offering of bonds for sale shows that the stringency which was believed to exist did not exist in any serious degree and therefore the claim of Wall street influence does not appear plausible. But before crediting with dishonorable motives a public official who has always borne an honorable reputation it would be fair on the public's part to hear what he has to say. We quote from an interview with Secretary Gage printed in the Chicago Times-Herald.

"In a general way the course of finance, as indicated by the history of the last three weeks, was producing not only agitation in New York but a growing anxiety throughout the country in the minds of those who were engaged in productive industry, like manufacturers. The manufacturer has to buy raw materials, often times far in advance of his immediate necessities. Few have capital enough to pay cash down, but rely upon the use of credit. When anxiety and doubt about the future reach this class they check operations. The fear that such raw materials as they may contemplate buying will not, when the labor cost shall have been added, find a market at fair prices naturally causes them to hesitate. So it can be readily seen that the question was not a question of New York alone, but that it was possible the far-reaching effects of this anxiety might touch every industry in the country. Whether it would go so far or not was a question which neither the secretary of the treasury nor any other human being could possibly determine. In such matters one cannot draw definite conclusions from a set of facts, however clearly understood. It is the influence of these facts upon the minds and imaginations of the public that cannot be measured.

"It was the department's fair belief that the situation as manifested in New York would by natural causes gravitate itself. On the other hand, the situation was delicate and might at any time be seriously aggravated by some unforeseen circumstance. It is further to be considered that the treasury itself was in danger of aggravating the situation by a further looking up of funds in the vaults of the government to the prejudice of individual and business interests. Appearances indicate—they are not absolute certainties—that the receipts of the government will be in excess of its expenditures. This argument alone would seem to justify as a prudential step on the part of the government to make it possible, under proper conditions, to transfer moneys from the treasury, where they were doing no one any good, to the market, where they might be usefully employed. The proposal to buy bonds was a proposal which would be operative only to the extent that the holders of such securities might see in the necessities of the market an advantage in exchanging the best bonds at the current market price for cash funds. In other words, the treasury did not invade the street with fresh money, and thus interfere with the natural relations of men with each other.

"From quite another point of view the transaction is justified. Under the law it is the duty of the Secretary of the Treasury to buy for the sinking fund—out of surplus revenues—United States bonds to an amount equal to 1 per cent. of the public debt, together with a sum in addition equal to one year's interest on the whole amount heretofore purchased for the sinking fund. The requirements of the statute make it the duty of the secretary to buy, if surplus revenues be adequate, something more than \$36,000,000 of bonds each year for the sinking fund. Unfortunately for the last nine years there has been no surplus revenue available for such purposes, and until the present no purchases have been made. Should the surplus revenues of the treasury be adequate it will be the secretary's duty to make further purchases from time to time. It is not a matter of choice with him, but a matter of official duty."

This explanation appears reasonable on its face. It meets and fits the known facts, including the circumstance that Mr. Gage had had previous

opportunities in abundance to "work" Wall street had been dishonorably disposed, and had utilized none of them. Those who assume in the secretary's action an unworthy motive have nothing but their own ever ready suspicions to offer as a basis for the assumption. The number of men willing to believe without proof that men of personal integrity and good reputation become, in high office, corrupt and venal is fortunately small and perhaps hardly worth considering.

But although Secretary Gage does not say so, we incline to believe that he had another motive in offering to buy bonds at this particular time. Congress is soon to meet. It will contain many members whose minds are undecided as to the need of currency reform. An offer to buy bonds would do no harm in any event. The government had the money in reserves to buy in \$25,000,000 worth without injury to its interest, the purchase would mean nothing worse than a reduction of the government's debt, and reduction of one's indebtedness is a wise move whenever it can be afforded. But beyond this, a demonstration of the inelasticity of the present currency system would be likely to incline toward currency reform many members of congress who had not realized fully the need of greater flexibility in the secured paper circulation. Hence the object-lesson at this opportune moment.

It is significant, in this connection, that published forecasts of the president's message all predict a straight-out executive recommendation of currency reform.

As we suspected, Secretary Hay had a trick up his sleeve in the Samoan settlement. The United States not only gets all that it wants in way of territory out of the Samoan group—that is to say, the island of Tutuila, containing, in Pago Pago, the finest harbor in the Pacific—but it also secures from Germany perpetual equality of trading privileges in the territory taken over by Germany. With this arrangement everybody ought to be satisfied.

It has become quite the fashion in well actions for divorce on the ground of adultery to conceal the name of the co-respondent. Judges hear testimony in chambers, seal the evidence and keep the entire affair as much as possible in the dark. No doubt this is wholesome so far as the nauseating details are concerned; but is the guilt of the home-breaker not deserving of at least the penalty of publicity? Is there no punishment?

Anthony Comstock was taken for a genuine sport in a New York museum the other day. Anthony appears to have considerable fun in the performance of duty.

No one seems anxious to learn anything about the opinions of Brother Brigham Roberts on expansion.

Nearly all reformers are liable to lose interest when once inside of the stockade.

HUMAN NATURE STUDIES.

His Wife's Comment.

A certain Washington man congratulated himself on the fact that he has the best wife in the world. To tell the truth, he has not yet settled down so much that he does not enjoy a little whirl "with the boys." 8 sometimes these celebrations develop into orgies of magnificent proportions. It is here that wife's good disposition asserts itself.

When her husband comes home in the wee hours and is groping vainly for the key, he is not to be blamed, being an irate spouse at the top of the stairs. He is not compelled to listen to a certain lecture before he is allowed to sleep off his potations. He is confronted by no sour looks when he gets up the next morning with a fever-dazy head, consequently he feels artless with remorse. He even thinks up with his conscience, or tries to, by purchasing fine raiment and various articles for the feminine toilet in order to make himself believe that he is in some degree worthy of such a wife.

But the good wife herself has come to understand the meaning of these gifts. Not long ago the husband went to New York on some business. Contact with convivial friends and numerous "high balls" produced a Bacchanalian time that lasted for three days. With sobriety intact, he bought and the Washingtonian went down to a fashionable dry goods emporium and outfit himself. He bought an elegant dress and trimmings, which costed up two hundred and fifty dollars. He explained to them to his wife and awaited developments.

In a day or two came a letter. It was not very affectionate, it is true, but it was a good long one. It recounted the effects of the recent cyclone at the capital even more vividly than it was described in the newspapers. The kind words and respectful compliments mentioned. All the details of the late neighborhood gossip were fully cited. No mention was made of the receipt of the dress in the body of the letter. The postscript, always the best part of a woman's epistle, consisted of this brief but significant phrase: "You must have had an elegant time."

—Washington Post.

Raised His Rank.

An engaging manner is useful everywhere. This axiom is amusingly illustrated by a story which Justin McCarthy tells. "Soon after the civil war," he says, "I happened to be standing on a bridge in New York, amusing myself by studying the crowd, when a Cap'n, youthful voice accented me with 'shin, shine yer boots?' The chance distribution of military titles was ready and liberal at the time, when so many soldiers were returning to civilian life, and I paid no attention to the invitation. Just then a rival bootblack passed, and imagining where the cause of my indifference lay, he advanced, and, pushing past the unsuccessful claimant, he gave me a military salute and appealed to me with the captivated words: 'General, shine yer boots! I had my boots shined on the spot.'"

Monogamy Explained.

Margherita Arina Hamm, the well-known traveler and author, cultivated in China upon the wife, or rather the wives, of a great mandarin. Her visit partook of the nature of a festival, so novel was the experience to the Chinese women, whose lives are passed almost entirely within the walls of their yamen. They examined her

clothing, and were partly pleased and partly astonished at it. They were shocked by her shoes, and especially by the fact that her feet were not confined by binding.

Finally, relates the Philadelphia Post, on their side, "Now I understand why foreigners never take more than one wife. They are afraid to."

"Why, certainly?"

"Can you ride a pony as well as a man?"

"Of course."

"Then you must be as strong as most men."

"Yes, I think I am."

"You wouldn't let a man beat you, not even your husband, would you?"

"Not at all."

The Chinese woman passed, laughed, and then said: "Now I understand why foreigners never take more than one wife. They are afraid to."

Gave Herself Away.

"Did the postman leave any letters Mary?" the mistress asked, on returning on a visit one afternoon.

"Nothing but a post-card ma'am."

"Who is it from, Mary?"

"Do you think I'd read it, ma'am?" asked the girl, with an injured air.

"Perhaps not. But any one who sends me a message on a post-card is either stupid or impertinent."

"You'll excuse me, ma'am," returned the girl, loftily, "but that's a nice way to be talking about your own mother!"

—Sydney Journal.

McLean's Sense of Humor.

John R. McLean, the recent Democratic nominee for governor of Ohio, is not without a nice sense of humor, as the following story proves. One day a new reporter on the Enquirer addressed Mr. McLean as "Mack."

"Now, don't call me 'Mack,'" protested the proprietor and editor in chief, "call me 'Johnny'; 'Mack' sounds so stiff and formal."

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Rochester Post-Express.

The death penalty is inflicted for murder in all the states and territories of the United States except in Colorado, Maine, Michigan and Wisconsin, but in Kansas there can be no execution without the formal permission of the governor. We know of no instance in which a state has abolished capital punishment and then returned to it. In several states the death penalty is inflicted for crimes other than murder. In Louisiana for assault with a deadly weapon, burglary, administering poison, and assaults on women; in Delaware and North Carolina for arson, burglary, and assaults on women; in Alabama for arson, robbery, treason, and offenses against women; in Georgia for mayhem, arson, and assaults on women; in Missouri for perjury and assaults on women in Virginia, West Virginia, South Carolina and Mississippi for arson and assaults; in Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and Arkansas for assaults on women; in Maryland for any variety of arson. In some of these states the court may substitute imprisonment.

The last statement that we have seen regarding the death penalty in Europe is the following:

Switzerland—Abolished 1874. Since reinstated by two or three cantons.

Prussia—From 1829-78 out of 484 condemned to death only one execution (Hilde).

Portugal—Capital punishment abolished.

Roumania—Abolished.

Tusany—No execution for fifty years.

Russia—Capital punishment retained only for treason and military insubordination.

In these countries the death penalty is in use so rarely that it may almost be said to be discontinued:

Austria—From 1870-75, of 86 death sentences, 10 executions.

Norway—From 1829-78, of 11 sentences 3 executions.

Sweden—From 1829-78, of 32 sentences 3 executions.

Belgium—No executions since 1852. Number of murders ten years before, 321; ten years after, 70.

Holland—No executions since 1821. Murders extremely rare.

Holland—Capital punishment abolished 1870. With decrease in murders, despite increase of population.

It is becoming more and more difficult in this country to secure convictions on the charge of murder. The number of murders in 1885 was 1,467, with 121 executions. Since then there has been a steady increase in the number of murders until there have exceeded six thousand in a single year, but there has been almost no increase in the number of executions. While the population was increasing 20 per cent., the homicidal crimes were increasing 40 per cent. And it is a fact that the lynchings in the United States exceed the legal executions. In 1897, for example, there were 163 lynchings and only 128 legal executions. The legal executions in recent years have been as follows: 1897, 128; 1898, 122; 1899, 122; 1900, 122; 1901, 122; 1902, 122; 1903, 122; 1904, 122; 1905, 122; 1906, 122; 1907, 122; 1908, 122; 1909, 122; 1910, 122; 1911, 122; 1912, 122; 1913, 122; 1914, 122; 1915, 122; 1916, 122; 1917, 122; 1918, 122; 1919, 122; 1920, 122; 1921, 122; 1922, 122; 1923, 122; 1924, 122; 1925, 122; 1926, 122; 1927, 122; 1928, 122; 1929, 122; 1930, 122; 1931, 122; 1932, 122; 1933, 122; 1934, 122; 1935, 122; 1936, 122; 1937, 122; 1938, 122; 1939, 122; 1940, 122; 1941, 122; 1942, 122; 1943, 122; 1944, 122; 1945, 122; 1946, 122; 1947, 122; 1948, 122; 1949, 122; 1950, 122; 1951, 122; 1952, 122; 1953, 122; 1954, 122; 1955, 122; 1956, 122; 1957, 122; 1958, 122; 1959, 122; 1960, 122; 1961, 122; 1962, 122; 1963, 122; 1964, 122; 1965, 122; 1966, 122; 1967, 122; 1968, 122; 1969, 122; 1970, 122; 1971, 122; 1972, 122; 1973, 122; 1974, 122; 1975, 122; 1976, 122; 1977, 122; 1978, 122; 1979, 122; 1980, 122; 1981, 122; 1982, 122; 1983, 122; 1984, 122; 1985, 122; 1986, 122; 1987, 122; 1988, 122; 1989, 122; 1990, 122; 1991, 122; 1992, 122; 1993, 122; 1994, 122; 1995, 122; 1996, 122; 1997, 122; 1998, 122; 1999, 122; 2000, 122; 2001, 122; 2002, 122; 2003, 122; 2004, 122; 2005, 122; 2006, 122; 2007, 122; 2008, 122; 2009, 122; 2010, 122; 2011, 122; 2012, 122; 2013, 122; 2014, 122; 2015, 122; 2016, 122; 2017, 122; 2018, 122; 2019, 122; 2020, 122; 2021, 122; 2022, 122; 2023, 122; 2024, 122; 2025, 122; 2026, 122; 2027, 122; 2028, 122; 2029, 122; 2030, 122; 2031, 122; 2032, 122; 2033, 122; 2034, 122; 2035, 122; 2036, 122; 2037, 122; 2038, 122; 2039, 122; 2040, 122; 2041, 122; 2042, 122; 2043, 122; 2044, 122; 2045, 122; 2046, 122; 2047, 122; 2048, 122; 2049, 122; 2050, 122; 2051, 122; 2052, 122; 2053, 122; 2054, 122; 2055, 122; 2056, 122; 2057, 122; 2058, 122; 2059, 122; 2060, 122; 2061, 122; 2062, 122; 2063, 122; 2064, 122; 2065, 122; 2066, 122; 2067, 122; 2068, 122; 2069, 122; 2070, 122; 2071, 122; 2072, 122; 2073, 122; 2074, 122; 2075, 122; 2076, 122; 2077, 122; 2078, 122; 2079, 122; 2080, 122; 2081, 122; 2082, 122; 2083, 122; 2084, 122; 2085, 122; 2086, 122; 2087, 122; 2088, 122; 2089, 122; 2090, 122; 2091, 122; 2092, 122; 2093, 122; 2094, 122; 2095, 122; 2096, 122; 2097, 122; 2098, 122; 2099, 122; 2100, 122; 2101, 122; 2102, 122; 2103, 122; 2104, 122; 2105, 122; 2106, 122; 2107, 122; 2108, 122; 2109, 122; 2110, 122; 2111, 122; 2112, 122; 2113, 122; 2114, 122; 2115, 122; 2116, 122; 2117, 122; 2118, 122; 2119, 122; 2120, 122; 2121, 122; 2122, 122; 2123, 122; 2124, 122; 2125, 122; 2126, 122; 2127, 122; 2128, 122; 2129, 122; 2130, 122; 2131, 122; 2132, 122; 2133, 122; 2134, 122; 2135, 122; 2136, 122; 2137, 122; 2138, 122; 2139, 122; 2140, 122; 2141, 122; 2142, 122; 2143, 122; 2144, 122; 2145, 122; 2146, 122; 2147, 122; 2148, 122; 2149, 122; 2150, 122; 2151, 122; 2152, 122; 2153, 122; 2154, 122; 2155, 122; 2156, 122; 2157, 122; 2158, 122; 2159, 122; 2160, 122; 2161, 122; 2162, 122; 2163, 122; 2164, 122; 2165, 122; 2166, 122; 2167, 122; 2168, 122; 2169, 122; 2170, 122; 2171, 122; 2172, 122; 2173, 122; 2174, 122; 2175, 122; 2176, 122; 2177, 122; 2178, 122; 2179, 122; 2180, 122; 2181, 122; 2182, 122; 2183, 122; 2184, 122; 2185, 122; 2186, 122; 2187, 122; 2188, 122; 2189, 122; 2190, 122; 2191, 122; 2192, 122; 2193, 122; 2194, 122; 2195, 122; 2196, 122; 2197, 122; 2198, 122; 2199, 122; 2200, 122; 2201, 122; 2202, 122; 2203, 122; 2204, 122; 2205, 122; 2206, 122; 2207, 122; 2208, 122; 2209, 122; 2210, 122; 2211, 122; 2212, 122; 2213, 122; 2214, 122; 2215, 122; 2216, 122; 2217, 122; 2218, 122; 2219, 122; 2220, 122; 2221, 122; 2222, 122; 2223, 122; 2224, 122; 2225, 122; 2226, 122; 2227, 122; 2228, 122; 2229, 122; 2230, 122; 2231, 122; 2232, 122; 2233, 122; 2234, 122; 2235, 122; 2236, 122; 2237, 122; 2238, 122; 2239, 122; 2240, 122; 2241, 122; 2242, 122; 2243, 122; 2244, 122; 2245, 122; 2246, 122; 2247, 122; 2248, 122; 2249, 122; 2250, 122; 2251, 122; 2252, 122; 2253, 122; 2254, 122; 2255, 122; 2256, 122; 2257, 122; 2258, 122; 2259, 122; 2260, 122; 2261, 122; 2262, 122; 2263, 122; 2264, 122; 2265, 122; 2266, 122; 2267, 122; 2268, 122; 2269, 122; 2270, 122; 2271, 122; 2272, 122; 2273, 122; 2274, 122; 2275, 122; 2276, 122; 2277, 122; 2278, 122; 2279, 122; 2280, 122; 2281, 122; 2282, 122; 2283, 122; 2284, 122; 2285, 122; 2286, 122; 2287, 122;