

The Scranton Tribune

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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.

TWELVE PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 9, 1899.

To put the right man in the right place when he is known and available is the highest duty of statesmanship and this is why, regardless of army jealousies, President McKinley will make Leonard Wood governor general of Cuba.

Questions.

WHY DOES the board of health permit the holding of public funerals in cases of death from diphtheria or scarlet fever?

Why do parents who have cases of these malignant diseases in their families permit visitors to distribute the germs throughout the neighborhood?

Why is the simple precaution of fumigation so frequently neglected and infected bed clothing hung out on the line to be whipped by each passing breeze until converted into a public peril?

Why are convalescent children sent to school before the attending physician has certified that danger of contagion is past?

In order words, why is not radical action taken to stamp out the two epidemics which have cursed Scranton for more than a year; or at least to minimize them by the enforcement of the common sanitary precautions?

We don't know at this writing where the fault lies for the existing deplorable conditions, but we intend to find out.

It is reported at Washington that the president wishes to have both Sampson and Schley made vice-admirals. Before this is done there should first be a revision of the naval records.

Our Trade With the Tropics.

THE COMMERCIAL possibilities which await the tropical island territories which have come into closer relationship with the United States during the past year, in supplying a permanent and growing market in this country, are suggested by a compilation just made by the treasury bureau of statistics of the importation of tropical and sub-tropical products into the United States during the ten months of the present year compared with that of the corresponding months of the preceding year. They amount, as the Washington Star shows, to the surprisingly large sum of \$299,000,000 during the 300 days in question, or an average of over a million dollars for each business day of the year, showing that for the full year the total will reach more than \$299,000,000.

This compilation, it is proper to add, includes raw silk, tea and rice, and the small proportion of our sugar importations which is manufactured from beets; but even if these be omitted the total which would be clearly entitled to be classed as tropical products would exceed \$299,000,000 annually. Sugar, coffee, India rubber, fibers, tropical fruits, spices, gums, indigo, dyewoods and cabinet woods form the important features of this large importation, and all of them articles for which the United States is absolutely dependent, with the possible exception of sugar, upon other parts of the world and for the present at least for the large proportion of our sugar.

All of these articles can be produced and are now produced to a greater or less extent in the islands in question. Sugar, as everybody knows, is produced in large quantities in Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines. Of our sugar importations in the ten months just ended Cuba has furnished \$184,000,000 pounds; other West Indies, \$14,000,000 pounds; the Hawaiian Islands, \$34,000,000 pounds; the Philippine Islands, \$66,000,000 pounds, while the East Indies have in the present year furnished a larger share of our sugar importations than any other single part of the world, the total number of pounds from the East Indies alone for the ten months ending with October 1, 1898, 997,548 out of a total of 3,767,756,951 pounds. Coffee, of which our importations are growing constantly and rapidly, amounting to about \$50,000,000 pounds annually, as against an average of about 550,000,000 pounds in the earlier years of the decade, is successfully grown in all of the islands in question, and at one time was a very important crop in Cuba as well as at present in Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines. Fiber, of which the importations in the present year will amount to \$20,000,000 in value, can readily be grown in all of the islands, the Philippines already supplying that most important feature of our fiber importations, manila hemp, which alone in the present year will amount to about \$6,000,000 in value.

While two or three of the larger items of our tropical and sub-tropical imports, rubber, silk and tea, are not produced in any considerable quantities in the islands in question at present, experiments which have been made in those islands, especially in tea and silk, indicate at least that their production is possible and may prove entirely practicable with further experiment. Even without these items the list of importations of tropical products which it is well known can be produced in these islands suggests the possibility that fully \$200,000,000, which the United States has been heretofore expending outside her own territory and population for products which her people must have and do not produce, can in no distant future be distributed in these islands in exchange for their supplies, whose production will doubtless be stimulated by the introduction

of American capital and American methods. Consul Oscar F. Williams, formerly of Scranton, has just been welcomed home from Manila by his fellow citizens of Rochester, N. Y. Mr. Williams was an important figure on the scene at the time that Manila was discovered by a large portion of the inhabitants of the United States, and seems now in a fair way to be instrumental in also locating Rochester on the map.

The Gem of the War.

ONE OF THE members of the committee of Washingtonians appointed to arrange a testimonial in behalf of Commander Richard Wainwright has received from a gentleman well known in Scranton, Hon. James T. Du Bois, United States consul at St. Gall, Switzerland, the following interesting letter:

"I send herewith my mite for the Wainwright sword fund. It is the right thing to do. I have heard military and naval men in Europe say that Wainwright's exploit in that memorable day with the Gloucester ranks high among the pluckiest acts in naval warfare. I have heard them say that it was the pluckiest thing of the war. A majority of continental Europe expected of course they did not desire that the torpedo boat destroyers of Spain would prove terribly destructive to our armored fleet, and when they learned that a pleasure yacht armed with small cannon and commanded by Wainwright, had rushed promptly and boldly at two of these Spanish torpedoes and had smashed them to helpless wrecks, quite as soon as the most fastidious patriot could wish, they were started at the possibilities of Yankee pluck and promptness, and have been wondering how it happened ever since. That a pleasure yacht dared to face two of these naval torpedoes, from which Europe expected so much, is still a mystery to them. That the pleasure yacht actually destroyed the destroyers is beyond their comprehension. Europe did not know as much about the American Jack before the war as it does now. Then he was known only as a money-getter. Now he is known as a fighter of the first class and first in his class at that. Nothing could be more appropriate than a beautiful sword for the commander of the Gloucester."

This letter expresses exactly the belief of all who have inquired into the circumstances of Wainwright's extraordinary gallantry. About the merits of that performance there is no haze of controversy or shadow of political strife. It shines out clear and bold, the chief gem in the constellation of gallant acts credited during the recent war to the heroism of the American navy. That Wainwright should be conspicuously rewarded goes without saying. Failure to commemorate his bravery would be a national disgrace.

It has been noted that the most bitter opposition to Congressman Roberts comes from the northwest, where divorce laws are most lax. The action of the Mormon congressman in sticking to three wives when a Dakota divorce court offers such an easy way out of the difficulty is probably looked upon as a direct insult to the institutions of the wheat belt.

An Unprofitable Criticism.

BY FAR THE MOST interesting article in the December number of the North American Review, considered from an American standpoint, is the paper in which Hon. Perry Belmont, indicates his theoretical dissatisfaction with the enormous authority and influence wielded at this time by the president of the United States, Mr. Belmont points out, with measurable accuracy, that the influence which Mr. McKinley can bring to bear upon public affairs is greater than that of any predecessor in the executive office and superior to that of any contemporary ruler, whether emperor or czar. Not alone is he the war lord over the newly acquired territory, holding 10,000,000 dependents in the hollow of his hand, but in consequence of the party system and by virtue of the personal tact which has characterized his intercourse with the legislative branch he is virtually the master of congress in the sense that his will and wish in the main shape its legislation. Thus it comes to pass, as Mr. Belmont mournfully emphasizes, that the executive dominates the whole government and in effect nullifies the constitutional theory of perfect co-ordination between the executive, the legislative and the judicial functions.

To this Mr. Belmont is shrewd enough not to make objection because of the character of the executive's acts per se; he realizes that no hay is to be harvested for the Democratic jackass by mere mulish opposition to the president's doctrines regarding expansion. His controversy is directed toward alarming people as to the theory involved. Can this remain a popular government, he inquires in substance, if to any one man, however wise and noble, is delegated power not contemplated in the constitution? And in the eloquence of his emphatic negative it is easy to perceive the anxiety to introduce a new issue calculated to reunite and revivify the disintegrated Democracy.

As an example of ingenious politics distinctly intellectual in character, Mr. Belmont's argument may be recommended as well worthy of perusal. We do not remember to have seen recently from any Democratic leader a more adroit or structurally interesting maneuver to turn the uppermost subject of public debate and divert the minds of the people from contemplation of Democracy's recent mistakes. This one article alone, by reason of its apparent dignity and undoubted ingenuity, would be sufficient to stamp Mr. Belmont as intellectually one of the best equipped Democrats of his time to enter upon the task of Democratic rehabilitation, not to say anything concerning his other qualifications, some of which are more concrete and material. At the same time, we must in all candor express the belief that Mr.

Belmont's is an unprofitable criticism. Granting, as all must, the present magnitude of the executive power and the great force of the presidential initiative, which far exceeds the ideals of the fathers, are these prejudicial to the theory of republican government; do they constitute a substantial menace to the general welfare? With regard to the present administration in particular we consider that answer is unnecessary. Never were the conditions of the public welfare more satisfactory. Never was pessimism more still. Though unprecedented his power, equally extraordinary are the intelligence, the tact and the conscience with which President McKinley administers it in trust for the people and most admirably responsive is he to their manifested will. There is no czarship or peril of czarship here.

But going beyond the individual instance, and considering the abstract principle, how can any American think that centralization of power in the hands of the executive is likely to be a serious or continuous menace to republican institutions so long as the executive shall at frequent intervals account for his stewardship before the people? It must be borne in mind that the American people have not breathed for more than four generations the consciousness of political freedom so vainly as to be likely not to notice a change in the atmosphere should abolition seek to assert itself beyond the spirit of the popular will; and it must be equally remembered that where free schools and a free press continually ventilate the ship of state there is little chance for any captain to turn tyrant and retain his command.

In all departments of every day endeavor we have illustrated the economy of single-headed organization as compared with communal direction. The system must have a head, formal or implied. Even congress is helpless until taken in hand and led. When the head becomes swelled, common sense applies the lance; but not even in theory can Hon. Perry Belmont convince a majority of his countrymen that one man power, when exercised benevolently and beneficially in the interest and as the trust of the whole people, constitutes any peril to an enlightened citizenship. At the present moment, it is so far from being a peril that in the judgment of many it is literally the hope and salvation of the republic.

Colonel Bryan's silence on the president's message is alarming. Can it be that the Nebraska leader has deliberately ignored an opportunity to talk?

The newspapers might better economize their energies in regard to the Quay case. It is the senate which will settle that.

Judging by the law of probabilities, news should soon come of the decisive battle of the Transvaal war.

So long as Mr. Roberts is not deterred from the lecture platform he need not despair.

Brother Brigham Roberts is in danger of becoming known as a man with a grievance.

The war power should establish a censorship over Billy Mason.

HUMAN NATURE STUDIES.

Lord Kitchener's Gallantry.

While I was waiting for a cab in the Charing Cross railway station one day in August, a train rolled up, says a London correspondent of the New York Journal, and from one of the third-class carriages stepped a girl whose face and bearing stamped her at once a stranger to London, and probably an American, for she wore a Fedora hat with a quill in it.

She was hampered with a half a dozen pieces of hand luggage, and was unaware of the usefulness of the porters that hover around the carriage doors in hopes of picking up a few pennies.

The girl looked up and down the long platform. She did not know which way to turn.

Then from across the way came a tall, raven-haired, bronzed-faced man, with a drooping moustache and a pair of shoulders as broad as the back of a hansom.

Removing his hat, he spoke to the girl, and asked her if there was anything he could do to assist her.

She blushed, and, opening her purse, took out a slip of paper, upon which was written an address in the west central part of the city.

"And do you want to go there?" asked the man.

"Yes, sir," replied the girl. "That will be very easy."

He called a commissionaire and had the cab whistled for.

He ordered the porter to throw the girl's hand luggage on top, and, returning the paper to her, told the cabbie where to drive.

He helped the girl into the hansom, and closed the two front doors over her skirt.

She thanked him very sweetly, and the bronzed cheeks of the man took on the tinge of a blush.

I had watched this little act of courtesy from the gate of the station with Mr. A. E. W. Mason, whose novel, "The Courtship of Maurice Buckler," met with such success in England a year ago.

As the cab drove out through the carriage door, Mason said: "That was very pretty, wasn't it?"

"Yes," I replied. "I wonder who the bronzed man was?"

"Why, don't you know who he is?" inquired Mason, with some amazement. "That was Lord Kitchener, Sir, of the Egyptian army, the man who took Khartoum."

my time at \$500, the worth of my letters at \$300, and my broken heart at \$200, and drew me a check for a thousand dollars, and here it is. Gave her a receipt in full to date, kissed her good-by, and there you are and here I am. There's but one way to do business, and the best known all about it. Yes, check for a thousand, and how many of you gentlemen will smoke a Henry Clay at my expense?"—Washington Post.

Musical Silence.

One evening Sir Arthur Sullivan went to see Rubinstein at his house in London. The Russian composer asked his visitor to step out onto the balcony and smoke a cigarette. They sat down, twisted their cigarettes, and puffed the blue clouds into the air. After a long pause Sullivan observed: "You are a great admirer of Beethoven, I presume?"

"Yes," answered Rubinstein. "And Wagner?"

"No," was the reply. "That was all. Not another word was spoken. They rocked themselves in their chairs and smoked away. After a long time Sullivan remarked: "I think it is time for me to be going."

"Don't say so," said Rubinstein. "Stay a bit longer; it is so nice to talk to you."

Sullivan remained, went on rocking himself and smoking into the small hours, when he at length got up and said: "I must really be off now; I think we have chatted long enough."

Rubinstein drew out his watch and shook his head in blank astonishment. "Half-past two," he said. "Strange how quickly time flies in pleasant company!"—Collier's Weekly.

Augustus Thomas' Retort.

Maurice Barrymore's wit is far-famed, says the New York World, but a neat little witticism at his expense, hitherto unrecorded, was Augustus Thomas' laconic criticism of one of Barrymore's plays.

The celebrated playwright had been mercilessly picking flaws in the actor's drama until the good-natured "Barry" winced.

"Oh, come, Gus!" he interrupted, "don't be quite so hard if it's not an 'Alabama.' Just remember that I wrote it in a week."

"Did you, Barry?" retorted Thomas. "Then you must have loafed."

His Farewell.

A clergyman in the west country had two curates, one a comparatively old man, the other very young.

With the former he had not been able to work agreeably, and, on being invited to accept another living, he accepted it and took the young curate with him.

Naturally there was a farewell sermon, and we can imagine the feelings of the curate who was to be left behind when he heard the text given out: "Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship."—Spare Moments.

SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY.

A Good Substitute. Clara—So that Grotto girl didn't succeed in capturing a Lord after all? Maude—No; but she married a Baron, and they say he gets as drunk as a lord.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Masculine Ignorance.

"Julius, my last winter's seal coat is entirely too short." "Too short? Well, can't you sew a ruffle on it, or some of those bias bands you women are always talking about?"—Detroit Free Press.

A Believer.

Greene—Do you believe the first shall be the last? DeWitt—Yes; my wife's conversation is first, last and all the time.—Cleveland Leader.

Out in the Wilds.

Hopwell—Living in the country, now I understand, but sort of a place is it? Subbub—I really don't know; it takes me so long to get home that I never arrive till after dark, and I have to leave before daylight to reach the office on time.—Philadelphia North American.

THE GENTLEMAN FROM UTAH.

For The Tribune. I've got a drolful tale to tell That happened, so they say, To a gent who crossed the Rockies From Utah, far away.

A gentleman with several wives, Who came to make our laws, And landed square in Washington, To plead the Mormon cause.

For, oh! he was a marrying man, When he landed on this shore, He could get a wife on the other side, But he wanted many more.

If one was worth possession, How much better it would be To have a half a hundred, Instead of only three.

If she failed to sew his buttons on And dared to raise his ire, By expecting in the morning He'd get up to make the fire.

"Variety is the spice of life," And he'd know just what to do, Just wabble out and slam the door And call up number two.

Should he chide her for her cooking, And she should seem to bake The puddings, beans, cookies Like "Mother used to make."

Or, when she says, "Dear Mother Is coming here to tea," He can do his hat and ulster And go visit number three.

There is Bryan from Nebraska, Who says "Sixteen to one," Is quits the better ratio Than even three to one.

But this fine gent from Utah, Who also crossed the sea, And brought his heart along with him Is satisfied with three.

They do not proffer him the seat Where Cannon sat before, But seven millions raise a howl And show him to the door.

C. H. Soper. Scranton, Dec. 7.

Luther Keller

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