

The Scranton Tribune

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The Republican national committee's compliment to Philadelphia in selecting it as the site of the next national convention will be cordially appreciated in Pennsylvania and it ought, in courtesy's sake, temporarily to take some of the sting out of the factionalism in this state.

A Played Out Role.

UPON THE occasion of the twelfth annual reunion and banquet of the New York Alumni of Union college, held in New York city Thursday evening, Mr. Charles R. Miller, editor of the New York Times, made a response to the toast "our country" which is worthy to be circulated widely. He said:

"I like the old-fashioned toasts, 'The Flag,' 'Our Country.' Time was when those were the toasts spoken to at every banquet table. They grew out of date for a time, but thank God, they are coming into style again. A sect of Adulterians has grown up among us within the last dozen years who, withdrawing from the currents of the country's daily life and strife, have sent forth from their cave brines of abuse and ridicule upon every passerby who was not ready to confess that he was heartily ashamed of being an American citizen. They have taught us that it is beneath the dignity of a grown man to love his country; that the man who professes devotion to the flag is usually contemplating some act of turpitude, and that patriotism is a silly word which must never be uttered save in contempt or in the most unbecoming manner. The new national spirit, the larger thoughts and broader aspirations that occupy the minds of the American people today, have made it up-hill work for the Adulterians. Hardly any man who is an actual worker and doer of things as distinguished from the fellows who stand around and find fault, any longer attends to them. They preach diligently, but their doctrines find small acceptance among a people who are too busy to heed them."

It is not to be said that these professional critics are useless, for we are taught by eminent authorities that every created being performs some valuable service in the economy of Providence. But it is, as Mr. Miller points out, a healthful sign that the great body of the American people are getting over the habit of taking these men at their self-estimated value and are so busying themselves with constructive labors that they have scant leisure to devote to grumblers.

By the appointment of ex-Senator Allen to the vacancy caused by the death of Senator Hayward, of Nebraska, who is probably the most talkative advocate of Bryanism alive, another serious handicap has been precipitated upon the over-burdened Democracy.

A Poor Contrast.

THE GREAT loss of life among the English officers in South Africa has been attributed to a large extent to the brilliant uniforms of the service which makes the wearer an easy target for the Dutch sharpshooter. When engaged in combat with savages it matters not what the style of uniform may be but within range of a cool, calculating enemy equipped with modern firearms the officer or private in brilliant attire is taking terrible risks. An effective illustration of the dangers of apparel that is conspicuous on the battle field was given during the War of the Rebellion. Soon after the opening of a headgear was adopted by the Union troops known as the "Havelock." It consisted of a white canvas covering for the regulation military cap with a cape that extended to the shoulders and was of a pattern similar to those worn at the time by British troops in India. A very few experiments with the white cap proved that it was the most striking target that could have been invented for the rebel sharpshooter either at long or short range.

The lessons taught by the experience of American troops in the Civil War and in the subsequent engagements necessary to subdue the Indians have been heeded by the government officials at Washington, and the fighting clothes of the United States soldiers are of a color as near the shades of earth and foliage in the locality of service, as possible. The small loss of life in engagements during the Cuban war is no doubt largely due to the style of uniform that caused distant platoons of American soldiers to blend with the tropical landscape. The English war department has certainly displayed sad lack of perception in not profiting by these lessons. The sending of thousands of brave men to the front arrayed in uniforms that make them conspicuous targets for the bullets of the long range marksmen of the enemy is the most grievous error that has been made during the present conflict. In contrast with our own war department, recently so much criticized, the British war office is certainly not showing up well.

A crusade has been started against the lead-mouthed newshawks of Omaha and the police have been instructed to arrest unchivalrous display too much lung power in announcing the features of papers on sale. The boys are up in arms over the matter and are solicit-

ing funds to carry their case to the Supreme court. If the courts decree that the boys must offer their wares in silence, the question of carrying out the law will not be difficult; but if a certain amount of yelling is permitted a delicate task is before some one to regulate the volume of tones. The outcome of the crusade will be awaited with widespread interest.

One of the most curious effects of the South African war has been experienced at Antwerp, the dwelling place of diamond cutters. On account of hostilities that have temporarily suspended the traffic in precious stones, many diamond polishers are without occupation and in danger of starvation. The far-reaching results of war are indeed emphasized in the conflict in the Transvaal that has thrown out of employment peaceful artisans miles away from the theater of conflict.

Public Spirit and Citizenship.

(Contributed.)

WHAT IS public spirit? We hear a great deal about it now and then and it has occurred to us that people's ideas as to what constitutes it are sometimes colored by environments and individual interests, and that once in a while a man gains the reputation of possessing it, unmeritedly. The almighty dollar is often potent in the pros and cons of "public spirit." A so-called "public-spirited" man may gain that reputation by putting his dollars into some new enterprise that promises a profit, and yet refuse to pay an assessment for opening a street or building a sewer. He may join a syndicate to erect a fine building which will be an ornament to the city, and in which lies the nest egg of financial return, yet let his pavement remain filthy and haggle over his taxes. He will likely enough cry aloud over public extravagance but fail to see why economy should apply to his own locality, his own electric light, his own street, his own desired improvement. The conscientious public servant is often bewildered by the many and varying ideas of "public-spirited" men of affairs, and we fear is occasionally turned down by them because he disagrees with them as to what is warranted. Therefore he may well ask, "What is 'public spirit'?"

Our idea of a public-spirited man is one who is ready at all times to lend his aid toward furthering the public good without considering whether there is an element of personal interest in what he is called upon to consider. Every man can be public-spirited; "The Man with the Hoe" equally with "The Man with the Coach." It is a question of spirit—not dollars. If any distinction should be drawn it should be in favor of the man of small means, for to him it involves greater sacrifice. The man of means, so far as power goes, has more, through his wealth, for evil as well as good. But dollar for dollar, we question if he deserves as much merit as the smaller man.

We also think a realization of the duties of citizenship is an important element in public spirit. There is a question, also, in whether the man of small means does not value his citizenship more highly than the man of large means. Let a doubter take his place at the polls in some district where wealth largely centers, and watch the men who vote. Likely enough the next morning he will hear severe condemnation of the result from those "who don't bother themselves about voting," but who nevertheless anathematize and moralize when the voting does not go to suit them. Public spirit is not a fad, but involves the performance of public duties and involves sacrifices and willingness to bear a share of public burdens. Shirking these things is incompatible with it and it cannot exist without them. Any assumption of "public spirit" by the citizen who shirks the duties of citizenship, marks him as a public sham. Neglect of these important responsibilities indicates decadence and decadence in citizenship involves decadence in government.

There is a growing impression that there is a tendency among our wealthy class to carelessness in performing the patriotic duties of citizenship—for no man can be a patriot who neglects them—and without doubt many of the evils in public affairs so loudly complained of would be rectified if these duties were more closely performed. It is to be feared that this dangerous indifference is increasing, or at least not decreasing. The average man of means pays little attention to the education of his boys to become conscientious citizens and to realize the importance of citizenship. In the primitive days of the Greek and Roman republics, the coming of age of the youth was celebrated as a day of glory, and the chief glory was the attainment of the rights and privileges of citizenship. When the attainment of these rights ceased to become a glory, the republics became corrupted and fell, and the unvarying rule is that "history repeats itself." How many of our young men, on arriving at age, consider the glory of citizenship, and how many take any pride in casting their first vote? Can any thinking man fail to see in this senseless element of future grave danger? It may be said that "way down deep" the feeling is there and that in the time of extremity they will, like the disinherited knight in "Ivanhoe," rush to the rescue. The black knight having rescued Ivanhoe, released into the squalid, the "public-spirited" man should be steadily alert and active as a citizen.

Ministers in Cumberland, Md., are at war over marriage fees. It has proceeded to such a degree that a ministerial association meeting has been called to consider the matter. Cumberland is so near the state line that persons determined to marry find it convenient to avoid the license law of this state by having the ceremony performed across the border. One clergyman of Cumberland is charged with being so enterprising as to have subsidized the hackmen in his own interest, with the result that the other ministers are seriously perturbed. Several field suits, a marriage license law and a variety of other difficulties are prom-

ised as the outcome of the controversy; and the whole matter is far from edifying to the cloth.

The blizzards of the northwest have been coming through by slow freight this season.

The Whipping Post.

THE WHIPPING post as a means of punishment for criminals is again being talked of. It is interesting to note that Rev. Henry H. Kelsey, a prominent clergyman of Hartford, Conn., is on the side of those who advocate the lash for those evil-doers for whom the jail has lost all terrors. The heads of police departments in many well-known cities who have been interviewed agree with Rev. Mr. Kelsey, and it is likely that an extended canvass for opinions would find advocates of the whipping post largely in the majority in police circles. It has been noticed everywhere that those who are compelled to deal most intimately with the criminals of brutish instincts are the most earnest in their recommendation of this method of punishment for the class that regards with indifference a term behind the bars. The efforts of these officials to secure the enactment of laws which would give authority to administer proper punishment to those who are without redeeming traits in the way of manhood have in nearly all of the states been met by the mawkish wall of sentimental people who contend that the whipping post is a relic of barbarism. The effort made some time ago to secure the passage of a bill in the Pennsylvania legislature that would introduce the whipping post to wife-beaters aroused opposition which has probably made the bear-eyed inebriate of the coal regions secure for years to come from any punishment save perhaps a short time in jail or a fine, which is usually paid by the abused wife. In the case of the whipping post, as in many other questions of public interest, the people least qualified by actual knowledge to express opinions usually have the most to say and too often exert an undue influence. Rev. Mr. Kelsey has the proper idea. Give confirmed lawbreakers the whip first; then let sermons follow.

Residents of Montrose, as well as other points about Susquehanna county, are rejoicing over additional train service which will take effect on Monday on the Lackawanna branch, connecting the county seat of Susquehanna with the main line. The additional trains on this branch road will prove convenient to Scrantonians, as well. The change is an appreciated step of progress on the part of the management of the Lackawanna road and one which seeks to encourage travel and bring business to the road by affording the best train facilities possible.

With "The Christian," the "Children of the Ghetto," "The Sign of the Cross," "Quo Vadis" and "The Little Minister" all on the stage at the same time it cannot be said that the drama in America is utterly given over to the French school, or to low class comedy. From present appearances it looks as if religious problems are to be the most interesting ones which will attract worldlings this season.

After nearly all have commended the message of President McKinley, Wharton Barker's American appears with a labored two-page editorial in which the writer endeavors to prove that there is really nothing of consequence in the message. A marked copy of the American would doubtless make Mr. McKinley feel very sorry.

There seems no question that Porto Rico had been rapidly Americanized. An election contest is threatened as the result of the recent ballot.

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MEARS & HAGEN 415-417 Lackawanna Avenue.

NUBS OF KNOWLEDGE.

Italy has 1,182 vessels. Blue eyes are said to be weakest. Strikers were hanged in England less than 100 years ago. The latest use to which bicycles have been applied is tiger hunting. The typhoid bacillus frozen in ice has been found alive after 102 days. It is expected that an automobile fête will be held at Pau, France, next February.

Prossians in the South of France spend about 10 cents a day for food for a family of five. School children in Victoria, Australia, are carried in street cars to and from school free of charge. The first recorded strike in the United States is that of the journeymen bakers of New York in 1711.

Drivers for electric vehicles are so scarce in London that one concern has been compelled to give up business. Labor Day is not kept in Arkansas, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia.

Thimbles have been found in prehistoric mounds with every evidence of having been made by machinery similar to our own. From the single district of the department of the Maritime Alps is produced annually 1,100,000 pounds of pomade or oil, the value exceeding \$2,500,000. An enterprising western firm is making arrangements to set up a modern sawmill in China, where lumber is still sawed by the primitive methods of a century ago.

Locks like those in use today, which could only be opened by the knowledge of a certain combination of numbers, were known to the Chinese centuries ago, while Hobbs gave his name to a lock found in an Egyptian tomb.

In the three years that the London Institution for the Deaf and Dumb has been established 13,994 animals have been received and cared for, or, if absolutely homeless and unhealthful, painlessly destroyed in lethal boxes.

Looking-glasses and mirrors sell extremely well in Persia. Immense quantities are imported every year, especially from Germany, France and Belgium. The Persians know nothing better for the decoration of their drawing rooms than fine mirrors in gilt frames.

A new method for overcoming sleeplessness has been discovered by Professor J. M. Baldwin. It consists in trying to picture a person asleep. The more clearly the other person's sleep is pictured the stronger becomes the subjective feeling of drowsiness.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE. [Under this heading short letters of interest will be published when accompanied for publication by the writer's name. The Tribune does not assume responsibility for opinions here expressed.]

Letter from Mayor Moir.

Editor of The Tribune: Sir: "Favor scribendi" is a motto I would suggest for inscription upon the coat of arms of the Lord Autocrat of the Scranton Gas and Water company. Having placed Colonel Bales "hors de combat" he now hurries his "stratum falcatum" at me. Mr. W. W. Scranton is at liberty to criticize my every official act if he sees fit, but, though no doubt eminent by example, I certainly object to allowing him the privilege of so shaping my future conduct as to make me a defaulter. If being poor is a sin or crime then I am guilty; but as to questioning my reputation for honesty, Well! I brave the scribbler of the long-eared kind. Very truly yours, James Moir.

Scranton, Dec. 15.

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