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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, and the condition precedent to acceptance is that all contributions of whatever nature and by whomsoever sent shall be subject to editorial revision.

### TEN PAGES.

SCRANTO, DECEMBER 18, 1809.

There is no profit in predicting with reference to the Quay case. It is the voting which will count.

### The Law's Delays.

HOSE WHO attended court from the bench upon promptness, both F. W. Fleitz. in the attendance of witnesses, talesmen and jurors and in the presence it court of attorneys interested in cases marked for trial. We cannot say from personal knowledge what the custom has been heretofore in these respects or how for Judge Archbald last week departed from it; but we do know that the expressions of opinion among the taxpayers in attendance at court was without exception favorable to the

Judge's attitude. There is, we suppose, a reasonable margin of courtesy due from bench to bur In the matter of adjusting court business to fit the convenience of practitioners: but common sense would seem to indicate that this margin a overstepped when the money of the people is wasted in unnecessary delays. It costs, we understand some where in the vicinity of \$10 a minute to operate the courts of this county and when many minutes of the court's time are exhausted in easily avoided Interruptions or in the sheer careless ness of some individual attorney, juror or witness, an injustice is worked upon the whole body of the people as well as upon the attorneys, witnesses and litigants who are thus held up.

In a newspaper office it would hardly be claimed that the absence of one individual should cause suspension o publication. Railway trains do not stop running when an engineer or conductor or superintendent takes a day off. Very few lines of business succumb to personal convenience. Yes there are attorneys who sometimes appear to believe that an expensive system of court administration representing more than any of these other institutions a public property and a public necessity should adjust its workings to accommodate their personal appointments. We cannot assume that this is a real belief. It is doubtless

commendation for endeavoring to obviate delays which by the exercise of a little forethought and public spirit could easily be avoided.

No doubt Senator Hanna had satisfactory reasons for squelching the plan to give representation in future Republican national conventions prethe only fair basis.

### General Wood and Cuba.

N ALL BUT name, Major General Leonard Wood, now on his way to Havana to assume the office of military governor of Cuba. will be a civil administrator possessing extraordinary power. In every deliverance of coinion which he has made upon the subject of Cuba's needs, he has strongly emphasized his belief lathe wisdom of using no more force in the government of the Cuban people than was necessary, and has asserted his confidence in the friendly disposition and honorable intentions of the masses of those people with respect to the United States. We may therefore expect that his assumption of the supreme command in Cuba will be followed as quickly as possible by the introduction of American ideas and ideals in Cuban public affairs, not pompously at bayonet's point but tactfully under circumstances which will seem to give to the representative Cuban advisers, upon whom it is General Wood's policy to seem to lean, the power of initiative and the courtesy of voluntary acceptance. General Wood's policy is well expressed in the adage that more flies are to be caught by nolasses than by vinegar; and his conlinual and unvaried practice has been to attain results through native cooperation, by putting the natives on their pride and honor. He is firm and in velvet.

If Cuba can be fitted in one generation for independent statehood; if the dream of a Cuban republic capable of taking its place among the sovereign sattons of the world can be fulfilled by iny power short of a miracle of heaven, the policies and methods and personal influence represented in General Wood's Cuban administration will effect this result; if Wood shall fail it will mean that the task set before him was an mpossible task. His appointment is a guarantee, which the conscience of mankind will accept and indorse, that the American executive has kept faith. it was not within President McKinley's power to go further toward esablishing in this dependent Island good order, intelligent methods and stable government. He has, at the berinning, done his best; it is for Provilence and the Cuban people to do the

mistake to assume that the have rights in the matter. Certain it

with any desire to appropriate Cuba. population unfit to govern itself would not represent a desirable addition to our domestic race problems. The Cuba which Americans would welome should be a Cuba capable of standing alone but sufficiently intelligent-to prefer identification with the creator of her affranchisement. For this reason, self-interest no less than duty calls for the education of the Cuban population; for their uplifting mentally and morally as well as in respect to production and commerce. If after all has been done which duty says should be done it shall yet appear that independence will not be possible, the recognition of this fact must by no means be limited to ourselves; the appeal for permanent guardianship must come with substantial unanimity from the representative Cuban people them-

Opponents as well as friends of Attorney General Elkin concede that in Saturday's hearing at Washington on the Quay case he carried off the honors. It will add local interest to this last week noticed what was triumph to say that Mr. Elkin was masaid by habitual attendants | terially assisted in the preparation of to be an unusual insistence his brief by his efficient deputy, Hon.

The Beale Case. N EXAMPLE of the occasional inconsistency of juries was shown in the verdict returned on Saturday morning in the case of the Commonwealth against George W. Beale charged with embezzlement,

This case grew out of the disappearance of certain funds held in trust by Mr. Heale as executor of the Ellis es-The sum of \$1,500 was involved. belonging to Mrs. Esther Mead, one of the heirs. The Commonwealth alleged that Beale had guiltily appropriated this money to his own use; the defense, that he had invested it at Mrs. Mead's direction in stock of the Morris Hidge Coal company, now without value. The conflict in evidence upon the essential point in the case—that is as to whether Beale's purchase of stock with Mrs. Mead's money had been made, upon his own prompting, with fraudulent intent, or in execution of a verbal order from his client-was direct and irreconcilable. One or the other side was mistaken. One or the other side rested upon a foundation of false swearing. If Beale did not invest this money on his own prompting, fraudulently, he is innocent of embezzlement and should have been acquitted. If he did so invest the money his crime was flagrant and there existed in the estimony no extenuating circumstances. The jury's verdict of conviction, coupled with a recommendaion of extreme elemency, is to be construcd, we dare say, as a compromise between obstinate jurors rather than as a satisfactory expression of justice. Quite aside, however, from the ques-

tion of the justice of the jury's opinion on the subject, this case presents before the community in its wider bearings a most impressive object lesson. simply one of the tricks or traditions Upon the defendant's own version of of the trade, more, we think, to be the facts we have illustrated a loose honored in the breach than in the ob- estimate of the moral responsibility belonging to the oilice of a trustee. To When a court is at work at its very the widow client who sought advice best speed the delays of the law are as to the investment of her little leprovoking and costly enough to tax gacy the defordant recommended purboth the layman's patience and his chase of an admittedly speculative purse. We, therefore, consider that stock which had been put into his hands to sell. The risk in such an investment was obviously larger than any widow or orphan should have been asked to take; and that the defendant in this case was willing to unload such risk upon a woman unpracticed in the arts and wiles of business exhibits a view of feduciary obligations which can hardly be too strongly condemned. In humorous or satirical literature portionate to the Republican votes the typical attorney is often depicted cast; but he will find it difficult to as a human shark seeking whom he eliminate the impression that this was may devour; and this conception no doubt owes its origin to instances like the one we have been considering. It is unnecessary to add that this view is not to be accepted seriously. The majority of lawyers are on principle the first to condemn an abuse of trust by an unprincipled or a misguided

member of their honored profession. The Democratic representation in congress, although proficient in lung power, is already showing signs of great weakness in its thinking depart-

### The Examination Fad.

NQUIRIES regarding school methods in other cities has developed the fact that in one respect the system pursued in Scranton is not abreast of the best educational thought of the day. We refer to the examination fad which prevails here. The tendency all over the country is certainly in the direction of shorter examinations and fewer of them. Some superintendents do not permit an examination of more than one subject in a single day and in many schools pupils are not required to do any study or lass work during the remainder of the day. In the public schools of Scranton four subjects embracing the most difficult in the curriculum are frequently undertaken in one session. In many progressive schools in other cities examination in a subject is held informally and white a pup-i may stern, but the hand of steel is gloved be called upon to review previous topics he is not subjected to an examination

in them more than once. There is a growing practice of submitting examination papers to specially appointed examiners. In some instances this work is done by older pupils; in other cases by teachers employed for the purpose, these persons working in conjunction with the grade promotion to the supreme position in | teacher whose class is involved. Many superintendents, in fact those who are recognized as the progressive representatives of modern day education, positively forbid the now infrequent practice of compelling the teachers to work over the papers after school hours, and a more sensible regulation could not well be devised. A teacher who has worked until midnight reading and marking papers is not in a fit condition to carry on her class room duties next day. It is an imposition on the pupils, if no mercy is to be shown to the teacher. It is upon them that the evil reacts. Certain it is that the pupils

is that they have the right to the service of a teacher who has not been

worn out with midnight toil. The informal opinion of about two hundred superintendents seems to be that written examinations are not a test of the pupil's progress, still less of his scholarship; and that the teacher's judgment of the pupil's capability is a safer criterion is almost a unantmous decision. In consequence of the multiplicity of examinations and the extra work they entail, the Scranton teacher in a number of grades is fast becoming a mere drudge with little or no opportunity for bringing to her pupils fresh outside interest and therefore for doing the best work in her power. This we consider a serious mis-

The soldiers of Great Britain do not lack personal bravery; but their officers appear to lack the fertility of resources and ready adaptability to unforeseen emergencies which characterize above all others the men who wear the shoulder straps of Uncle Sam. The more we learn about how things are going in south Africa the better satisfied we are to belong to the American wing of the Anglo-Saxon race,

A Philadelphia woman has just left her husband because he would not give her a deed to his property. While this action should not be encouraged, it is probable that the wife who holds the deeds for real estate cuts more of a figure at home than the one who allows the husband to have full control.

Root and Hogg, as opponents on the vice presidential ticket, offer a delightful prospect for the funny para-

### Critical Situation of British Empire

TRITING in mediately after defeat of General Bulier, the London Times said that the English nation "has not been confronted by so painful and anxious a situation since the Mutiny." Actually, however, England and the British Empire must go far back of that Indian episode to find anything approaching a parallel of the present situation, if, indeed, in all Eng-lish history there has been any likeness The Indian Mutiny of 1857 made anifest a violent and widespread native iscentent with British rule which rend necessary vigorous repressive sures, which were applied success-The defeat of General Buller, following in rapid succession the similar defeats of General Gatacre and Lord Methica and the earlier reverses of General White, has been of far graver consequence. The military prestigs of England has received a stunning blow. The standing of the British empire as a firstclass power of the world, as the foremost power, is put to a test more severe and seatching than any other at has peen called on to endure in a century.

England entered upon this war with the Boers without a single misgiving, and there was none in its army. Its confidence of speedy and complete victory was absolute. General Buller himself, upon leaving England for the field, jo-cosely and vauntingly proclaimed his in-tention of eating his Christmas dinner at Pretoria. Throughout England, and more especially in the London Stock Exchange, the contest was regarded simply as an easy opportunity for the Brit-ish army to demonstrate its resistless power: and even in foreign countries the was looked upon as almost a foregone and other armies, had long questioned the efficiency of the British military system and the practical ability of the British officers to meet the exactions of modern war; but the general public, more particularly the English public itself, had formed a conception of British military resource and prowess which made impossible to it the thought that a state like that of the little South Afri-can republic could withstand them for more than a few weeks if they were exerted even to a small part of their

The conduct of the British campaign has amply justified these military criti-

example of generalship on the English side indicative of capacity to deal with present military conditions and exigendes, but it has also demonstrated continuously from the battle of Glencoe to the defeat of Buller at the Tugela River the incapacity, the careless training and the professional ignorance of the British officers, while on the side of the Boers and their Free State allies all the re-quirements of such wurfare have been satisfied in a distinguished degree; the whole military ability has been with them. The English officers have neglected persistently the precautions requisite in every war with a civilized people, and have proceeded as if their mere approach, with all the pomp and circum-stance of war, was of itself enough to strike confusion into the heart of the stoutest foe. Probably there is no other army in the world in which the officers, as a mass, have given less thought and less heed to professional study and prep-

Kipling's stories, though written to applaud British military superiority, reveal, incidentally, this deplorable negligence. Sports and pastimes take the place of arduous military manoeuvres and patient study of the practical ques-tions and problems of war. Of course as papers of the United Service institution bear witness, there are conspicuous exceptions, known throughout the mili tary world, but the great run of British officers have deceived themselves with the notion that their personal bravery only rendered them competent for their duty, though of course mere animal courage is a relatively insignificant element in war. Foreign military students visiting England have long been surprised to find so much of professional ignorance among officers of the army; they are likely to know more about the history of the mess plate than about the construction and capacity of their ord-nance and the details of their duties.

war is simply bringing to view the in-evitable consequences of those pervasive defects in the training of British officers. They are compelled to surrender to forces of Boer farmers, regulars yielding to volunteers. The errors and miscalculations, the carelessness and neglect of the first principles of modern war. with the display of which they began with the display of which they began, have been repeated almost without variation from Glencoe to Tugela River, whether the commander was White or Gatacre. Methuen or Buller, and always with the same disastrous consequences. So far, they have learned no lesson Meantime, probably inferior forces of the Boers are beating them continuously with a relatively small loss. The strategy of the British campaign, with its division of the three columns, led respectively by Gatacre, Methuen and Buller, has proved so far defective that how it may be said that the work has all to be done over again, a new campaign laid out, and new armies collected to carry it on. soil remains untouched by the invaders and the British are still everywhere on the defensive, with beleaguered armles o with armies shattered by defeat.

It is, then, a situation which imperiis the prestige of the British empire. As a military power purely, England is making an exhibition of her weakners in the presence of an enemy of insig-plificant numbers which brings satisfacs accomplished she will need to dismis polo players, club loungers and drawing-room heroes, but actual soldiers taught the art of war in a strenuous conflict

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tion to all her rivals or foes and pain and mortification to her friends and admirers. Accordingly, Consols have fallen to par, the lowest price since 1893, and all England is roused to the necessity of exhausting every resource of the empire to retrieve her military reputation and maintain her front rank place among the powers of the world. That she can do forced to recast and reform her military system, putting into it new vitality and adapting it to the conditions of war as it is now, not as it was a century ago For this purpose, out of the long tes which the South African conflict is like ly to furnish, there will come eventually a nucleus of officers about whom this reorganization can be made—not mere

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