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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.

SCRANTON, JANUARY 16, 1900.

TEN PAGES.

Would Thomas B. Howe, the latest objector to the opening of Wyoming avenue, like to be the means of depriving Scranton of a printing plant employing 500 men? Is he prepared to make good the \$300,000 a year in wages which may be lost through delay?

An American Object Lesson.

DOCUMENT of present interest and historical value has just been issued by the government. It embodies the annual report of the department of posts for Cuba for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1899; or, in other words, the first six months of American rule in the island; and unlike the average department report, it is replete with

It is perhaps known that when, upon appointment by Postmaster General Smith, E. G. Rathbone was sent to Cuba to organize a postal service on American lines, the Spaniards had prepared the way for him by destroying every record which could possibly aid in the performance of Mr. Rathbone's task. There was not a list at headquarters of the postmasters throughout the island.nor a postage stamp nor a cent of money. The American officials directed by Mr. Rathbone had not only to take hold of a strange task in a strange land, inhabited by people speaking a strange tongue, but they had to originate their work from the foundations up. Let us see how they succeeded.

Director General Rathbone assumed control Jan. 1, 1899. Before the last of February he had secured information concerning 193 of the 285 postoffices reported to be on the island. and had put those 192 offices in good running order, in most instances in charge of a native postmaster. This may be a good place to say that although the reputation of the Cubans for honesty does not stand high, the chief of the detective bureau in connection with the postal service, who had charge of the morals of the native postal employes, reports that while 492 Cubans were at the close of the fiscal year employed in postal work, only one case of undoubted theft had developed during the six months and within forty-eight hours the culprit in this case was discovered, arrested and remanded for trial. In January six bureaus were organized, including finance, chief clerk, postal accounts, aplation, the latter of especial importance, since to many of the Americans employed Spanish was yet an unknown tongue. To these were subsequently added bureaus relating to postal money orders, special agents, registration, dead letters and disbursements. A legal department is in pro-

cess of organization. One of the early questions to be considered was that of transportation of the mails. In the absence of a complete railway system the department had to negotiate largely with the steamship lines skirting the coast. There are seven of these lines. Four of them, after consultation with Mr. Rathbone, agreed to carry the mails free until June 30 next. Three made slight charges, aggregating \$2,200 per annum. Under Spanish rule the cost of steamship transportation of insular mails had been about \$141,000 a year. The cost of the thirty railway routes at present in use with a total mileage of 1.046 is \$1.914 a year. Thirty-five star routes, with 705 mileage, a feature new under American rule, cost \$15,564 a year.

One of the most radical changes effeeted in any one branch on the island took place in the railway mail service. Says Mr. Rathbone: "We found the of the real character of the service scared, expected of them, working the mail on two seats turned together; without uniform to distinguish them, and in many cases subordinating legitimate work to that of carrying parcels and even letters which were handed them directly, for the delivery of which, a fee; and often these fees, if inforthan the salary. All this is changed. greatly to the safety of the mails. their work and in nearly every inwell arranged compartments in secondclass cars; a uniform has been prescribed which will add to the appearance of the clerks, and also, I think. the position. The practice of allowing the clerks to carry parcels and letters and personally deliver them to the addressee, has been stopped."

On June 30, 1899, there were 239 offices in operation, distributed among the six provinces, as follows: Ha-30; Puerto Principe, 7; Santa Ciara, 64: Santiago, 30. At these 239 offices there were, on June 30, 535 employes. including postmasters and acting postmasters. Of these, 59 were Americans were employed in the delivery of the

The money order system was a Yanthe innovation which quickly established itself. When Mr. Rathbone took

37 money order offices open regularly to all the people. In the first quarter .409 domestic money orders, representing not quite \$49,000, were issued; at this time the army was still in Cuba. In the second quarter, after the army had been largely reduced, 3,365 domestic orders, representing nearly \$130,000, were issued, an increase of 1,956 orders and over \$50,000 in amount. For the same quarters the domestic orders paid numbered 712 and 3,267 respectively. and the amounts were \$23,954.70 and \$132,658.69, an increase of 2,555 in number and \$108,703.99 in amount. Of international orders payable in the United States, the records show 6,362 in the first quarter, representing \$174.983.91, and, in the second quarter, 11,402 orders, representing \$340,724.06, an increase of 5,040 orders representing \$165,-740.15 notwithstanding the reduction of the army. So great did the demand for international money orders become at a time subsequent to the period covered in the report that Mr. Rathbone had to increase the fee and make a rule forbidding one person to take out more than five orders to one payee in one day. In one day in Havana 1.212 orders were purchased, representing \$115,048.02.

As an illustration of Spanish meth-ods, over 2,000 pieces of undelivered registered mail matter of a declared value of \$7,000, the accumulation of four years' carelessness, were found in the Havana postoffice when the Americans took possession, and they had the pleasure of finding the owners, which they speedily did. Similarly an accumulation of thousands of pieces of ordinary mail, some of it dated as far back as 1891, was disposed of by a dead letter bureau. In all, this bureau, in the six months, handled 73,688 pieces. Of this amount, 37,347 pieces, or a little more than one-half, were disposed of unopened, 35,437 pieces being returned to countries of origin, 1,890 pieces returned to senders, as per cards and requests, and 30 pieces delivered to applicants. Of the 36,341 pieces which were opened, 1,741 were delivered to addressees, 1 309 were filed, 31 are awaiting evidences of delivery, and 33,260 of no value, and which could not be returned to writers, were destroyed. It is a matter of interest to know that undelivered mail was received from and returned to sixty-nine foreign countries, covering all civilized portions of the earth.

At the beginning of a work so Important as all this, many expenses arise which, once met, do not recur. In the first six months the postoffice system in Cuba cost \$265,572.64 and the actual receipts from current business were \$150,138.02, leaving a deficit of \$115,385.62. We understand that the system is now paying its way. But in any event it is a notable object lesson of practical American methods and as such is worth to Cuba and the world many times its money cost.

Does the law permit coasters to make cripples of themselves? If so,

The Main Question.

S WILL BE OBSERVED in another column, the Philadelphia Record, which on November 16 last published the report that a large campaign fund Islative districts this year against Quay, now asserts the truth of its report as printed on that date. The men whom it had in mind as the promoters of that fund are the same men heralded daily by the Press as desiring to accomplish the purification of Pennsylvania Republican politics, by eliminating the pernicious use of money, restoring power to the people, dice, which is one of the rarest of all demolishing bossism, etc., etc.

For saying that the organizers of this fund were boasting of it. The Tribune was accused by the Press of lying. We considered the Record article a boast and supposed from the Record's past co-operation with the insurgents that it was an authorized mouthpiece responsive to the Wanamaker influence. This supposition having proved erroneous and unfair to the Record, we now gladly withdraw it; but upon the main point that a large fund intended for use in the David Martin manner has been collected by the insurgents we refer the Press to the Record's assertion. Let the Press call the Record a liar if it

In spite of the mayor's intermittent talk about closing the speak-easies and disinfecting the haunts of vice, the postal clerks without well defined devil still does a wide open business methods of work, without much idea in Scranton and doesn't look a bit

Nicaragua Canal Prospects.

T WOULD undoubtedly gratify the country if congress at this session, without waiting for the latest commission of inquiry to report, were to pass the Hepburn bill both parcels and letters, they received appropriating \$140,000,000 on the instalment plan for the construction by the mation is correct, amounted to more United States government, on soil of its own, of the Nicaragua canal. The Mythods are in vosue now which aid bill could not go into effect until the government had completed the neces-Clerks are thoroughly instructed in sary negotiations and arranged the requisite preliminaries: but it would stance take an intelligent interest in at all events constitute a starting point it. Their work is done in reasonably for definite, progressive work, and the country would be relieved of the annoyance of seeing successive congress. es, under the inspiration of a transcontinental railroad lobby, exhaust will tend to make them take pride in their energies in profitless declamation or in the naming of superfluous commissions intended primarily to

delay the work of construction. It is reported by observers at the capital that the sentiment in favor of an early beginning of the canal has very materially increased since Dewey vana, 60; Matanzas, 48; Pinar del Rio. captured the Philippines and involved the United States in the strategic command of the North Pacific ocean, and the news is plausible. Any man with an average imagination can see that, in consequence of this expansion busiand 476 were Cubans. At the close of ness, the United States is soon to dethe fiscal year, free delivery had been velop an enormous commercial interestablished at 23 offices, and 96 carriers est in the Orient, including a larger navy and an adequate merchant marine: that the manufacturing cities of the Atlantic seaboard and of the country bordering on the gulf of Mexico will not rest content to permit the hold he found 32 military postal sta- slope states to have all that new trade tions'andere money orders were sold to but will move heaven and earth to

kets; and that the only way they can hope to compete successfully will be by means of cheap ocean freights predicated upon a transisthmian canal. Thus the east and south will press for its construction, but not more so than the western states, who, in their turn, recognize in the canal a great stimulus to intercontinental trade and a possible means of securing western

fruit and grain exports to Europe. The events of the past two years have made the Nicaragua canal more than ever an imperative necessity to American growth and to American defense. The day has passed when the American people will pardon temporizing on this subject upon the part of

General Wood's action in deposing the Cuban prosecutor in Havana who spent most of his time in devising means of defeating the processes of justice has, it is pleasing to notice, recelved the cordial approval of the leading Cubans, a fact indicative of better things in Cuba. General Wood has again shown that he is the right man working in the right manner.

Men who would promptly volunteer for their country's sake to fight a foreign foe very often seem to think that it is no part of a patriot's duty to do battle against a raging epidemic more deadly than bullets or bombs, Public opinion should know that patriotism is an all-round, continuous virtue and not a series of spasms.

scientific enthusiast in Brooklyn says that concentrated heat in solid blocks for the generation of power will be among the discoveries of the twentieth century. He offers no suggestions, however, as to how the discovery will be brought about. This seems another opportunity for Prof. Coles.

In a lecture delivered at Rochester ast week ex-Consul Oscar F. Williams predicted that the Filipinos would be reconciled to American rule before the Americans had been reconciled to the Filipinos. Let us hope that the pacification will be simultaneous,

Sir Hugo de Bathe, the latest huspand of the Jersey Lily, announces that he is going to fight the Boers in order to show his wife and the world that he is a man. He has a large contract on hand.

The institution of pro-Boer societies and the threatened organization of pro-British clubs, may yet make the encouragement of a pro-mind-your-ownbusiness movement necessary in this

In declining the Democratic nomination for governor of Illinois, young Carter Harrison demonstrates that he knows the difference between a sure thing and a dream,

From all accounts it looks as though it would be necessary for the British generals to spend a little time fighting each other before proceeding against

Senator Hoar should have thought twice before giving aid and encouragement to the enemies of his country. He

HUMAN NATURE STUDIES.

Root as an Interviewer.

One of the chief peculiarities of Elihu Root, the secretary of war, is, says the Saturday Evening Post, his ability as a listener, He listens without prejugifts. To a club member this gift is indispensable if he wants to rise to office and Mr. Root has been president at one time or another of almost every club he belonged to. The growth of the war secretary has been slow, But it has been sure. As a lawyer he has had the genius of industry, and early in his professional life he learned the value of preparing both sides of every case he had. As a result he frequently knew more about his adversary's case than his adversary did himself. This thoroughness gave him an enviable standing at the bar. Long before he was generally known he was made United States attorney for the southern district of New York. That was years ago, and many laymen thought the president was appointing an incompetent man because he was comparatively unknown, but Mr. Root's public services demonstrated the wisdom of his

Not only has Mr. Root a genius for listening, but he rivals Li Hung Chang in his ability to interview an interviewer. The other day a well-known New York reporter was sent to Washington to obtain the secretary's plans for ending the Philippine insurrection. When he returned he was asked what

he had got, "Got?" replied the reporter soulfully. "Got nothing. The secretary saw me all right, and I told him nearly all I know about the newspaper business, and was just starting in to tell him how to own your own house on \$50 a week when an assistant secretary broke into to consult him about a matter of business, and I had to go."

Saved the Captain's Reputation.

"They tell a good story in the army about Captain Patillo, the crack shot," said one of a party of late diners, according to the New Orleans Times-Democrat. "General Miles and a high Washington official once visited a western post where the captain was stationed, and sent word that they would like to see a little exhibition of his skill. Patillo happened to be quite sick at the time, but he couldn't very well refuse, and presently appeared on the long-distance range. "He blazed away, and an Irish ser-geant, who had been sent out to act as marker, waved a small flag. 'What does that mean?' asked the distinguished visitor. 'It means I missed the whole target,' said Patillo gloom ily. He tried again, with the same re-sult. 'I don't know what's the matter with me!' be exclaimed, in deep mortification; 'I never did such work

in my life. "At the third shot the distant figure varied the wig-wagging and the as-sembled officers applauded. Thereupon he fired 20 consecutive rounds and each time the flag waved back the news that he had plerced the inner circle. It was a mervelous record, an unparalleled score; the distinguished visitor was very gracious in his con-

soldiers. Six months later there were compete in the race for Oriental mar- | "Later on Patillo, still beaming, met

the marker crossing the paradeground. 'Hello' sergeant,' he said; 'I wonder what the deuce made me miss the target those first two shots?" 'Whist, captain!' replied the Irishman, drawing close; "tis divil the toime ye hit it at all, at all!" Didn't hit it at cried Patillo, in amazement; why did you signal all those bulls-eyes?" 'Faith, sor,' said the sergeant, reproachfully, 'I knew your reputa-

Misplaced Confidence.

A newly married couple were honeyning in the country, when the first batch of letters from home arrived, and the husband teasingly proposed to open one addressed to his

"Certainly not," she said firmly.
"But, Philippa," he pretended to remonstrate, "surely you are not going to have any secrets from me now that we are married?"

shall not have any secrets from you, but Fhyllis might," his wife said. That letter is hers, not mine. I shall probably let you read it after I have, but not till I am sure that Phyllis has told me nothing but what she would be willing for you to know." "Still, doesn't it imply a lack of

confidence when a wife won't show her letters to her husband?" "Not at all. The lack of confidence is shown by the husband when he demands to see his wife's letters." This was unanswerable, and the husband sank back in his chair with

amused delight in his wife's perfect unconsciousness of having said a good Presently she added: "I told you so! Here is something

Phyilis wouldn't want you to know. "Then why are you going to tell "Im not going to tell you what it

something you can't know-at pres-"Phyllis is engaged," he remarked. "And what if she is? You are not to know to whom.

"To Radeliffe," hazarded her husband. "I didn't say so."

"But you don't say she isn't." "How could I say she isn't when

"ls? I really think, my dear, you might as well have let me read that letter."-Collier's Wackly.

Taking No Chances.

"Darling," he murmured, pillowing her golden head upon his manly bosom. "Darling' we will soon be wed-bound together by the indissoluble ties of holy matrimony." But she was a new woman and knew

good thing when she saw it. He was worth \$100,000. "Yes, a church ceremony will do for a starter," she murmured, "but this corporation will be organized under the

laws of New Jersey." Yet there are those who imagine that women have no business acumen -Omaha World-Herald.

THAT ANTI-QUAY FUND.

From the Philadelphia Record. The Scranton Tribune having stated

izers of the anti-Quay campaign in the forthcoming legislative primaries is that they already have at command a \$300,00 the statement was denounced by the

Philadelphia Press as a lie. Thereupor Such boasts have been made. One was

made several weeks ago in the columns of the Philadelphia Record. And the Press rejoins:

The Scranton Tribune now acknowledges that its statement was a lie, as it only gives a local Democratic news-parer as authority for it, whereas it had isserted the boast was made by the organizers of the anti-Quay movement.

The Tribune was inaccurate in characterizing as an anti-Quay boast an item of political intelligence printed in the Record. What the Record stated in its news columns, November 16, was that a considerable sum of money was said to have been already subscribed by leading anti-Quayites and that the fund to be raised might reach half a million dollars, The Press, in offensively contradicting The Tribune, inferentially accuses the Record. This cannot be permitted, What the Record printed as a matter of current political information was altogether true

VERY PROBABLY.

From the Washington Post. Perhaps the follies that characterize the fight against Quay, the malice that shows up in every movement against him, may be among the reasons why he so signally triumphs over his enemies when they and he go to the people.

LITERARY NOTES.

The first number of a valuable new monthly periodical called The Successful American, has appeared. It is a finely illustrated quarto of 50 pages, beautifully printed, and containing authentic nographical sketches, with portraits, of &i prominent Americans and other matter of contemporary interest. The publishers are the Press Bicgraphical company of 13-21 Park Row, New York, and they explain that their endeavor will be to explain that their endeavor will be to put their readers in possession month by month of the most noteworthy "human documents" of the times. From the lavish manner in which the initial number is gotten up we should imagine that this pledge would be handsomely re-deemed. The subscription price of The Successful American is 3.2 a year. Successful American is \$3 a year.

The rumor that England is preparing the island of St. Helena for the possible reception of President Kruger lends special timeliness to an article which wil appear in the February Century—the first of the hitherto unreported "Talks with Napoleon," from the diary of Dr. B. E. O'Meara, his physician at St. Helena. The extracts printed in this number are prefaced by an account of the writer's re-lations with the ex-emperor and the story of the manuscript's discovery by the editor of the Century. A portrait of O'Meara and a map of the island are among the illustrations of this instalment.

"The First Stage of the Boer War" (the "The First Stage of the Boer War" (the first of the articles on the war to appear in Scribner's Mcg.zine) will be published in the February number. It is by H. J. Whigham, who made his reputation as a correspondent in the recent war with Spain (before which he was well known as the golf champion of America). Mr. Whigham is following the column which is marching to the relief of Kimberley.

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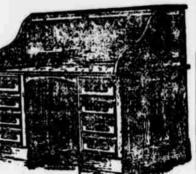
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