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TWELVE PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 7, 1901.

One trouble with political news is that often what would be interesting if true turns out to be pure fiction. Some time ago Congressman Cassel, of Lancaster county, was quoted as authority for the announcement that former Senator Cameron had declared for Colonel Warren, our governor. Why Cameron should do his own talking seemed strange at the time, and now comes from Mr. Cassel a denial that he ever said anything of the kind. The incident is unimportant except in so far as it teaches the need of caution in believing all you read.

Too Delicate.

M. R. CONNELL'S bill decreasing the death penalty for the person or persons found guilty of the assassination or attempted assassination of the president, vice-president, a member of the cabinet, the speaker of the house, the chief justice or any of the associate justices of the Supreme court is objected to by the Chicago Record Herald upon the ground that it goes too far. That paper says:

"It is at once evident that the moment we get beyond the incubus of the presidential offices there is confusion in the effort to treat the crime either of assassination or attempted assassination as a crime against the government and the people. The president above is the head of the government he alone has that peculiar official distinction which makes him personally the sovereign of the people. A general idea such as that which was directed against Lincoln and the members of his cabinet might under the present law of succession give the same treasonable quality to an attack upon a cabinet officer that may be found in an attack upon the president, but the possibility of such a combination does not eliminate the objection to a hard and fast law. It, owing to the unique position of the president, the question of motive may be put aside in this case, it may become the all-important question in other cases. A man might club a Justice of the Supreme court with the avowed purpose of killing him because of a real or fancied personal injury, and if he should do so it would be absolutely impossible to construe the act as a crime against the whole people unless we would sanctify the entire official class from pound master to president. For all such offenses the ordinary laws provide a sufficient punishment."

It does not pay to be too delicate in this matter. The man who because of a real or fancied personal injury sets out to club to death a Justice of the Supreme court may not intend to strike a blow against the whole people, but he strikes one, nevertheless, and a good way to encourage carelessness among men of his type is to put on a stiff penalty. Proper respect for the high offices named in Mr. Connell's bill demands that those who occupy them be afforded every possible protection. There is less danger of being too severe upon assassins than of being too lenient with them, in consequence of sentimental considerations that often interfere with justice.

"Good ships and good guns are surely good weapons, and the best weapons are useless save in the hands of men who know how to wield with them,"—President Roosevelt.

Trouble Ahead.

EDUCENTLY all is not to be plain sailing for the Republicans in New York who want to see the legislature of that state to let the people of that city vote by wards on the question of opening the saloons on Sunday. Ainsworth, as this newspaper is generally considered with proposed amendments to the existing excise law known as the Barnes law, a flat measure strongly supported in the country districts, both Senator Platt and his rural following are reported to be strong and bumbling for the war path. That this report has some foundation may be inferred from the following interview by the thickness Democratic and Chronicle, a rockribbed stolid paper, which is giving the facts under a broadside a day:

"The real situation in New York and the real reason why the incoming reform administration wants a more liberal liquor law is this: The present liquor law requires that all saloons shall be rigidly closed on Sunday and it is possible to enforce the law. A very large body of New York voters, including many anti-Tammany voters, is strongly opposed to the complete closing of the saloons on Sunday. So the incoming reform administration believes that it is confronted with this dilemma: If it enforces the Sunday closing law it will make itself so unpopular that it will be beaten by Tammany Hall at the next municipal election, the old regime of corruption and robbery will be restored, and years will pass before public sentiment can be sufficiently aroused to again overthrow

it. If, as previous administrations have done, it winks at violations of the Sunday closing law it will violate its pledges, fall in its duty, make itself ridiculous, disappoint many of its supporters, forfeit public confidence and its own self-respect, and be defeated by Tammany Hall at the next municipal election just the same. So it wants a compromise law that it can enforce without offending anybody. Mayor Low and the rest are not sanguine; they are not at all eager for Sunday opening for its own sake, they are simply choosing what they believe to be the less of two evils. It will occur to many minds that the Low administration wants an impossibility and that it can succeed in ruling simultaneously two horses going in opposite directions quite as well without the assistance of the state as with it. Also that, since it seems to have settled in its own mind that it is going to be beaten by Tammany at the next municipal election anyway, it might better take its licking righting than cracking."

There is something in this.

Not to Be Delayed.

WHAT has been known as the Lodge bill imposing an educational test upon immigrants, that three times passed the house of representatives and twice the senate by large majorities, to fall by President Cleveland's veto is to be revived in the present congress. Its essential feature is the debarring of all persons over eighteen years of age and physically incapable of reading who cannot read the English language or some other language, though it provides that an admissible immigrant or a person may be hereafter admitted to this country by him or sent for his wife, his children under eighteen years of age and his parents or grandparents over 50 years of age, if they are otherwise admissible, whether they are capable of reading or not.

For the purpose of testing the ability of the immigrant to read, the bill provides that the inspection officers shall be furnished with copies of the Constitution of the United States printed on uniform postage-stamped cards, each containing not less than twenty nor more than twenty-five words of said Constitution printed in the various languages of the immigrants in double small pica type. Each immigrant may designate the language in which he prefers the test shall be made, and shall be required to read the words printed on a slip in such language. No two immigrants listed on the same slip shall be tested with the same slip. An immigrant failing to read as above provided shall not be admitted, but shall be returned to the country from which he came at the expense of the steamship or railroad company which brought him.

The Immigration Restriction League, which has largely directed the educational campaign in favor of the Lodge bill, presents some striking statistics to prove that such a literacy test as it proposes is needed. Of the 387,908 steerage immigrants admitted during 1900, 45,615, or nearly one-fourth, were illiterates, of whom 257 per cent were between 10 and 19 years of age. The European countries furnishing the largest percentage of growth in their contributions to our population are precisely those in which illiteracy is most common. Our immigration is now made up of seven classes, as follows:

ISLE	1890	1900	%
Southern Indian	6,620	81,800	1,210
Hellen	6,620	100
Scotch	1,020	1,020	100
Belgian and Moravian	1,020	1,020	100
Finland	1,020	1,020	100
Irish	1,020	1,020	100
German	26,620	26,680	1,017
Swedes	15,820	29,240	184

The number of persons in each hundred immigrants over fourteen years of age who cannot write or cannot read and write their own language, from those races which contributed upwards of 2,000 immigrants to the United States during the past three fiscal years, is as follows:

WESTERN EUROPE	1890	1900	%
Austria	6,620	1,020	15
Poland	1,020	1,020	100
Scot	1,020	1,020	100
Belgian and Moravian	1,020	1,020	100
Finland	1,020	1,020	100
Irish	1,020	1,020	100
German	1,020	1,020	100
Swedes	1,020	1,020	100
Italian (North)	1,020	1,020	100
Average of above	1,020	1,020	100

EASTERN EUROPE

1890	1900	%	
Magyar	6,620	16,800	25
Grec	1,020	1,020	100
Shek	1,020	1,020	100
Polish	1,020	1,020	100
Croatian and Slavonian	1,020	1,020	100
Romania	1,020	1,020	100
Bulgaria	1,020	1,020	100
Russia	1,020	1,020	100
Average of above	1,020	1,020	100

OTHER RACES

1890	1900	%	
Cuban	1,020	1,020	100
Togolese	1,020	1,020	100
Chinese	1,020	1,020	100
Hawai	1,020	1,020	100
Other	1,020	1,020	100
Average of above	1,020	1,020	100

There are objections to the literacy test and because of them it is not incorporated in the bill of Congress, which has the native support of the immigration bureau. The purpose in view is the same, however; to keep out undesirable additions to our already large foreign-born population, as to give time for the assimilation of those now here and to prevent us from having to deal with us.

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Rearming the Militia.

THE SMALL arms in the hands of the National Guard are almost as antiquated as modern warfare as rifle hatchets. That they shall be replaced with the latest weapons of precision is the intention of the administration, as defined in Secretary Root's report. It would be useless, or nearly so, to arm the militia without training the men in the expert and tactical interrelation to the aggregate of which is the highest ascertainable qualification, because the only practical graduation for the individual for efficiency in the field. It is also the most important. At the same time, taking the private soldier as the military unit, he must bear a disciplinary and tactical interrelation to the aggregate of which is forming a part, intimately to his company, and in a greater or less degree to his regiment or the division that bears to the army corps or the general command.

What is the machinery of our command for turning out from the raw material of parts of the National Guard the perfected soldier? It must be said that whatever it amounts to, it is not now, nor has it been since the civil war, in antipeaceable working order. It almost breaks down when such a comparatively small affair as the Spanish war caught us unprepared, and not much has been done to improve it since.

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The smokeless powder is doing more to modify the strategy of warfare than any other agent in its evolution has done since powder and bullet replaced the bow and arrow. The same may be said in a sense, but to a far less important extent, of the magazine rifle. Without smokeless powder the magazine rifle would be an incentive to random firing through impenetrable smoke rather than the instinctive reserve to a point blank aim at the enemy which the smokeless powder enables each man to take for every cartridge in the magazine.

Different armies have different patterns of rifles. Nor can any one tell what a year or two in that matter may bring forth. The rifles now in general use in all armies are modifications of each other and are about equally effective in action. Of course, those expert shots who amuse themselves at rifle meetings are very hard to please in these matters. The Krag-Jorgenson, in their opinion, is a trajectory not quite ideal. Notwithstanding, it is a magnificent tool of blood, and when the National Guard are armed with it, they need not fear that any opponent can out-shoot them, as was true when the Mausers out-shot the old Springfield in the Spanish American war.

The merit system is simply one method of securing honest and efficient administration of the government; and in the long run the sole justification of any type of government lies in its proving itself both honest and efficient.—President Roosevelt.

According to latest reports from the Hague, Wilhelm and her worthless consort have become reconciled, but in court circles the prince continues to receive what in stage parlance would be termed the proverbial "frost."

The Human Society of Toledo seems to have split upon the question as to whether the sympathy of the organization should be bestowed upon helpless children or the brute father who deserts them.

The Smasher's Mall has passed from earth much more peacefully than its name and surroundings would indicate. To the trade and to the public the condition of the building is