

## 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 and the condition precedent to acceptance is that all contributions shall be subject to editorial revision.

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## SIXTEEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 19, 1902.

It is evident that when Judge Gray gets down below his snail in the mud he has a substantial undercurrent of fortifier in it.

## The Recordship.

THE Republican party was in business before the Economic League decided to go into politics, and it will be alive and healthy long after the last vestige of the present labor upheaval has been unknown even to the oldest inhabitant. The Economic League movement for the election of a class recorder is well known to those behind the scenes to be a Democratic set-up. How foolish, then, for Republicans to get alarmed at it and to act as if they intended to apply for a political recorder. The next recorder of Scranton should be a Republican and he will be if the Rev. Watkins' candidacy shall capture West Side Republican votes as its Democratic manipulators plan? There are other votes in this city, and the Republican party can poll them if it nominates the right kind of man. The substantial, property-owning class of citizens, a host when united, do not by any means propose to fly the flag of socialism and yield the government of this great city to class fanaticism and excesses. Why not give them a leader and carry the issue to a show-down?

But whom? Without naming the man himself, we can at least say what he should be like. He should not, for instance, be a facsimile. He should not have made a failure of the job once before. He should not be primarily an office-seeker and political grafter. He should be a popular, capable man of affairs, whom the tax payers would feel like trusting to manage their interests. Nominate that kind of a man on the Republican ticket and he can be elected. Try to put on it some six by nine party heeler with a record for facing every way and the ticket will go down so deep that there will be no need of an inquest, for the corpse will never be recovered. There isn't much time left if the Republicans are to act. The registration closes tomorrow. Of course the battle can be surrendered in advance, but that would hardly look well for Scranton's Republican manhood.

Attorney Burns' motion for a non-suit doubtless fails for lack of jurisdiction.

## Apportioning the Cost.

THE Philadelphia Ledger learns from an operator who attended the meeting of operators in New York last Tuesday that it has been decided to continue the recently announced special 50 cents additional price of anthracite throughout 1903. The Ledger calculates that this would increase by \$25,000,000 the profits of the operators in that year, a sum more than sufficient to reimburse them for losses sustained in consequence of the strike. As 50 cents added to the wholesale selling price of coal usually means about \$1 extra by the time the coal arrives in the bin of the consumer, this would mean that the late coal strike, in addition to what it has already done in way of injury to the public, will increase the public's burdens approximately \$50,000,000 a year.

If this sum were divided among the 140,000 workers in the mines it would give each one, breaker boys and all, an increase of \$400 a year, raising their incomes to an average far above that of labor of similar skill anywhere else in the world. Assuming these figures to be correct, it would, last spring, have been infinitely cheaper to make a direct grant of \$50,000,000 or \$60,000,000 a year from the federal treasury for the benefit of Mr. Mitchell's constituents than to have had to make its equivalent in other ways, in addition to undergoing the breakdown of law and order which took place during the strike.

If we assume the Ledger's figures to be true, it is, however, only for argument's sake. They are undoubtedly inexact and exaggerated. But the cost of all this miserable business, whatever its precise dimensions, will surely fall, at the last, upon the general public, which encouraged and supported the strike; and the public, though likely to complain, will have no redress. Fortunately the American public is a patient public, slow to anger and easily lulled by its sympathies. It sympathized with the miners and will pay the price of its sympathy. Whatever complaint it may express is likely to be directed toward the vast number of intermediate charges necessary to get its contribution into the pay envelope of the miner. That is one of the weak points in our industrial system and one of the reasons why strikes should be indulged in sparingly.

As Korea has no Monroe doctrine, it is probable that \$1,000,000 American claim will be paid without question.

The Chicago speculators who endeavored to manipulate the corn market are

very much in the position of unsuspecting people who recklessly investigate the distilled corn product of old Kentucky.

Many men in the American diplomatic service have greatness thrust upon them but Minister Bowen seems to be one of the kind who can bear up.

## John Bull as "He Too."

W HILE there has developed out of the Venezuelan controversy no tangible reason as yet to cause the United States to entertain doubts of England's friendship and honorable dealing, the peculiarity of her alliance with Germany in order to settle a small matter in dispute with a small power like Venezuela cannot escape notice and naturally excites wonder.

The time was when the British Lion would have scorned to have it appear to the nations of the earth that he could not care for British interests without first establishing a partnership arrangement with another power. The precipitancy with which his majesty's government tumbled into the arms of the Kaiser and took up with the latter's proposal of a joint demonstration against Venezuela—the two strongest powers of Europe combining against one of the weakest and most contemptible powers of Latin-America—demonstrates either a sub-current of perfidious intent regarding the Monroe doctrine, needing the strong arm of the Kaiser to brace it up, or a softening of the brain. We dismiss the former but see no escape from the latter explanation. Evidently John Bull's nerve has not recovered from the ravages of the Boer war.

Imagine how the dignity of the United States would look if, having a claim against, let us say, Roumania, it should fear to press it until it could take some other giant power into partnership and thus, by their formidable joint frontage, scare the life out of the people of Roumania and, let us also assume, make it inconvenient for Russia to interfere, if, in her judgment, interference might become necessary to safeguard Russian interests. We do not believe that that would ever be the American way. The American people from the days of Washington down have happily been taught to paddle their own canoe. They attend to their affairs themselves. They ask no odds of other nations, though always glad to welcome the friendly co-operation of all nations.

It is pitiable to see Great Britain reduced to the dimensions of a "me too" to Germany. But if the English people are satisfied with that relationship we do not see that it is up to Americans to complain.

From Dewey's evolutions to a revolution in the Venezuelan status is a step which the other fellows had better not crowd him into taking.

## Football.

CONSIDERING the great popularity of the game and the enormous number of young men who engage in foot ball during the season all over the country, the number of casualties and fatalities are, after all, significantly small. Every foot ball accident is duly and widely chronicled, while the editorial moralizing upon it is without end or issue. One would imagine from these criticisms that foot ball was the refinement of physical brutality, a game in which mere animal strength and impetuosity led to nothing but broken necks or broken limbs. The accidents to which foot ball players are liable are grossly exaggerated. The average foot ball player who is guided by the rules of the game, who takes the smallest precaution to ensure his own safety and that of his companions, as rarely meets with a scratch as he inflicts one. No one can deny that there are foot ball players who seem to imagine the rougher and more headstrong the play, the finer the spectacle; there are others who think less of winning the game than attracting by bravado and show the attention of the spectators, and there are still others who think that nothing is admirable in play which is not characterized by main strength and ignorance. We believe, however, that they are in a large minority. In every match, and the ethical code in the foot ball field is high and becoming higher. Foot ball is rightly regarded as one of the most stimulating, as it certainly is one of the most strenuous, of outdoor sports. The season in which it is played here is necessarily circumscribed to a few weeks in the fall. In England foot ball can be played practically all the year round. But like base ball here, the sport there has become largely a professional one. Any game which becomes solely or largely professional rapidly degenerates into an undignified scramble between rival teams for gate money. Popular interest in the game itself becomes a form of dissipation. Foot ball in this country can never become professional. The season is too short. It is largely confined to university students and is looked upon generally as a branch of physical culture in the scholastic world.

No one can deny that foot ball is a needlessly rough game. The rules of the game need revision. There is no reason why the "scrimmage" should not be greatly modified, if not altogether abolished. It is unnecessary and, in its practice, lies all the danger. Quick, above all things, should be logical. If it is the object of the play to get a ball across the goal by kicking it, it should be sped on its way by the feet and not by a buffalo-like rush of the players' heads or trunks. The incidental danger has, of course, its fascination; but however permissible it is for the individual to indulge in it, or look for it, the players in a foot ball team have a corporate responsibility to themselves and their opponents of which the individual sportsman is altogether free. Play which in any way outrages public sentiment loses much of its inherent attractiveness.

Some day Germany's mailed fist will make the mistake of striking against a stone wall and then there will be pyrotechnics.

As a concession to General Miles and his friends, Secretary Root asks congress to pass the army staff bill with

the enforcement clause dated ahead so that it will not affect Miles. Certainly this ought to satisfy and gratify Miles' vanity. Not every army officer is enabled to have his whims put above the best interests of the service.

President Roosevelt is willing to sign a bill admitting Arizona and New Mexico joined in one, but he opposes admitting the two separately. If they are not ready to come in separately, better let them grow a while.

It will probably appear in the strike commission's report that the "scab" still has some rights which the striker is bound to respect.

Germany expects this Venezuelan flurry to stimulate navy building. Well, it certainly won't discourage it in the United States.

The "also ran" class of European claimants is open for registry and business at the box office seems to be brisk.

It probably is just as well for the peace of mankind that Consul Oscar Williams is not in South America now.

It could be wished that Arizona and New Mexico were worth all the trouble they are making at Washington.

## Life and Works of Cipriano Castro

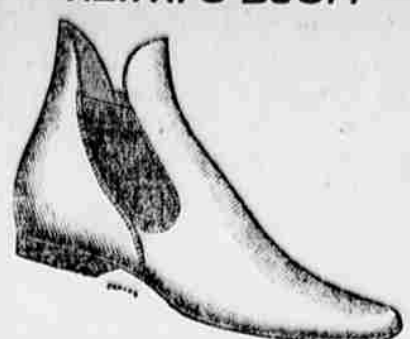
From the New York Commercial Advertiser.

PERHAPS the most instructive source of light upon the present crisis in Venezuela and upon Venezuelan affairs in general is to be found in a thorough understanding of the man who is directly responsible for all of Venezuela's troubles. Little has been published about the personality of President Castro since he first became so conspicuous as a bird of evil omen, and that little has been mainly incorrect. It is, therefore, well to sum up the principal incidents of his career for the benefit of those who are tempted to regard him as an object of esteem and sympathy. Cipriano Castro is now a man of some forty years of age. He is not, as has been said, a full-blooded Indian, but most of his countrymen he has in his veins a distinct strain of Indian blood with its native endowment of duplicity and cruelty. He received an excellent education at the University of Caracas and then turned his attention to fighting in the troubled waters of Venezuelan politics. It must be remembered that although there are nominally two political parties in Venezuela, the Conservative and the Liberal, these are subdivided into different factions, each headed by a keen-witted, unscrupulous and greedy partisan whose one object is to secure at least a temporary grasp upon some public office where he can pick pockets and retire with a private fortune. The recent political history of Venezuela is simply the history of a contest between these partisan chiefs who scheme, plot, bargain or fight, according to the dictates of their personal interest. The model of these men is Guzman Blanco, the ablest and most shrewd ruler that Venezuela has ever had, and one whose presidency in the early seventies revolutionized the country, directing wholly to gorging the dictator with ill-gotten gold. Castro soon acquired a following, and he acted for a time with President Crespo as one of the so-called "liberal" leaders, receiving from him various offices and gifts by means of which he kept his own followers together while he bided his time for a coup d'état. This came in 1899, when he headed a revolution against President Andrade, whom he expelled from office, making himself "provisional president," which is to say the military ruler of the country. The record of Castro's two years rule is characteristic of the man and of the country. From the outset, among his own people, he has been decidedly unpopular. Four distinct and different revolts against him have been organized, one by Hernandez, another by Pulido, Castro's own minister of war, another which appears to have been a spontaneously popular movement in the state of Bermudez, and finally the recent revolution headed by Senor Matos, which is still smoldering and which at one time drove Castro from his capital.

In his relations with foreign powers Castro has shown an utter indifference to international usage and to the rights of the United States. The company had secured a concession for working the asphalt deposits in the state of Bermudez. After the concession had been granted, a rise in the value of asphalt excited the cupidity of Castro. He felt that he might have made a better bargain. Consequently, without a show of legality and as a purely arbitrary act, he annulled the concession and offered it to another company at a higher price. The American consul protested, but Castro, who held that the President's act was unlawful, and that the question was one for the judiciary to decide, Castro threatened to expel the American operatives by force of arms and summoned troops to carry out the threat, although the Americans had occupied their land for more than twelve years and though the courts sustained them in their position. At this moment in person to President Castro and protested with the utmost vehemence. His protest was received with a source concealed insolence and with a cold which said: "What are you going to do about it?" An answer to this question was promptly given. The American warship Scorpion stood at once to sea, a fleet of action, and her marines and blue-jackets made ready to repel the attack of Castro's soldiers. This prompt action caused the dictator to hesitate. He revoked the order to his troops, and at last unwillingly consented to leave the question to the courts. At his instigation, however, a campaign of insult and invective was begun against Minister Loomis. The press of Caracas teemed with foul accusations against the American representative, and in official circles Mr. Loomis was treated with a coldness which verged upon actual discourtesy. Mr. Loomis, at his own request, was presently transferred to Porto Rico, and our present minister, Mr. Bowen, took his place. Meanwhile Americans had been made the object of general persecution until at last our Consul-General at Barcelona was arrested, and one of the friendly English consuls was assassinated. The climax to Castro's insolence was reached not many months ago when, in carrying on his operations against the revolutionaries, he flew the American flag from one of his headquarters in order to deceive the enemy and to approach and bombard one of their towns. This flagrant violation of international usage, constituting a direct insult to the United States, led to vigorous action on the part of our minister. Castro was forced under a temporary demand to apologize and to fire a national salute to the American flag.

Such has been Castro's attitude toward this country and toward his citizens until within the last few weeks, when, having tried in vain to bully his foreign creditors and to escape the consequences of his own dishonesty, he has put forth a whimpering and disingenuous appeal to the American Republic. A usurper, a contemptor of law and justice, at one moment a bully and at another a cringing suppliant, if there are those who can see in Castro any likeness to a patriot and a hero, then surely they must be utterly impervious to reason or to the teaching of undisputed facts.

## ALWAYS BUSY.

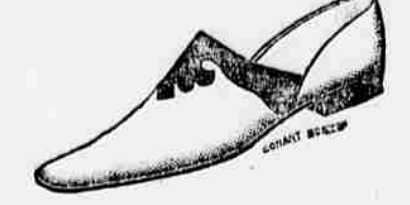


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