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## Communications.

For the Messenger.  
**THE TONNAGE TAX.—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION—CORRUPTION OF THE LEGISLATURE.**

A short time before the adjournment of the Legislature the Committee raised to enquire into the question as to whether the Central Rail Road Company of Pennsylvania had procured the repeal of the Tonnage tax law through the means of money, &c., reported, through its Chairman, Col. HOPKINS, the results of its labors. I propose to lay before your readers a brief abstract of the report, the whole of which would occupy more of your paper than you can conveniently spare.

The Committee devoted their attention to the collection of evidence, under the following heads:  
1. As to whether the Press had been tampered with.  
2. Whether the Company had distributed the accumulated Tonnage Tax, which it withheld from the State, among sundry Rail Road companies to influence the members from the counties through which these branch roads passed, to vote for the repeal; and  
3. Whether monies had been directly paid to any of the members of the Legislature, by any officers of the Central Rail Road Company.

1. Mr. Rhee, of the Allentown Democrat, proved that a certain Jas. Fuller, of Lehigh county, paid him \$2,000 as an inducement for him to publish the bill, which subsequently passed the Legislature, accompanied by certain printed arguments sustaining the propriety of its passage, and containing reasons for sustaining Senator Schindel, from that county, if he should vote for the bill. Fuller was called before the Committee, and sustained Rhee's testimony as to the payment of the \$2,000.

Rhee testified that he did not sustain the bill, and denounced the Senator for voting for it.

Fuller denied receiving the money from any officer of the Rail Road company, and claimed that it was his own money; and yet when asked to give a reason why he thus lavishly spent his money, in a matter in which he testified he had no direct interest, gave the singular reason that he did it to "make political capital for himself and the Republican party in his Legislative and Senatorial District."

The Committee very properly pronounced this a "most improbable story," and his statement that he "did not expect to be re-imburged," (if he had actually paid the money out of his own pocket,) as still more improbable.

Our excellent and facetious neighbor Hurd, of the Brownsville Clipper, also testified before the Committee, and stated that he was at Harrisburg during the session of 1861, and that a member of the Legislature from Huntingdon county, invited him to the room of Thomas A. Scott, the then Vice President of the Central Rail Road company, who very soon went into the question as to how he (Hurd) stood on the Tonnage Tax question? Hurd was prejudiced against its repeal. Scott thought he might be induced to change his views, and handed him a bundle of documents to read. Hurd had not time then to examine them—was on expense, &c.—Scott said he would make all that right and handed him three or four hundred dollars! Hurd took the documents with him to Philadelphia, and after a careful examination, concluded to write an article for his paper favoring the repeal of the Tonnage Tax, but upon further reflection, (finding, perhaps, that the money was secured at any rate, and that his people were against the repeal,) he countermanded the publication of his article!

Although these editors, both, ultimately opposed the repeal of the Tonnage Tax, and the Company seem to have spent their money in vain, yet the inquiry of the attempt to bribe them with money, is none the less criminal, and the painful impression is left on the mind of the honest tax payer, of how many other editors received money for a similar object, about which the public know nothing!

II. Upon the second branch of the enquiry, as to whether the Company used the \$800,000 which it withheld from the treasury of the State, to influence votes for the repeal of the Tonnage Tax law: An examination of the bill shows that the branch Rail Roads to which this money was applied, passed through some twenty counties; some of the directors of the Rail Road company admitted that this provision was inserted in the bill, "to increase the chance of its passage." Burns, a member from Allegheny county, testifies that he voted for the repeal, upon the assurance of Scott, Vice President of the P. R. R. Company, that provision should be made in the bill repealing the Tonnage Tax, for the early completion of the Steubenville Rail Road, and that he voted for the bill on that condition.

Thus were members bribed to vote

for this bill with the money thus filched by this company from the Treasury of the State! They not only gave away the \$800,000 then due the Treasury, but an annual revenue of from four to five hundred thousand, accruing to the State from this fund!

Israel Painter and Jacob Ziegler proved that Scott, the Vice President of the Rail Road company, entered into a writing with the North Western Rail Road company—a concern whose stock in the market was worth only twenty-five cents to the dollar, to take, on the part of the Central Rail Road, four hundred thousand dollars of its stock at par, provided that the bill for the repeal of the Tonnage Tax should pass! Painter testifies that "he supposed Scott would expect the parties interested in the completion of the North Western Rail Road to use their influence with Senators and members representing the counties through which the road passed to vote for the repeal of the Tonnage Tax." A very natural expectation, indeed! He further testified that he had no doubt that the members from Butler county were thus influenced to vote for the bill, and that he had frequent conversations with them on the subject.

It is thus that the interests of the hard-working and tax paying People are treated by their Representatives!

III. The Committee next gave their attention to the question as to whether direct bribery was resorted to.

Tom Scott, the Vice President of the Company, was supposed to be the medium through which any money might have dropped into the laps of the members. The subpoenas of the Committee chased him all over the country. It will be recollected that sometime previous to the investigation, Scott had gone to Washington to assist his friend Cameron, in the disbursement of the monies of the Government necessary to carry on the war. His public duties was a most convenient excuse for not giving the Committee a small portion of his precious time. Mr. Secretary Stanton (than whom no more honorable man can be found in the country) was twice applied to know, if possible, when Scott could be released from his public duties long enough to give his testimony before the Committee. Permission was both times given by Secretary Stanton, but Scott never got before the committee, although his reputation was involved in so doing. The Committee say "from the disclosures before the Committee the conviction is left upon their minds that the said Thomas A. Scott did use money in connection with the Legislative question, and that he purposely kept himself out of the way to avoid being examined as a witness."

Kenealy Marshal, a member of the House from Allegheny county, testified that he voted for the bill, and about the time of the adjournment of the Legislature he went to the room of Mr. Scott, at the Covelly House, in Harrisburg. That there were certain persons in the room, and that he and Scott went into another room, and that Scott handed him a small package, inclosed in an envelope, remarking, "This was left here for you; I don't know by whom, nor what it contains." That in going to his own room, and opening the package, he found it to contain five hundred dollars in bank bills! He also testified that he saw in Scott's room a number of other envelopes, but could not tell to whom they were addressed. He further testified that on the day of the adjournment of the Legislature, he went into the room of Speaker Davis, of the House, and saw lying on his table or bed a large amount of bank notes, and that he picked up some of them and put them in his pocket, remarking to Davis at the time, "Where did you make such a raise?" and that Davis replied, "from Tom Scott." Marshal remarked, "I wish he would serve the rest of us the same way." He said that Davis then said, "I was only joking, it belongs to other parties living up the Allegheny River," &c. Davis, who was also previously before the Committee, testified that he had received over thirty free passes over the road for his friends, during the session of 1861, from Vice President Scott!

D. D. Dewitt testified that Thomas Osterhout, a member from Wyoming county, admitted that he got enough money for voting for the bill to pay his debts; that if he had not done so he would have been "stowed up," that the bill would have passed any how, and his friends should not blame him for making money out of his vote.

John Day testified to the same thing, and that Osterhout fixed the amount which he got, but which amount he could not remember, but it was from one to three thousand dollars.

J. Baker testified that Osterhout told him that he had made enough of money by voting for the bill to pay his debts.

Charles Reamy testified that Osterhout told him he thought the bill would pass any how, and he would get all the money out of it he could. He did make a good thing out of it, and brought the money home to pay his debts.

hout before them in person, but he contrived to evade all their efforts, and flatly refused to come before them after they had succeeded in reaching him with a subpoena.

The Committee complain of the many obstacles thrown in their way in their efforts to get before them witnesses who were believed to have received money for their votes. In many cases the members themselves were in the army, and beyond the reach of the Committee; as well as many witnesses outside of the two Houses, who had been pointed out to them as having knowledge of the fact of bribery being used on the members. A great number of witnesses, upon whom subpoenas had been served, refused to attend, and kept out of the way of being punished for the contempt in not obeying the commands of the subpoenas.

They made an attempt to have the benefit of the testimony of J. Edgar Thompson, the President of the Rail Road Company. They subpoenaed him to attend before them at Harrisburg. He alleged illness as an excuse for not appearing. They then attended at Philadelphia, where he was then residing, and proposed to examine him at his own house, but his physician interposed objection, that "if he was much disturbed it might increase constitutional irritation," &c.—One would naturally think that unpleasant reflections might have such effect! The Treasurer of the Company, who might be supposed to have some knowledge of any leaks that might have taken place from its treasury, was unfortunately also too unwell to appear before the Committee when subpoenaed!

The Committee after again alluding to the many obstacles which they met in making a satisfactory investigation, conclude their report as follows:

"In summing up the whole case, then, so far as the limited time allotted, and the surrounding circumstances would enable us to prosecute our inquiries, the conviction is forced upon the minds of your Committee that in procuring the passage of the bill for the commutation of the tonnage duties, unlawful means were used by Thomas A. Scott, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Rail Road Company, who has himself successfully eluded the process of the House. Thus have we the startling fact presented, of an officer of a gigantic corporation procuring the enactment of a law by corrupt means, by which some \$800,000 dollars were abstracted from the treasury, in violation of every principle of morality and justice, and which also relieved the corporation from the payment of the sum of an annual sum of say \$400,000, and which will continue to increase to almost an indefinite period.

"Wicked and unjustifiable as is the present rebellion, which is seeking to overthrow the best and most magnificent government the world has ever seen, it is not more to be deprecated than is the corruption of the fountain whence emanate all the guarantees we have for the protection of property, life or liberty. When the law-making power becomes so corrupt as to barter away millions upon millions of the people's money, for the pecuniary benefit of its members, it is enough to cause every true patriot to tremble for his country. How can we expect God's blessing if we shamefully violate His laws.

"How can we expect our State to prosper if the press is to become the auxiliary of corporations in inflicting great wrongs upon the people? and if corruption is permitted to march, with brazen face, into our legislative halls, and buy up the guardians of the public interests like cattle in the market? The higher the position and character of those engaged in such demoralizing acts, the more lamentable it becomes. But neither station nor reputation should screen them from the condemnation of outraged virtue."

## A HEROIC DRUMMER BOY.

A letter from an Illinois gentleman gives the following account of the heroic conduct of a drummer boy on the battle field of Pittsburgh Landing:—"A little boy, only twelve years old, whose mother resides in Woodburn, returned last week from Pittsburgh Landing. He was a drummer in a company of which his father was a lieutenant. His name is Charles Bliss. I am well acquainted with the family, having been their physician. This boy went through the whole of the Donelson fight, and was engaged during the two days of that at Pittsburgh. His father was wounded in three places, whilst he had his clothes pierced with bullets, and blood once slightly drawn from about the knee. His drum was shot entirely away. The little fellow's gear looked very rusty, and his girl's face was tanned as dark as chocolate. His colonel sent him home, with four wounded men, by whom he had remained, and to whom he carried water on the field when the battle raged the hottest. They say he never flinched. As Donelson he got hold of a gun, dropped by a rebel, and fired twenty rounds himself, by borrowing cartridges from the soldiers about him. I tried to get him to stay with us over night, promising to take him home in my carriage early in the morning. But no, he said he preferred to walk three or four miles in the mud and rain, after dark, for he wanted to see his mother that night. His father was left behind in a hospital."

"He never was as good as he should be, that doth not strive to be better than he is."

## Miscellaneous.

### LAST HOURS.

Surely there is something very pathetic in those last words of Dr. Adam, of Edinburgh, the High-school head master: "It grows dark, boys; you may go." As the shades of death were fast closing around him, the master's thoughts were still with his work; and thus regarding the shades of death as but the waning twilight of the earthly day, he gave the signal of dismissal to his imaginary scholars, and was himself at the same instant "dismissed" from work to his eternal rest! Every one knows that the two last words which Goethe uttered were truly memorable: "Draw back the curtains," said he, "and let in more light."

At the time of Humboldt's death, the sun was shining brilliantly into the room in which he was lying, and it is stated that his last words, addressed to his niece, were these: "Wie herrlich diese Strahlen, sie scheinen die Erde zum Himmel zu rufen!" (How grand these rays; they seem to beckon earth to heaven!)

Sir Walter Scott, during his last illness, more than once turned to Lockhart, and exclaimed with great fervor to him: "Be a good man, my dear." When we recollect the character of the man who uttered them, is there not a little sermon in those words? Judge Talford, it will be remembered, died suddenly whilst delivering the charge to the grand jury at the Stafford assizes. The last sentence which he uttered before his head fell forward upon his breast, is pregnant with wisdom; and from the eternal truth which it so nobly enunciates, forms a fitting conclusion to Talford's benevolent and useful career. "That," said he, "which is wanted to bind together the bursting bonds of the different classes of this country, is not kindness, but sympathy." And so, with that last word "sympathy" yet trembling upon his lips, poor Talford passed away.

Dr. Johnson's last words, addressed to a young lady standing by his bedside, were: "God bless you, my dear." And "God bless you!" Is that you, Dora? were Wadsworth's last words.

There is a singular identity, also, between the last utterances of Mrs. Hannah Moore and of the historian, Sir James Mackintosh, the last words of both consisted of one word, and both alike breathe the same spirit of happiness. "Joy," was the last utterance of the former, and "happy," that of the latter. "I am ready," were the last words of the great actor, Charles Matthews. John Knox, about 11 o'clock, on the night of his death, gave a deep sigh, and exclaimed, "Now it is come." These were his last words, for in a few moments he expired.

General Washington's last words were firm, cool, and reliant as himself. "I am about to die," said he, "and I am not afraid to die." Noble words these! There is something in them which reminds us of Addison's celebrated request to those around him "to mark how a christian could die."

Betty, the great painter, quietly marked the progress of dissolution going on with his frame, and coolly moralized thereon. His last words were: "Wonderful—wonderful, his death" and he uttered them with perfect calmness.

Thomas Hood's last words were: "Dying, dying," as though, says his biographer, "he was glad to realize the sense of rest implied in them."

Amongst the last utterances of another great wit, Douglas Jerold, was the reply which he made to the question "how he felt?" Jerold's reply was quick and terse, as his conversation always was. He felt, he said, "as one who was waiting, and waited for."

When we remember Charlotte Bronte's stormy and sorrowful life, lightened for only a few brief months toward its close by her marriage with her father's curate, Nicholls, there is a melancholy plaintiveness in her last words. Addressing her husband, she said: "I am not going to die, am I? He will not separate us; we have been so happy."

with a look of great affection, and then commenced to recite with deep feeling these sublime lines of Milton, from Adam's Morning Hymn, which he knew to be his father's favorites: "His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow, Blow soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines, With every plant, in sign of worship, wave."

Just as he pronounced the last word, his strength failed him; the lamp which had flickered up so grandly in its socket was quenched; he fell forward into his father's arms, and so died. Burke's grief was terrible, and he did not long survive his son. Burke's own last words were the same as those of Johnson and Wadsworth—namely, "God bless you."

Who that ever read them can forget those noble last words which Bishop Lattimer addressed to his fellow-sufferer, Bishop Ridley, when both were about to perish in the flames at Oxford? Addressing Bishop Ridley, he said: "Be of good cheer, brother Ridley; this day we light a candle in England which shall never be extinguished." We question whether, if the archives of all the "noble army of martyrs" were to be ransacked, there could be found a record of any more memorable utterance than this.

King Charles II. also died with a joke upon his lips; his death had been expected some time before it occurred, and thus many of his courtiers had been kept up all night. He apologized to those who stood round his bed for the trouble he had caused them; he had been, he said, a most unbecomable time in dying, but he hoped they would excuse it. "This was the last glimpse," remarks Lord Macaulay, "of that exquisite urbanity so often found potent to charm away the resentment of a justly incensed nation."

There is an instance related of the death-scene of Sir Charles Napier, the great Indian warrior, which is so curious and suggestive that (although, strictly speaking, it does not come under the category of "last words," since no words were spoken by Sir Charles) we cannot resist referring to it here. It appears, then, that the 22d foot was the regiment with which Sir Charles' chief victories were achieved, and to which he was most strongly attached. Just as the old warrior's spirit was passing away, Mr. McMurdo, his son-in-law, seized the tattered, shot-torn fragments of the colors of the 22d regiment, and waved them over the dying warrior. A grim smile of satisfaction crossed Sir Charles' face as this was being done, and thus his spirit passed away.

Zwingle, the great German reformer, was killed in battle in the year 1531. His last words are cool and brave. Gazing calmly, and with undaunted courage, at the blood trickling from his death-wounds, he calmly exclaimed: "What matters this misfortune? They may indeed kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul!"

And now that we are speaking about the last words of warriors, who can fail to recollect those noble last words of our great Nelson? "I thank God," said he, "that I have done my duty." And so, with the great guns booming overhead, proclaiming the victory so dearly bought, he died.

In the year 1591, Sir Richard Grenville—the Sydney of the sea—was serving in an English fleet against Spain. They were assailed by a Spanish fleet of far superior force.—After inflicting the most terrible chastisement upon the Spanish fleet—it is said that Sir Richard was engaged with no less than fifteen ships—The Revenge (Sir Richard's vessel) was taken, and Sir Richard Grenville himself was carried, mortally wounded, on board the Spanish admiral's ship, where he was treated with distinguished honor. But in a few days he felt that death was at hand, and spoke these memorable words in Spanish, that all who heard him might bear witness to their fervor: "Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and a quiet mind; for that I have ended my life as a good soldier ought to do, fighting for his country, queen, religion and honor; my soul willingly departing from this body, leaving behind the lasting fame of having behaved as every valiant soldier is in duty bound to do."

We purpose giving, as the final illustration of our subject, the last utterances of a soldier who fought in another warfare, to wit, the Venerable Bede. Bede died at Jarrow monastery, near Newcastle, in the year 735. The account left us of his death is very striking. For a long time previous, Bede had been engaged upon a translation of St. John's Gospel into the Saxon language.—His work, which was to give God's Word to the common people in their own tongue, was very nearly completed; but Bede's strength was ebbing fast. He sat in his chair, however, conscious still, though the shades of death were fast gathering around him. The scribe who was writing to Bede's dictation, now hastily exclaimed to him: "Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written to his father, regarded him

fast-failing senses; gathering together all his strength, he answered: "Write quickly!" and then dictated to the scribe the last sentence of the last chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. The scribe wrote it down rapidly, and then said: "The sentence is now written." Bede replied: "It is well. You have said the truth. It is finished! Consummatum est!"

## MICHAEL FLANNIGAN AND FATHER O'LEARY.

Not many years ago there lived in Ireland a priest named Father O'Leary, who was a staunch temperance man, and used every means in his power to disseminate his views. Being at a fair at Donnybrook, he was amusing himself gazing on the many interesting objects, when a fight commenced—one of the old-fashioned kind which has given a world-wide celebration to Donnybrook Fair; although he took no part in the disgraceful proceedings, except in trying to quell the disturbance, he was suddenly knocked down by a man named Michael Flannigan. The following day he had Michael arrested, but at the trial all the defence he made was, that being drunk, he remembered nothing about it. Father O'Leary had a few private words with the judge, who then informed Michael that through the intercession of the reverend gentleman, he had concluded this should be the sentence: "That Michael should become a teetotaler for three months, and at the end of that time beg the priest's pardon." To this the prisoner rather reluctantly agreed. At the termination of the stated time, a genteel-looking, well-dressed man, might have been seen knocking at the door of Father O'Leary's residence, and when Bridget opened the door she was greatly astonished to see her old friend Michael (though she had lost sight of him for some time) looking so changed; after the usual greeting he asked her to tell her master that a jintleman wished to see him, but she ran into Father O'Leary's study, and with a half-suppressed titter, told him that Michael Flannigan wished to see him. "Show him in," he replied; and when he saw Michael, he was so surprised at his appearance that he hardly knew what to say. At length he managed to ask, "Well, Michael, I suppose you have come to beg my pardon?" "Shure, and I aint, your honor," was the reply. "What do you mean, you rascal? Don't you remember knocking me down at Donnybrook Fair, three months ago?" said he, almost forgetting himself, so enraged was he with Michael's cool reply. "Certainly I do," responded Michael; "but I can't beg your pardon, for faith and I'm only sorry that I didn't knock your reverence down twenty years ago." The priest felt very wrath, but on second thought he understood why Michael made use of such language, and was well pleased to forgive him without being asked. Reader, the moral is a good one.

## ROMANTIC STORY.

The Gazette des Tribunaux has the following strange story: "A shoemaker and his wife, with a daughter about eight years of age, who occupied a small lodging on the fourth floor of a house in the Rue du Temple, were much struck with the sorrowful air of a lodger named Bernard, who had just hired a room near their own, and thinking him in want of common necessities, they adopted a thousand little expedients to relieve him without offending his delicacy. They were always asking him to take of this dish or that, and he occasionally consented to dine with them. One day, however, he said that, i convenient, he should like to take his meals with them always, and would pay them 100f. a month. The woman thought it too much; but he would not hear of paying less.—About a week ago Bernard received a letter which appeared to cause him great agitation. After reading it he threw it into the fire, left the house, and never returned. The shoemaker and his wife were uneasy about their friend, fearing that he had committed suicide; but a day or two after they received a letter from him thanking them all for their kindness, and begging them to accept a sum of 10,000f. in bank notes, which he had left in a certain drawer in his furniture. They were also to sell his furniture, and keep the proceeds, as he was going a long journey, from which he should never return. As the letter was posted at Senlis, the shoemaker went there to make inquiries after his friend, but could hear nothing of him. He accordingly returned home and appropriated the 10,000f. as his benefactor had desired, in establishing himself in business on his own account."

LIEUT. WHIPPLE, in his memoir of travels in California, states that there is a spring of cool, sweet water in San Diego county, not far from the desert, which has no power of quenching thirst.

In the London exhibition bible will be exhibited in one hundred d