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The Disfranchised of Freeland. Some of our contemporaries are raising a hub-bub about the disfranchisement of the Southern negro. Perhaps all they say is true, and perhaps not.

The total voting strength of the First, Second, Third and Fourth wards of this town is 608. Each of these divisions has two representatives on the council and two on the school board.

In the South ward there are 428 voters. They have only two representatives on each of the municipal bodies named, or one councilman and one school director to every 214 voters.

In the matter of school attendance, valuation of property and estimated population the South ward's proportion to the whole is found to correspond with the vote as cast.

The people of the territory embraced in the South ward are entitled to the same proportionate representation on the governing bodies of the borough as is enjoyed by the people of any other ward.

Leg Irons for Otis. From the Philadelphia North American. The statement that General Otis has made a requisition for a thousand pairs of handcuffs and leg irons for use in securing those of his soldiers who have become insane in the Philippine campaigns will be likely to startle those ebullient expansionists who have been holding out the idea that soldiering with Otis is so much of a pastime that the men who are engaged in the campaigns do not want to quit.

The Philippines are being bought with a price which it is not yet possible to compute. There is a waste of life and a loss of moral force which cannot yet be put into dollars and cents and balanced up against the transactions of the Manila custom house.

While congress dabbles with the grave questions that have grown out of the Spanish war Otis is sending home for more leg irons, and transports crowded with dead men and invalids steam into the Golden Gate.

Least people with short memories should forget it, we call attention to the fact that the war in the Philippines is over. General Otis, who is on the ground, declared it at an end several weeks ago. Nevertheless, the long casualty lists continue to come to Washington every Monday with terrible regularity.

The Ohio legislature is going to see that women are paid just as high wages as men. Such a reform is absolutely necessary in Ohio, where most of the betrousered are so busy with politics that their women folks are compelled to get out and hustle for grub money.

When Clark goes back to his copper mines he will know more than he did when he left them. There are a few honest men in the country yet, although Montana and Pennsylvania have not supplied their quota.

If the newspaper reports of the jubillations throughout Queen Victoria's possessions over Cronje's defeat and the relief of Ladysmith are true, there is a stupendous job ahead for Great Britain's fool-killer.

PORTO RICO AS IT IS. RANDOM JOTTINGS OF AN AMERICAN TRAVELER.

Chances for Settlers or Investors—Sugar Cane, Coffee Fruit and Tobacco—A Study of the Inhabitants—The Spanish Language.

I have seen nothing prettier on the whole island than the road from Rio Piedras to San Juan. It is lined with a wide variety of handsome tropical trees, fronting picturesque cottages. Flower gardens are plentiful, and occasionally one is laid out with some skill and taste. These evidences of culture are indeed rare and no American can visit the island without a feeling of disappointment at the lack of outward show as well as inward home attractions.

San Juan, Ponce, Mayaguez, Aguadilla and Arecibo are all seaports and are really the only places of much consequence on the island. Arecibo is some fifty miles west from San Juan. The journey may be made by rail, although it is about as bad a railroad as I ever saw. The train conductors, however, were always considerate enough to delay the cars four or five minutes at the various stations, in order to give me such time as I needed to explore them, or to buy a drink of cocoanut milk from the peripatetic vender. Arecibo has some extremely picturesque environs. Five or six miles east of the town is a vertical rock that rises some 350 feet. About half way to its summit is an entrance which leads into a grotto that has a number of caverns, arches, stalactites and other curiosities. It may be added that this with the hot sulphur springs about five miles from Coamo on the military road in the southern part of the island, are really worth a visit from every American tourist.

But what chance does Porto Rico offer to settlers or investors? The answering of this question is beset with difficulties because facts there are elusive as will-o'-wisp and as slippery as eels. This may account for the fine imagination and deft diction shown in so much that has been written about the island. To depend upon the native for information is to become bewildered by elaborate contradiction. The truthseeker will be told, for instance, that the rainy season begins and ends at periods varying according to the number of natives he consults. Superficial candor will assure him that social life is a stream of unpolluted innocence and that its bestiality can be paralleled only by the worst days of Imperial Rome; that life and property are fairly secure, and that villainy and outlawry stalk broadcast over the land. It is reported that before the Spaniards evacuated San Juan they released several hundreds of the worst types of criminals—murderers and brigands—from the island prison, sending them out broadcast through the country to resume their vocations of murder and rapine. Whilst this report is confirmed by our own soldiers, I have traveled all over the island alone, night and day, without molestation, or witnessing any crime flagrant or otherwise.

Thus when I turn to the prospects for labor and for capital, to the chances for the incoming investor and the worker, I soon learn to be guided only by facts acquired by observation, though not until it had cost me something in time and Spanish pesos. For illustration, it has been reported with a good deal of sincerity that there are good placer gold mines up in the mountains back of Rio Grande; that the women make six or seven dollars a week panning it out from the beds of the streams. Soldiers at Caguas told me they had seen the dust in possession of their comrades at Fajardo, but when I arrived at that town the gold had somehow down back to Caguas. But yet the claim was still that there was plenty of gold in the mountains. "Mucho oro," said the native; "plenty of gold dust," said the American soldier. A twenty mile journey, however, a careful sifting of the story, and a much more exhaustive sifting of the sand in the beds of the creeks, demonstrated to my mind that there is only here and there a gold color in the locality. Possibly we may yet hear of rich Porto Rican gold mine companies, however, cash capital one unit and ciphers and lib.

Coffee Culture. But let us take less speculative enterprises—coffee raising, for example. Undeveloped coffee land can be purchased for twenty dollars per acre, provided a native does the buying. Americans will be charged twice that sum. Four years of hard work are required before any return whatever can be secured. Unless already wooded, trees must be planted to shade the coffee shrub, and the curcra tree, which brings a profit in itself, is best for this purpose, although the more quickly maturing banana will answer. It is claimed that coffee can be grown without shade, but I am unable to find any thus produced under the hot Porto Rican sun. After the fourth year some berries may be picked, and the year when it is at its zenith. Eight production increases until the tenth hundred pounds of coffee is a good yield for an acre of ground, twenty cents Spanish money, per pound, is an average price, and sixteen dollars to the acre a fair estimate of the cost of cultivation and harvest. The coffee bloom is white, of a pleasant perfume, and the berry is attached closely to

and encircling the branch. The berry is first green, then red, and lastly white. Like most tropical productions it ripens at such varying periods that several pickings are required. The best coffee shrubs are about six feet high, and the branches spread widely. Sugar-cane plantations can be started in far less time, but while coffee is largely grown on the hillside and clear to their tops, bottom lands are the best for cane, and these are not so easy to secure in Porto Rico. Cane requires but little cultivation, and it grows ten years in this country without replanting. The cost of extracting the sugar from the stalk is about twenty dollars on the gross product of over three hundred dollars per acre. It may be added that in Louisiana, sugar cane must be replanted every three years. The cost of machinery for extraction—the engines, the boilers, the vats and the crushers—is heavy, but the grower of small means can take his cane to the mill very much as the farmer in the States used to take his corn, the miller returning the finished product after deducting toll. Good sugar cane land is easily worth one hundred dollars an acre and is usually held at a far higher value. Tobacco land is worth quite as much as cane land, and no better tobacco can be grown on earth than on the island. For the man of small means fruit raising offers far greater attraction than anything else he can engage in. Fine oranges grow abundantly without cultivation, and the experienced grower who introduces the California navel fruit on the island will make a fortune. Land suitable for fruit can be had at a comparatively low figure, and with low freight rates and a line of steamers making the distance from San Juan to New York in three days, there can be no competition from other sources of supply.

Native Stores. The general merchant will do well to keep away from the island at present. Almost every other house on the military road from Ponce to San Juan is a general store, and while the principal article of traffic is rum, they all carry a supply of such goods as are of common use and the consumptive capacity of the average native is at present woefully limited. It is noticeable that the average native buys his sugar, coffee, rice, and indeed, most of his groceries, by the single penny's worth.

The country needs a railway system to assist in its development and future prosperity, but it will require a Jim Hill or a Vanderbilt, with the patience of Job, to wait for its successful operation. A good deal has been said about a railroad around the island. The present status of Porto Rican railways is this: In 1878 a report was presented to the minister of the colonies embodying a study made by the engineer and head of public works, with the view of constructing a railroad which should start from the capital, and passing through all the chief towns near or on the coast, return to the point of departure, thus encircling the island. The provincial authorities finally let out the contract and gave the exclusive franchise to a French company for ninety-nine years and the guaranteed interest of eight per cent on the cost of construction. The company promised to complete the line in six years, but it did not carry out its contract, nor has the island treasurer paid its promised eight per cent interest. At present there are one hundred and twenty-seven miles of completed railroad under this contract and considerably more partly constructed. The roadbed is fairly good, but the running stock is of extremely inferior quality, and the rails in many places are well consumed or made badly defective by the damp climate. Coal for fuel is imported from the United States. The speed of trains is twelve or fourteen miles per hour. There are first, second and third class cars, and the fare is five, three, and two cents respectively. Spanish money, per kilometer. A fleet of light draft fast teams around the island would prove far more remunerative at present than the railroad but the time is coming when the latter, with spurs to the smaller towns and in the hands of American operators, will pay hand somely.

Military Road and the People. The construction of a railroad across the island from Ponce to San Juan would be an engineering feat quite as difficult as that of crossing the Alps or the Rockies. Twenty miles back from the coast on either side are successions or networks of sierras and hills of varying height, some of them rising almost perpendicularly. The military road switches back and forth for miles at angles so sharp that the pedestrian can often save time and effort as well as distance, by climbing on his hands and knees from one turn to the other, a distance of not more than fifty feet.

After careful observation and study I am unable to see anything to admire mental, moral or physical, in the average Porto Rican native. It must not be forgotten that they are worse off than under Spanish rule, had as that was, and further delay will simply breed more discontent and possibly rebellion. Having acquired Porto Rico, we must provide it with a government under which its people can live in greater freedom and comfort, rather than with less than before. This we are bound to do in simple justice to all concerned, and further dallying with this important subject is simply inexcusable.

This game of military hide and seek has been played for about a year at a cost to the people of thousands of valuable American lives and over 100,000,000 in hard cash. The mothers and fathers of the country who are called upon to sacrifice their sons, the overburdened taxpayers who foot the bills, are beginning to exclaim, "How long, O Lord, how long?" The Spanish war—the war authorized by congress—added to our renown by the splendid victories of our forces by land and sea and gave us at least two new naval heroes of the first rank—George Dewey and Winfield Scott Schley. But no man who has any reputation for veracity to lose will assert that the Philippine war has added to either our glory as a people or to the strength of the republic. When the Spanish war closed we could have occupied the most enviable position ever held by any nation since creation's dawn, and all we had to do was to do that which we owed it to ourselves to do, and that was to say to both the Cubans and the Filipinos, "The Spaniards are beaten. Your chains are broken. You are free to do this thing. Now set up any sort of government you want, and we will make the other nations of the earth keep their hands off you, or we will shoot them off."—Hon. Champ Clark.

PUBLIC OPINION. Opinions From Various Sources on Questions of the Day. The Democrats of this state need a firmer discipline and a more assertive leadership and the sincere, honest, determined, unpurchasable element of the party are ready for such a policy and will support it to the death.—Rochester Commoner.

McKinley complains that the attacks on Secretary Gage for his subservency to Standard Oil company's bank are aimed at him. He is mistaken. Everybody knows Marcus Aurelius Hanna is responsible for the acts of both Gage and McKinley. They are simply Mr. Hanna's spokesmen, and sometimes he even does the talking.

Governor Taylor should at least make an effort to bring about the arrest of Senator Goebel's assassin. The country finds it difficult to understand his failure for ten days to offer a reward for the author of such a dastardly crime. Clearing his own skirts of complicity seemed to demand at least as much.—Titusville Advance-Guard.

That the Philadelphia leaders are guilty of treachery to the Democratic party and its principles Colonel Guffey needs no investigation to inform him. Every citizen of the state who has given any attention to the matter and who is not deaf, dumb, blind and paralyzed, knows that the organization in Philadelphia is but a band of political cut throats and assassins who barter away the life and honor of the Democratic party to the Quay gang of that city for whatever reward they can get. An investigation can only determine the degree of their treachery and reveal the methods of their brigandage.

We, to a great extent, depend on America and Europe for our food-stuffs. It will be criminal on the part of the great powers to suffer this little nation to perish by famine since the sword has fallen. Since in 1870, the president of the United States acknowledged our republic as a sovereign state Americans have looked here in great numbers and in every instance the land of fellowship has been extended to them. Not a single case of disagreement is on record, but with the first war note of the oppressor, we are informed that America is acting in league with the enemy. If our sister republic has no sympathy with us, if she has no respect for the honor and British is to be preferred to sincerity and truth we will no longer believe in the justice and integrity of the American nation and her profession of Christianity we will consider empty sound.—Secretary Reitz, of the Boer Republic.

The three great Republican counties of Pennsylvania are Philadelphia, Lancaster and Allegheny. Bardley, a Republican officeholder, inflicted on Philadelphia losses by defalcation and embezzlement aggregating more than a million dollars. He was sent to the penitentiary and pardoned out. Moreland and House, Republican officeholders, put Pittsburg, in Allegheny county, through the squeezing process to the extent of several thousand dollars. One of them has been pardoned, and the other is likely to be. Now comes the last, in the embezzlement by Harshey, the Republican treasurer of Lancaster county, of \$65,000 of the public funds. He has every encouragement to expect that his little peccadillo will be forgiven. The greater the crime the less punishment. "Bill" Kemble set the fashion, by the aid of the Quay machine, over 20 years ago, when he set out at Harrisburg to bribe a whole legislature, and being convicted was pardoned before the prison doors had a chance to close on him. The quality of mercy is not strained in Pennsylvania when it applies to big operations. As to a loaf of bread it is different.—Norristown Register.

It may not be a matter of great importance even to the people of Porto Rico, whether their products are admitted into our markets free or required to pay a duty of twenty-five per cent, but it is of vital importance that they shall be admitted at some rate and a market opened for them. In the present state of things we have simply the Porto Ricans from Spanish rule and destroyed their market relations with Spain without furnishing any substitute at all. We govern them by military force and maintain our tariff restrictions against their products. Congress should do something about this important matter and do it quickly. Already the people of Porto Rico are complaining that they are worse off than under Spanish rule, had as that was, and further delay will simply breed more discontent and possibly rebellion. Having acquired Porto Rico, we must provide it with a government under which its people can live in greater freedom and comfort, rather than with less than before. This we are bound to do in simple justice to all concerned, and further dallying with this important subject is simply inexcusable.

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