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TODAY'S WEATHER.—Light rain, probably followed by fair; west to northwest winds.

PORTLAND, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 26

The evolution of Christmas is a beautiful illustration of the way in which the life and teaching of Jesus have ennobled and illumined the institutions of human society. Christianity's improvement upon paganism is as noteworthy and necessary as its improvement on Judaism. There is the passing of Yule-tide into Christmas, and there is the transformation of the Passover into the Eucharist. The rabbi's "do not to others" is reformed into the Golden Rule. Natural refinements, as in Greece, are transformed through the immaculate conception into the idolization of woman, and through legends of the infant Jesus into apotheosis of childhood. Nearly every moral injunction of Jesus had prior existence in the Judaistic scriptures—the love for enemies, the inferiority of sacrifices to repentance, the deification of poverty, the denunciation of riches. In the New Testament Jesus is made to correspond as nearly as possible to the character foretold for him by prophets of the Old. Of the close resemblance of Christian ethics to those of pagan philosophy, the arguments to show their derivation from it are abundant witnesses. Yet Judaism and Paganism failed. Little though the difference and natural the growth of the old into the new, the redemption of the dead forms through the vivifying power of love is the profound fact in the adaptation of Christianity to modern needs and its miraculous conquest of the civilized world. It is strange and sad that discovery of this orderly development of religious thought and ideals fills so many of our churchmen with dismay and rage. If evolution, physical, psychical, religious, is true, they say, let us rather cherish the old lie. Facts are a minor consideration, so we have our dogma. Upon the ruins of this short-sighted doctrine must the faith of the future be builded.

It is a low standard of morality that clamors for reformation of character through the statute-books. Why do young men give themselves up to immoral habits? Is it the fault of the Oregon Legislature, or the Chief of Police, or the Mayor, or the District Attorney? No, it is the fault of their parents. Public teachers who hold up the prevalence of vice as the fault of Government betray their trust. Theirs is the duty of eradicating vice, not by preaching to parents that the law is to blame or by railing at officials and newspapers. The character of our men, young and old, is formed in the home, assisted by the church and the school. It is not formed in the Legislature or the Police Court. If our young men are going to the dogs, it is largely the fault of the religion and morality that have been preached to their parents. It is largely because, instead of driving home upon every parent the sense of moral accountability for his children, the pulpit and the schools are permeated with a pernicious socialism that excuses failure through lack of half a chance, and promote immorality by leveling against society en masse the censure that should fall upon individual neglect. Preachers and teachers occupy a position of heavy responsibility toward public morality. In the church especially there resides a vital relation toward morals. So long as religious truth is the accepted medium of ethical instruction, this responsibility cannot be evaded. The morals of a community are the fruits of its religious teaching. The church that arraigns them only indicts itself.

The Nicaragua Canal has gained more in effective support by two recent episodes than has been given it by years of oratory and figuring. One of these is its identification by Secretary Hay with international amity, and the other is the disreputable procedure of its opponents. To guarantee the neutrality of the canal has been to enlist in its behalf those students and thinkers who fall in love with a work of broad statesmanship, but were hopelessly repelled by the idea of a canal, military and exclusively National in its scope. A great body of independent opinion, hitherto skeptical as to the desirability of the enterprise, has, in this adventitious way, become committed to it. And so of the exploits of the canal's treacherous friends in Congress. As soon as they were informed that Great Britain was likely to accept the Davis amendment, they hastened to draft other amendments. Their determination that the treaty must be made unacceptable as a means of defeating the canal was so apparent that fair-minded men revolted from such shameless double-dealing. The canal has had its ardent champions hitherto, now it has judicious and weighty support from quarters as influential as they are cautious. Its enemies have done more by their extravagant notions of belligerence and their duplicity to advance it than its advocates have been able to do in years of appeal. The passage of the treaty is the monument of their effectiveness. They have made the canal almost a certainty for the first time in the century. At last it looks as if it will be built. And its enemies have been the making of it.

Nowhere is the advance of manners more signally displayed than in the Christmas celebration. That love and sympathy which was wont to confine itself to the immediate family circle now widens to extensive limits, until the contributors to the average person's holiday cheer are scattered not only through the whole immediate neighborhood, but in distant states and foreign lands. The strenuousness of the pioneer struggle having passed, life takes on exaltations and embellishments that make the world brighter and better with every return of the holiday season. So, too, with the functions of the day itself. No longer a season of abandoned conviviality, the day is given to healthful outdoor sports, home gatherings, exchanges of social attentions, generous visits and refined evening entertainments. The Christmas debauch is passing, the Christmas drunk is no longer the conventional ideal. It is a reflection of the transformation society is undergoing through the development of industrial life, with its competition requiring clear heads, its machinery demanding steady nerve. More wine and beer, perhaps, are taken in moderation, but less ardent spirits in excess. It is in these holiday times that the underground tendency of the time comes unmistakably to the surface. Then it is we realize that the world is growing better. Then it is we take heart for the future as we survey the past, and in the good cheer and joyousness of the day come nearer to the sage counsel of the poet:

Who misses, or who wins the prize,
Go lose or conquer, as you can;
But if you fail, or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman!

THE SOLID SOUTH HANDICAPS THE DEMOCRACY.

John G. Carlisle, a conservative Democratic statesman, born and bred in Kentucky, says that the future success of the Democratic party rests with the South, and Mr. Cleveland, a conservative Democratic statesman, born and bred in New Jersey, points to the South as the citadel of Democratic strength which dominates the party. This amounts to a confession on the part of both Carlisle and Cleveland that the Macon (Ga.) Telegraph is right when it says that "the Southern Democracy is about the only Democracy that is left," and that, "since it furnishes the votes, it has the right to furnish the platform and the leaders." It is true that the South at the November election gave all but thirteen of the electoral votes that will be counted for Bryan for President. These thirteen Southern States, including Missouri, cast a popular vote of about 1,732,000, while the six Northern States of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania cast a Democratic vote of 2,596,500 for Bryan. That is, in six Northern States more Democrats voted for Bryan than in the whole solid South of thirteen Bryanite states. Add the Democratic vote for Bryan in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Michigan, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey and Wisconsin, and the total number of Northern and Western Democrats in sixteen states is found to be over 4,000,000.

That is, the South, because it furnishes the electoral votes of thirteen states for Bryan, is treated as the backbone if not the brains of the Democratic party, despite the fact that the popular vote for Bryan in thirteen Southern States is but 1,732,000 against a popular Democratic vote of nearly 2,600,000 in six Northern and Western States, and a popular Democratic vote of over 4,000,000 in sixteen Northern and Western States. This is an exact statement of how the South furnishes the electoral votes and dictates the platform and leaders to the Northern and Western Democracy, whose popular Democratic vote is about double that of the solid South. This situation will have to change before the Democracy can hope to be victorious at a Presidential election. The very fact of this unflinching, unchanging solidity of the South damns the party that acquiesces in its so-called leadership, for it implies a reactionary sectionalism that recognizes no question of National consequence save what it terms a white man's government. It used to be said in jest that a man born in New Jersey was so out of sympathy with the people of other states that he should be treated as if he had been born and bred in a foreign land, and it is something so with the South, by its own confession, and because this is true the North and West will continue to distrust a "reorganized" Democracy based upon the solid electoral vote of the South.

Under these circumstances, the Democracy are doomed to National defeat, for the South's minority control of the party will always be possible until Presidential elections are placed on a manhood basis; but this electoral system of choosing a President, which has outlived the purpose for which it was created, is beyond any reasonable hope of near change. The South is sure to stay solid for some mossbacked political creed; the Northern Democracy will hang the millstone of a Southern platform upon its neck, jump into the raging sea of party politics, and again strive gallantly to make dry land, only to have its weighted corpse washed ashore after many days. There is something half comic and half pathetic in Carlisle and Cleveland both turning to the South and saying, "If the grand old party is to be reorganized for victorious battle in the future, the South must do it." And the South grimly answers, "We are a peculiar people; we always have been; we always are likely to be a peculiar people; the North may be a Nation, but the South is only a 'peculiar people,' who do not spell Nation yet with a capital 'N,' although we spell 'the South' with a capital 'S.'" The Democracy have carried this handicap of a solid South for many years, and because they have been obliged to carry it they have generally lost the race. The odium of gross sectionalism attaches to the Democracy because it is controlled by the solid South, and for this reason the Republican party, as the party of abounding, progressive nationality, is sure to be victorious until the South displays something beyond its present sole political conviction that governments are formed and maintained exclusively for the protection and perpetuation of "a white man's government."

THE CHRISTMAS LESSON.

Christmas festivities were more general and on a much more generous scale throughout the country yesterday than for many years. Indeed, so substantial a growth has been made by what may be called the "Christmas spirit" that it may be questioned whether "good will" ever before found an expression so general as in the season which culminated in feasting, giftgiving, tree decorating, music and the application of the Christmas idea in the exercise of a thankful, generous spirit.

The family feature of the Christmas festivities, as ever, came closest to the human heart. Its direct offshoot—charity, as exemplified in providing for the poor—had vigorous growth and wide extension, while in the study to make little children happy and older ones glad sweet mystery brooded for days over hundreds of thousands of homes, making their inmates, from the aged grandparents, occupying honored places by the fireside, to the youngest member of the household tenderly, expectantly happy.

Follies were committed, of course, and extravagances, that find no excuse in any condition, were in many instances charged up against Christmas. The person who gave that he or she might receive again; the niggard who grudgingly parted with his money in churlish obedience to "what was expected of him," were doubtless in evidence throughout this glad Christmas season, but there seems to be good reason to believe that representatives of these classes are diminishing with the years, else the growth of the Christmas spirit would not be chronicled. Then there are those—God pity them—to whom any occasion of public rejoicing means an opportunity for increased indulgence of the lower appetites, and who observe the season of good will with bacchanalian revels, culminating on Christmas day in crimes of the baser sort. These, too, let us believe, are fewer in number than in former years—must be fewer, else would the fact so substantially proven by events all about us showing the growth of the Christmas spirit be but a myth.

Indeed, from whatever view-point we take a survey of the Christmas season that brings to a close the world's most glorious century, we can but see in it evidence that the world is growing better and stronger in all things that make life worth living and human beings worthy of immortality. If in this survey we learn patience that abides in certainty of fruition, the processes of human growth; wisdom, whereby we may help the universal law of progress, and charity, wherewith we may judge kindly and take on trust things which we cannot, from out own experiences, understand, we may well rejoice in the revelations of this wonderful, far-reaching Christmas time and leave the secrets and processes of the evolution of the human race to be discussed by scientists or combatted by blind theologians, who search in the mist of antiquity to discover the perfect man, ignoring the upward and ever upward struggle of the race.

A COMPLAINT NOTICED.

Dr. Hill is so incensed with The Oregonian, because it does not always knuckle to his peculiar views and proposals, that in his letter elsewhere printed he reiterates his old assertion that this paper declines to take its stand on the side of law and order. When Dr. Hill is wiser or fairer, he will recognize that the stern moral standards The Oregonian has held up before this community for fifty years make no inconsiderable part of its position as a newspaper. These standards are not always those of the orthodox pulpit, never those of any single representative of the orthodox pulpit, however dogmatic and insistent he may be, but their presentation here has contributed as it has reflected the moral tone of this community, which is high, if not intolerant. Portland's moral standards are not those of Dr. Hill, and that is why, when he does not get his way, he rails against The Oregonian. He has never a word to say of its suppression of scandals, some of which belong in his own congregation; of its manner of reporting salacious trials, of its attitude toward immorality, including repeated excoriation of gambling as the worst of vices. His resentment leads him into unfair assertions.

Immediately upon publication of Dr. Hill's first letter reporters were sent out to see the officials and gamblers attacked by him, and also to see him for an interview, which he declined. Yet now he complains "we have interviewed only the men charged with malfeasance in office and the criminals themselves." Letters have been printed from Rev. Mr. Snyder, Mr. Strong and Mr. Quackenbush, and the effort has been to get discussion from all sides. Dr. Hill doubtless knows that heavy taxpayers decline, from business motives, to take part in a controversy of this kind, because if they were to declare an honest opinion that gambling properly regulated is a better business policy than its suppression, the reward of their candor would be persecution in refined but effective form; yet he complains that these heavy taxpayers are not quoted openly.

As to the utterances of The Oregonian on the subject in hand, they are erroneously characterized as inconsistent. It is obviously impossible in isolated paragraphs from day to day to present all aspects of a question together. We have said that gambling cannot be extirpated, which is true. We have said that open gambling-houses can be closed up, which is also true. The Mayor, or the District Attorney, or the Chief of Police, any one of them acting independently of the others, can pursue the gamblers by repeated arrests of them and of players also, so as to close up their open houses, drive some of them out of town and push the business into secret places. We have said that on moral grounds the present system is indefensible, which is true. It is equally indefensible with the system of private graft. Many good persons believe that the public graft is worse than the private graft. The Mayor, District Attorney and Chief of Police believe that the private graft is the worse, and they think they are doing a public service in putting this $50,000 annually into the city treasury. If they are wrong, they can be put right, but a promising way is not to impute to them, as Dr. Hill does, dishonorable "relations between the administration and the crime now going on."

Gambling is an awful vice. No other habit so dries up the springs of moral sensibility, destroys natural affection and stills the voice of conscience in the soul. It is as odious an immorality as the social evil, and without the excuse that is sophistically offered for sexual indulgence. Its control is among the hardest problems that society has to confront, and in its solution there is need for a great deal more discretion and reason than for aspersions upon one's city's name and upon officials who are trying to do their best.

First Lieutenant Anita Newcomb McGee has resigned her commission in the United States Army, to take effect December 31. Lieutenant McGee is notable as the first woman who ever held a commission in the United States Army. She was appointed Acting Assistant Surgeon, with the rank of Lieutenant, at the beginning of the Spanish War, and has since had charge of the Army nurse corps of the Surgeon-General's office. Her efficiency in the discharge of the duties of her position is a matter of record. In addition to this, Surgeon-General Sternberg, in accepting her resignation, eulogized her work very warmly, and tendered her the thanks of the Government for the "faithful service, excellent judgment and the executive ability that she has shown." This eulogy, coming from a stern old Army officer, a thorough disciplinarian and a man not given to sentimental views in connection with military matters, means all that the words imply. Dr. McGee is the daughter of Simon Newcomb, the astronomer, and one of the most famous scientists in the United States, and the wife of W. J. McGee, chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Fortunate in her ancestry, in her opportunities for culture and in her marriage to a man of brains and position, she has developed a new field of womanly endeavor and made herself an honored name therein. General Sternberg, who for practical reasons offered the enlistment of women in Army hospital work in Cuba, shows by his just and generous acknowledgment of the value of Dr. McGee's work in his office as chief of the Army nurse corps, that the criticism with which he was assailed at the time for his action in the premises was unjust. The outcome proves that a man in authority can discriminate in regard to the employment of women in the world of work without necessarily being governed by prejudice or "pigheadedness."

Since Burglar Nicholson got but ten years in the Penitentiary—a sorry proportion when it is reflected that the hat-rack thief of a single episode, or the destitute pilferer who steals a pair of overalls from the front door clothing house exhibit, gets a quarter, perhaps half, as many years in prison, let us hope that the Governor will not be approached during the continuance of this sentence by a plea for the pardon of this wholesale, all-round thief. Posing in the role of "good boy"; ransacking his memory to tell how many houses he had robbed, while the owners of the stolen property ransacked the miscellaneous pile of plunder for their property; coming with deep humility to confession after he was found out, and expressing himself as "so sorry" when told that the jewelry which he had taken from one house and melted so that he might dispose of it more readily, was, each piece, a family keepsake, this "gentleman burglar," it is said, expected to get off with a seven years' term in prison. He is a young man still, so no doubt he calculated on being able by closely following his chosen vocation to earn a competence for an honored age after having done proper penance for the sins of his early manhood. Poor fellow! Let us hope that he will take heart in the reflection that three years will not make so much difference, after all, to a man so accomplished in his special line of business as he has proved himself to be, and that he will yet have time to retrieve his fallen fortunes at the expense of the public that ten years hence will have forgotten his peculiar methods of accumulation.

From the letter of a Umatilla County subscriber, printed in another column, it is apparent that the hunter as well as the beast must submit to scalping under the Oregon scalp-bounty law. If the hunter whom the law offers $2 for killing a "varmint" can get but $1 28, if the $100,000 of warrants issued by the state are "shaved" to the extent of $35,000, more or less, a change is called for. The manifest design of the law is to make it an object for men to kill destructive beasts. To turn 35 per cent of the money to other purposes is neither fair to the bounty-hunters nor just to the taxpayers. It ought not to be necessary under a proper law.

The Kaiser has a bill against the Sultan, and won't allow him to purchase a warship until Germany's account is settled. The more creditors the Sublime Porte has the better does he stand them off.

How is Portland, how is Oregon, treating the Buffalo exposition enterprise? How does Portland, how does Oregon, expect to be treated when it comes to the Lewis and Clark exposition of 1905?

That prosperity abounds in Eastern Oregon is attested by the fact that so many estimable taxpayers are eager to contribute to the support of one or two more county governments.

Pingree must show cause why he should not be punished for contempt of court. He cannot receive punishment commensurate with the contempt of the American people.

Chicago finds that the most effective way to keep down vice is to have the grand jury in session. Is this a hint for Portland?

The Deadly Palace.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

More and more have Americans reason to congratulate themselves that there are not, in our midst, any of those old palaces, castles and dwellings of ancient date which are deemed to add so much to the attractions of Europe. For it is demonstrated beyond doubt that they are the breeding places of typhoid and other filth diseases. All of them were erected before the principles of sanitary science had begun to be applied to the construction of dwellings. Cess pools took the place of modern sewers; any thorough system of drainage was unknown. Buckingham palace, the town residence of the Queen, was found on examination, after the death of Prince Albert from typhoid fever, to stand in what was practically a morass created by ancient sewage. So with Marlborough House, where died the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, and where the same disease nearly carried off his brother. The present illness of the Czar of Russia is believed to have had a similar origin, as did the attacks which carried off Prince Christian Victor and Prince Henry of Battenberg. In fact, to die of a filth disease would seem to be the final mark of royalty all over Europe. The expensive attempts which have been made to remedy original faults of construction by the introduction of modern appliances seem to have been in most cases futile. From a sanitary point of view, the best use to which some of those old palaces could be put would seem to be to burn them down.

CLEVELAND'S GOOD ADVICE.

Not Definite Enough, Perhaps, but It Comes From a Very Big Man.

Chicago Journal.

Grover Cleveland's essay on the future of the Democratic party has naturally set the Bryanites to sneering. It is so easy to say that the second Cleveland Administration was the cause of the Democratic inability since then to carry an election. But nobody believes it, not even the Bryanites themselves. They know as well as everybody else that what Mr. Cleveland says is true—that since 1896 the party has been wandering after strange gods, that since the Chicago convention it has been, not a Democratic party, but a revolutionary party of political lunatics. Though it has not been particularly successful since the Civil War, at any rate it has been sane and sensible, which can not be said of it since it was seized with the Bryan madness. And if Mr. Bryan represents the revolutionists, Mr. Cleveland as unquestionably represents the conservative, level-headed Democrats whose principles may be incorrect, but who, nevertheless, have principles.

No honest Democrat will dare to assert that the advice Mr. Cleveland gives is not good advice so far as it goes. The difficulty with it is that it is not definite enough to be of any particular value. He counsels entire abandonment of the policy advocated by Bryan, but he does not enunciate any policy to be followed instead. This is not surprising, for no reasonable man can find any fault with the present policy of the Republican party, which has conducted the people through the wilderness into a land flowing with milk and honey. There is no use arguing against prosperity such as that which has followed the inauguration of Mr. McKinley. But the fact that opposition to the party in power is bound to be fruitless is small satisfaction to the party in opposition. Unless Mr. Cleveland can supply a rallying cry that will appeal to the Democratic hosts he might better keep still.

The truth is that so long as the Republican party continues in the course it is following now, the Democratic party must remain an eliminated factor in the life of the Nation. The Republican party is the party of construction; it is the party that does things. Until the Democrats cease to be obstructionists solely, until they can agree upon a constructive policy of their own, they can not expect the country to intrust its destines to them.

This fact, however, does not lessen the admiration of the people for Mr. Cleveland, who must rank in history as one of the four great men who have occupied the Executive Mansion, the peer of Washington, Jackson and Lincoln—in spite of the fact that the London Daily Mail's year-book calls him "the mediocre Democratic leader who was swayed by his Anglophobe Secretary of State, Richard Olney." Fancy Grover Cleveland swayed by Richard Olney—or anybody else!

BUREAU OF NATIONAL HOMES.

An Impressive Scheme to Provide for the Homeless Poor.

New York Sun.

A bill to establish a new bureau, the Bureau of National Homes, to be annexed to the Department of Agriculture, has been introduced into the House of Representatives. This is a measure of real genius, and would have the subsidiary effect of making unnecessary any reduction of the war taxes. It is a bill to give homes and work to the homeless poor, and it carries no petty fixed appropriation, but an unlimited one big enough to accomplish its purposes.

The Secretary of Agriculture is to pick out 5,000,000 acres of the fattest arable public lands, with water or irrigation reservoirs to suit. He is to improve these lands and to build upon them factories for the poor to work in and houses for the poor to live in. Laborers are to be appointed from the poor and homeless, and the Secretary of Agriculture is to pay each laborer for his work, and also to supply teams, transportation, machinery. Business is not to be carried on for the vulgar object of profit, but on the basis of "value for value," so that when anything is bought, sold or exchanged nobody shall make any money. The cost price shall be the selling price. This seems unjust to the homeless poor, who ought to be allowed to make all they can out of their transactions with the Secretary of Agriculture. He is to do his best to better their condition, and they ought to be allowed to do the same.

Finally, the Secretary is instructed to give these no longer homeless poor all the necessities they need until they can support themselves; to help them to make themselves self-supporting; and to guide them till they lay up money enough to have a home, free and clear, and a job of their own. The Secretary would be somewhat busy with all his duties as guardian, director and "angel" of the homeless poor.

The author, at least the introducer, of this bill is no fire-spouting Populist. He is the Hon. Henry Francis Naphen, Democrat, of Boston and the Tenth Massachusetts Congressional District, and he is 53 years old and a Bachelor of Laws.

New War Vessels.

Chicago Record.

The latest battle-ships of the Navy to be placed in commission were the Alabama, the Kearsarge and the Kentucky. There are now building the following battle-ships:

	Tonnage.	Horse-power.
Illinois	11,525	10,000
Wisconsin	11,525	10,000
Maine	12,500	16,000
Missouri	12,500	16,000
Ohio	12,500	16,000
And the following cruisers:		
Chattanooga	3,100	4,700
Cleveland	3,100	4,700
Denver	3,100	4,700
Des Moines	3,100	4,700
Galveston	3,100	4,700
Tacoma	3,100	4,700
St. Louis	7,503	8,000
Milwaukee	7,500	8,000
Charleston	7,500	8,000
And the following monitors:		
Arkansas	3,214	2,400
Florida	3,214	2,400
Wyoming	3,214	2,400

Bids for the construction of the following battle-ships and cruisers were opened by the Secretary of the Navy the other day:

Georgia, battle-ship	13,500	18,000
New Jersey, battle-ship	13,500	18,000
Pennsylvania, battle-ship	13,500	18,000
Virginia, battle-ship	13,500	18,000
Rhode Island, battle-ship	13,500	18,000
California, cruiser	12,000	23,000
Nebraska, cruiser	12,000	23,000
West Virginia, cruiser	12,000	23,000
Maryland, cruiser	12,000	23,000
Colorado, cruiser	12,000	23,000
South Dakota, cruiser	12,000	23,000

A Red-Light Senate.

New York Times.

The United States Senate chamber will in future be known as the "red-light district" of the National Capitol. Over its main entrance the Sergeant-at-Arms has erected three red lights, which will blush appropriately when the Senate is in executive session. The Sergeant-at-Arms does not, we believe, enjoy a popular reputation as a humorist, and we doubt if it occurred to him that he was perpetrating a grim joke on the august body of which he is an officer in thus illuminating its front door. Whether the symbol has in fact any part of the significance which it will have in the fancy of the initiated, we shall be better able to judge as the session develops.

To the bucolic mind, unfamiliar with the police slang of the large cities, the expedient of the Sergeant-at-Arms for signaling members of the House will have another significance. From time immemorial the red light has been a danger signal, and has flashed where danger existed. There have been times within recent years when the Senate has seemed to be a very unsafe arbiter of the National destinies, but it has never appeared necessary to hang a red lantern on a stake beside it to warn the public to shun it. If country visitors put this interpretation upon the red lights over the Senate chamber door, we confidently hope they will have no better reason for doing so than is found in association of ideas.

THE DIVINING-ROD MYSTERY.

An English Professor's Explanation After Careful Inquiry.

Baltimore Sun.

The second installment of an elaborate report by Professor W. F. Barrett on the "so-called divining-rod" has just made its appearance. Professor Barrett is a member of the Royal Society, occupies the chair of experimental physics in the Royal College of Science for Ireland at Dublin, and has taken an active part in the work of the Society for Physical Research.

Three or four years ago Professor Barret undertook a thorough investigation of the subject, collecting all the stories he could obtain regarding the use of a forked twig for the discovery of water and minerals, sifting them carefully, seeking such corroboration as might be available and planning experiments of his own. The first part of his report, which came out in 1898, cited 152 cases. The second furnishes many more, some of them having been conducted under Professor Barrett's own supervision. A third installment is promised, and will deal largely with the hunt for metals with the divining-rod.

In describing the operation of "dowsing," as this use of the forked witch-hazel twig is locally called in England, Professor Barrett says that the operator usually holds the Y by the prongs, so that the stem projects in front of him and inclines upward slightly. When the dowser passes a spot where water is supposed to exist the twig rises to a vertical position, striking him on the breast. The dowser himself often appears exhausted by the effort, even complaining of sickness or giddiness and breaking into perspiration. These are so marked in instances that he discards the twig altogether and is guided by his sensations alone. During the operation the dowser fixes his attention on the tip of the twig and becomes oblivious to the world around him.

Eminent people as well as those who are not conspicuous in public life in England employ dowsers. Professor Barrett includes Lords Salisbury and Lansdowne among their patrons. There are scores of professional dowsers in the United Kingdom, to say nothing of Continental Europe, the United States and Canada. Amateurs also practice the art. In his first report Professor Barret pronounced fairly successful 140 of the 150 attempts recorded. Rejecting the experiments of amateurs, he gets 95 successful results out of 105 cases. In the second report he finds the proportion about the same, but he admits that the dowsers may not report their failures so fully and frankly as their hits. Still, he does ont estimate the failure at more than 10 to 15 per cent of the attempts.

Two sets of experiments have been tried with a view to ascertaining the genuineness of the phenomenon. In one a second or third operator was taken over the same ground as the first, and the results of their divination were identical and successful. Some of the leading spirits in the Society for Physical Research hold that when the ordinary senses are lulled to inactivity by sleep, natural or hypnotic, a few persons of a peculiar organization exhibit a power of perception and a susceptibility to influence, which is unlike that experienced by other people or by the same people under other circumstances. Professor Barrett regards this possession of a "supernormal" faculty the most satisfactory theory regarding the discovery of water with a witch-hazel twig. He thinks that the successful operator is self-hypontized by fixing his attention on the twig. He says: "This subconscious perceptive power, commonly called 'clairvoyance,' may provisionally be taken as the explanation of those successes of the dowser which are inexplicable on any grounds at present known to science."

MEXICO IN A MONEY PANIC.

China and Japan Drain the Republic of Its Silver Coin.

EL PASO, Tex., Dec. 20.—(Special to the Chicago Record.)—The heavy exportation of Mexican silver dollars to China and other Oriental countries has caused the greatest panic ever known in the history of Mexico. Silver has been going through this port to China and Japan at the rate of $50,000 a day for five months, and has practically drained all the silver out of the country. The banks have been endeavoring to keep the matter secret, but a few days ago acknowledged the truth and petitioned the federal government to stop the movement.

George W. Hilsinger, manager of the El Paso and Juarez branches of the Banco Minero, the strongest banking-house in Mexico and Chihuahua, stated that the government would place an export duty on silver to prevent the country from being cleared entirely. He says that the banks have plenty of money, but it is all in gold and American and British currency, and worth nothing except as collateral.

Harmony in All Things.

Success.

Naturalists say that when examined minutely with a microscope it will be found that no creature or object in nature is positively ugly; that there is a certain harmony of symmetry of parts that renders the whole agreeable rather than the reverse. So the most disagreeable tasks in life, when viewed in their proper proportions, reveal a poetic, an attractive side hitherto undreamed of. Turn on the sunlight of good cheer, the determination to see the bright as well as the dark side, and you will find something pleasant, even in the most dreaded task.

PLEASANTRIES OF PARAGRAPHERS

At the Seaside.—Ambitious Mamma—What did you catch this morning? Daughter—A flounder and Mr. Bashfield—Tit-Bits.

"When I get to Paris, papa, I want to know just how much money I can have to buy clothes with." "Well, my dear, how would, say, a thousand do?" "Now, papa, I know you don't want me to go about in rags."—Life.

The Leading Lady.—"Clara says you have given her the leading part in your amateur play." "That's where we fooled her. She leads off with a feather duster and a few words, and then doesn't have another thing to do."—Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.

A Moist Definition.—They were once more talking about trusts. "I heard another definition of a trust the other day," said Mr. Northside to Mr. Shadyside. "What was it?" "A trust is a body of men entirely surrounded by water."—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

A Reformer Set On.—The Fair Northerner—I think it's perfectly barbarous the way people are lynched around here. The Southerner—I think so myself, ma'am; but after the last lynchin', when I suggested that we chip in an' buy an electric chair, the boys darn near lynched me!—Puck.

One of the Real Victims.—"There's no doubt," said the suburbanite householder, "that we have been needing butterine legislation a long time. It was only the other day my grocer sold me some old and rancid country butter for good butterine. I made him take it back, too, quick!"—Chicago Tribune.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Go to the bargain counter late and avoid the rush.

Christmas this year was not so white as it is usually painted.

It is not necessary to inform you that this is the morning after.

It is not likely that much more of the Senate proceedings will be Towne talk.

Exchange your Christmas presents before their prices go down with the January clearance sales.

Just wait till Editor Pettigrew and Editor Bryan get to calling each other "our esteemed contemporary."

Omaha could ill spare young Cudahy. The census enumerator scaled her population down to the danger point.

By striking the word "beer" out of the Army bill, the Senate put the canteen into the soldier's Christmas stocking.

The man who advertised for a wife "right off" ought to amend by striking out the word "right" and substituting "well."

The largest undertaking establishment in the world has just been started in Philadelphia. Is Philadelphia such a good football town as all that?

The pony belonging to the abductors of young Cudahy has been found. This seems to be a horse on—but never mind, anything goes Christmas day.

And over the chimney was a sound of wailing and lamentation. It was Santa Claus singing, "I Want Dem Presents Back," and refusing to be comforted.

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of wealth and bonds and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
And he's the boy that robber bands
Will grab, and for a ransom hold.

The powers have issued another joint note. Now if the Sultan could get the Money Power to go on a joint note with him, he might not have to do so much worrying.

A certain British naval officer was very pompous and conceited when on duty.

One day, when he was officer of the watch, and he could not, as usual, find anything of consequence to grumble about, he attempted to vent his spite on one of the stokers of the vessel, who was in the engine-room on duty.

Going to the speaking-tube the officer yelled:

"Is there a blithering idiot at the end of this tube?"

The reply came quick and startling:

"Not at this end, sir!"

The feelings of the officer as he turned away with a black frown, can be better imagined than described.

A street urchin stood peering into the window of a Syracuse toy shop one evening, just before Christmas, watching a prosperous father buying presents. Bigger and bigger the boy's eyes grew as the purchasing went on. Finally, when it was all over, and the man left the store, the lad sidled up to him, and with great diffidence asked:

"Wuz all them things you bought fer one boy, mister?"

"Why, yes—certainly," said the man patiently as he turned away with his bundles under his arms.

The street boy's eyes grew bigger yet.

"Gee whiz!" he whispered, under his breath. "Rich men's boys must wear big stockings!"

A Durham farmer was traveling to London to consult a lawyer, when the fear struck him that he had left certain important papers behind. He made a hurried search of his bag.

"If I did leave those papers," he remarked, "I'm a fool!"

The search proceeded, and a moment later he said:

"I believe it'll turn out I'm a fool!"

Just as he was examining the last bundle of papers, he exclaimed:

"I believe it'll turn out I'm a fool!"

A man on the other side of the compartment lowered his newspaper for a moment and said, slowly and deliberately:

"Oblige me, sir, by betting a little money that same way for me."

A 5-year-old Buffalo boy went with his mother to make a call. The lady of the house, who was fond of children, told him she meant to ask his mother to let her have him. "Don't you think your mother would let me buy you?" she asked.

"No, ma'am," answered the little fellow; "you haven't got money enough."

"How much would it take?" she continued.

"Three hundred dollars," said the boy promptly, as if that would settle the matter at once for all.

"Oh, well, then," said the woman, "I think I can manage it. If I can will you come and stay with me?"

"No, ma'am," he said with decision. "Mamma wouldn't sell me anyhow. There are five of us, and mamma wouldn't like to break the set."

The Christmas Doll.

Folger McKinsey in Baltimore News.

They have clothed my figure in silk and lace;
In a window, where all may see,
They have stood me up in my dainty grace
For the throngs to look at me.
I watch the thousands that hurry by,
The wistful faces that peer
With longing glances—Ah! hear them sigh,
And whisper, "How sweet!" "How dear!"

There are drums and toys and a hundred lights,
Spangles and blocks and books,
But what does she care for the other sights,
The sad little girl who looks
At the snowy lace of my baby dress,
And the wax of my crimson cheek;
At the careful curl of each golden tress
And my lips that seem to speak?

I like her better than all the rest,
Who stand and stare each day;
I long to lie with my head on her breast
And hear what her heart would say;
I trust that the fates have seen her, too,
Her story of longing read,
And will carry me unto her arms so true
Some night in her pauper bed!

I know she will look with a glad surprise
In the morn when she awakes,
That the joy of her heart will glow in her eyes
For a thousand children's sakes,
And the sun will shine in her sunless home
As it never has shone before,
While her dream of the fairy, the elf and gnome
Will sing to her o'er and o'er!

You may fancy it dull for a doll to be
Dressed up in a window fine,
With laces and silk and a smile of glee
In her eyes with their glassy shine;
You may think it a bore for a doll to pose
Where thousands of faces peer—
Some with the cheek of the damask rose,
And some with the stain of a tear.

But, oh! it is sweet for the thought it brings,
Of the happiness I may bear
Some morn to a little sad bundle of things
Asleep in the attic bare;
Of the joy and the bliss and the love and light
The giver who gives me may
Send forth in the beautiful dreams of the night
To banish her sorrow away!