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TODAY'S WEATHER.—Rain; brisk to high equally southerly winds.

PORTLAND, THURSDAY, JANUARY 3.

The men of Australia are singularly obtuse. Do they not know that all men are by nature free and independent? Why, then, do they ring bells and indulge joy at federation as a part of the British Empire? It matters not, of course, how free they are in personal liberty, for, as Mr. Horace White says, self-government is better than good government, and unless Australia has political independence, her lot is of all things the most miserable. It ought to be noticed, moreover, that the men of England are substantially as witless as the Australians. When England expanded and took in Scotland and Ireland, these were contiguous or practically contiguous acquisitions. But Australia is several thousand miles away—too far to become a part of the British Empire. The Bushmen will only imperil British society. If they become citizens, they will destroy the British form of government, and if they become subjects, constitutional liberty will die in England. The fact is that what is wanted in government, as in other things, is not fine-spun theories, but results. Under George the American colonies were misgoverned, and they rebelled. Under Victoria the Australian colonies are well governed, and they are happy. The immortal Declaration was in essence a bill of particulars justifying revolt, and the inadequacy of its French generalizations is transparent. All men are not created equal, and the colonies were and of right ought to be free and independent not because political separation is the inalienable right of every section of humanity, but because of the abuses enumerated against King and Parliament.

Australia and the Philippines may both teach us that one important basis of anti-imperialism is laziness. It is so much easier to generalize than to find out facts. What sort of government is best for Australia—independence or union with the Empire? You can either study the needs of the colonies or else you can settle the whole thing out of hand by simply saying that every people ought to be free and independent. What sort of taxation system is best for the Philippines? Well, you can send men like Taft and Worcester there, study their customs, needs and ability to pay, and adopt a method subject to revision. Or, you can simply say that the Constitution follows the flag, that what is good for us is none too good for the Filipinos, and graft the Dingley and war taxes and the internal revenue upon them, regardless of consequences, but with insignificant strain upon the mental faculties. If it is made to appear that the taxes we pay in this country are not suited to the needs and paying abilities of the Filipinos, nothing is easier than to dismiss what may prove a laborious undertaking in economics with a wave of the hand and the remark that the tax adjusters are enemies of constitutional liberty, oppressors in heart and desirous of establishing an empire. Zest is added to the operation if you are known to be of the opinion that the United States is the worst Nation on earth, anyhow, and the more its sovereignty is spread, the worse for all concerned.

It is reassuring to have President Hill deny this latest explanation of the transcontinental tour of big guns, for if he admitted its truth our unvarying rule to reject all such utterances would be imperiled and the situation mystified. As it is, the railroad expert thinks of every possible scheme the capitalistic aggregation might have in mind, writes it up as the rumored programme, and awaits the result. The sequel, which we are growing to look for and to love as an old friend, is an official and positive denial of each account. One thought the impending tour might be for promoting the growing harmony between railroad ownerships, another guessed it was for establishing closer traffic relations, another said it must be to get an idea of the territory so that disastrous rate competition might hereafter be avoided through better understanding. It is a pleasure to have Mr. Hill's word for it that none of these things nor any other that might be anticipated will be done. The inspection tour, therefore, will in time take its place along with other interesting developments of our railroad annals, each of which in its turn has been officially and sweepingly hooted at by those in the best position to know all about it. We do not complain of this familiar phenomenon. It is held justifiable by railroad men as necessary to prevent miscarriage of unmatured plans. We merely call attention to it as an interesting phase of railroading in the twentieth century.

Again Quay seems as good as elected. Men of such tireless political energy and resources as Quay are not likely to be beaten when they lack but one vote. It is very clear that Quay has a good many bitter enemies in his own party, or there would not be 68 anti-Quay Republicans in the Legislature pledged to vote against him to the last, and yet Quay's friends were strong enough to deadlock the Legislature a year ago, and to re-elect a Legislature with a clear Quay majority in it. Under these circumstances Quay can hardly fail of success. It is not evident at this distance why M. S. Quay should be so strong with his party in Pennsylvania, or why he was so strong with both parties in the United States Senate that he came near being admitted to the Senate in face of the strongest precedent against his admission. Quay is the jumping frog of Pennsylvania politics, whose strong points are not evident to superficial scrutiny at this distance. Nevertheless he has thus far demonstrated his ability to outleap any other political frog that has been matched against him in Pennsylvania. Quay is generally rated to be, like Platt, of New York, a professional political "boss," a distinction from a genuine popular political leader in the sense that men like Blaine or Conkling were political leaders. He does not stand for political leadership in public debate, in framing legislation, or in valuable work on important committees. He seems to be merely an able engineer of machine politics, and yet as machine politicians he and Platt together were no match for Mark Hanna in 1896. Pennsylvania seems to want Quay for United States Senator, but why Pennsylvania should want such a man for Senator is as inexplicable as the marriage of a respectable white woman to a painted Indian or a Congo negro. There is no accounting for tastes in politics. The people of Montana seemingly want Clark for Senator, despite the fact that he was proved to have bought his first election with money, just as a drover buys cattle on the hoof. And the people of Pennsylvania evidently want M. S. Quay. Perhaps it is gratuitous for the rest of us to object.

Talk of further acquisitions by the United States in the Caribbean Sea has been indulged so often to no purpose that this Jamaica purchase story will be chiefly productive of a sense of weariness. If it were certain that Great Britain will agree to the amended Hay-Pauncefote treaty, then her willingness to sell Jamaica would be a matter of course, for its only value lies in its strategic significance. British diplomacy and British stubbornness have proved alike unable to subdue the proud spirit of Jamaica's mountain rebels, those Montenegrins, of the New World, and the civilized portions of the island are laboring under most grievous disadvantages in their fight with the other West Indies for markets. The natural destiny of all these islands, as they pass under the peaceful rule of economic development, is a close relation of some sort with the United States, and Jamaica is obviously gravitating in that direction. Great Britain has hung on to Jamaica through all her West Indian wars, and she is abundantly justified from political considerations, as the island is strategically of the highest importance. It controls the approach to the Gulf of Mexico, both by the natural route between Europe and the isthmus and by the Windward passage. In some respects its military position is superior to Cuba's, and in all respects nearly equal. The day has never been when Great Britain could afford to part with Jamaica, so long as Spain was a Central American power, and so long as she cherished the hope of sharing in control of the isthmus and its inevitable canal. To suppose that she is now ready to sell the island is to credit her with willingness to abandon all designs on the isthmus and with expectation that she will never again be at war with the United States.

ORIGINAL EDITORIALS BY HODSON.

The Senatorial campaign has hitherto progressed in a dignified and amicable way. So many annoying, not to say disgraceful, things have been done in the fights of past years that the good record made has been gratifying to all observers, and newspaper commendation of the course of both the leading avowed candidates, ex-Senator Corbett and Senator McBride, has been very general. It is disconcerting, therefore, to find that in Senator McBride's absence, and possibly without his approval, a notable departure from the rule heretofore observed has been made, ostensibly in his interest. The undertaking referred to involves the Eugene Register, which has been priding itself on its independence, and Mr. C. W. Hodson, a printer of Portland, whose activity against the Republican ticket last June was explained by a desire to rebuke favoritism in the County Clerk's office here. Unless the evidence is very deceitful, the Register, instead of being independent, belongs to a discreditable conspiracy, in which Mr. Hodson is a prime mover. Here is a letter Mr. Hodson has been sending out:

THE IRWIN-HODSON COMPANY.
PORTLAND, Or., Dec. —, 1900.

Gentlemen: At the request of our mutual friend, Senator McBride, and Mr. J. Lucas, of The Dalles, I hand you herewith a couple of editorial squibs and an extract from the Eugene Register, which we would like to have appear in the next issue of your paper. More of this matter will be sent you from time to time, with the hope that it will be used for the benefit of the Senator. He has a hard fight on his hands, and counts on every one of his friends to stand by him. The next time one of you is in the city I trust you will call and see me, as I have some special information to impart to you. It was one of the last things the Senator said to me before he went away.

Kindly send me two marked copies of the paper containing these items, together with anything else along this line which you select and publish. Very respectfully,

C. W. HODSON.

Mr. Lucas, it is presumable, is the land office official at The Dalles, a McBride appointee. The inference is a fair one, though we should be glad to have the Register contradict it, that the Eugene Register's article, ostensibly written from an independent and public-spirited standpoint, was furnished it by friends of Senator McBride for the express purpose of serving as the basis of sundry other articles in "independent" newspapers throughout the state. The editor of the Register is a comparatively new arrival from California, and if the editorial in question, involving, by the way, considerable information as to Oregon political history, was merely his own casual impressions of the Senatorial situation, the fact should be set out positively without delay. So far as we are advised, it is not customary in Oregon for newspapers to take matter furnished by candidates and run it in their editorial columns as their own impartial opinions, to serve subsequently for use in other papers.

Mr. Hodson's letter speaks of a "couple of editorial squibs" he was to inclose. He inclosed them. Here they are:

"(First squib.)

"It may be hard for a rich man to get to heaven, but not to the Senate of the United States. It would not seem possible that enough members of the Legislatures could be influenced to support a man whose sole qualification is his wealth, but it is evident that Mr. Corbett does not mean to lose by not trying. He probably figures that money is worth what it will buy.

"(Second squib.)

"The difference between Montana and Oregon is that in the former state riches is the universally recognized qualification for the Senatorship, while in Oregon only a few of the members of the Legislature can be brought to look at it in that way."

Perhaps Mr. Hodson does not know that there is no law in Oregon making the acquisition of wealth by honest industry a crime, nor is there any standard here that makes poverty and failure an indispensable qualification for United States Senator. It is easy to rail at a man for being rich, and there are political parties that make much of that sort of thing; but if all there is to say against Mr. Corbett is that he has made money and saved a good deal of it, the argument should not be expected to carry great weight in the columns of Republican newspapers.

If the Eugene Register asserts its entire ignorance of the plan in which its little part was played, we shall be glad to exonerate it, and if Senator McBride wishes to disown it, we shall be glad to give him space to do so. Meanwhile, it is a satisfaction to know that up to the hour of going to press no Oregon paper we have seen has ventured to make use of Mr. Hodson's "editorial squibs." Most of them, we are confident, feel able to write their own.

A GIFTED QUACK.

The late Ignatius Donnelly, of Minnesota, was a gifted quack in both politics and literature. He rose to political fame as a brilliant campaign orator during the Civil War, and was sent to Congress as a Republican some 38 years ago. He finally wore out his welcome with his constituents, and, failing of re-election in 1868, became a kind of political "free lance," everything by turns and nothing long, until he finally became anchored to Populism and flat money. He was a man of a good deal of outdoor endurance in his eloquence; a man of robust physique and sensational methods of speech; not unlike Bryan, save that Bryan has more tact and discretion and far more control over his temper. In the matter of natural brains and acquired intelligence, Donnelly was entirely superior to Bryan, and his lifelong demagogy was therefore more inexcusable. As a writer, Donnelly was a gifted quack with far more capacity for literary expression than for thought. His "Caesar's Column," published long before Bryan came to the surface, reads so much like Bryan's speeches in spots that the resemblance inspires the suspicion that Bryan had fed on this eloquent fustian of Donnelly when he should have been reading law, political economy and the history of finance. At all events, Donnelly's "Caesar's Column" is a nest full of wind eggs upon which Bryan appears to have spent a period of successful incubation. Bryanism clearly antedated Bryan, as anybody can see who has read Donnelly's blatherskite books.

The next essay of Donnelly was to play quack in literature by publishing a book in which he sought to prove that Bacon was the author of the plays that are attributed to Shakespeare. His argument was that Shakespeare could not have written the plays because the plays reveal great learning; that Bacon was the most learned man of his age, while Shakespeare left the grammar school of Stratford at 14 years of age. This book excited no attention among literary scholars, who knew that the historical and spiritual evidence that Bacon was not Shakespeare is impregnable, and that nobody but a person possessed with the theory that a man of genius is inexplicable ever entertained any more doubt that Shakespeare wrote the plays that bear his name than he does that Cervantes, who had been a soldier and a slave before he took to literature, wrote Don Quixote. Scholars know that while the plays of Shakespeare display great knowledge of men and things, they reveal their author the reverse of a scholar or learned man, while Bacon was an exact scholar in the history, learning, law and letters of his time. He had traveled abroad, and knew geography. Shakespeare's learning is so small that his plays are full of historical and geographical anachronisms. He makes Hector of Troy quote Aristotle; makes the Greek Theseus talk the mythology of the Goths; makes a party take ship from Sicily to Bohemia; makes Cleopatra propose to play billiards, a game unknown to antiquity; makes the comrades of Coriolanus describe him as a soldier after Cato's own heart, several hundred years before Cato's days.

These illustrations might be multiplied without difficulty. There is no evidence that Shakespeare was a master of Latin, Greek, Spanish, Italian or French. There is no evidence in the plays that Shakespeare had any learning beyond the knowledge obtained by a man who had the eyes, ears, the observation, the memory, the concentration, the faculties of apprehension, absorption and assimilation that are comprehended in a man of poetic genius, who could put himself in any time and place. The laudatory verses of Ben Jonson, scholar, soldier, man of dignity and honor; the testimony of Shakespeare's fellow-players, prefixed to the first folio edition of 1623, are ignored by Donnelly, who pretended to believe that Bacon, a man without poetic genius, could have written "Hamlet," "Lear," "Othello" or "Henry IV." Bacon had a certain kind of wit, but such an astonishing figure of comic genius as Falstaff was not in him, and Bacon undertaking to frame such speeches of airy fancy and romantic imagination as those uttered in "Romeo and Juliet" would be like an elephant attempting to rise in the air with a skylark's motion and song, or flit through the night like a bat. Bacon could march with considerable dignity, but he could not rise to an eagle's flight or move with the fleeting grace of a fawn through the forest. Grant the gift of genius and there is nothing else of mystery about Shakespeare's work. This was the obvious answer of scholars to Donnelly's Baconian theory of the authorship of Shakespeare's plays.

Donnelly was too bright and intelligent a man to be fooled by his own folly, for he knew he would find his audience not among scholars, but among persons who had never read enough of Shakespeare or Bacon to be capable of intelligent opinions. He appealed to the same class of minds that welcome "Spiritism" and "Christian Science." He challenged Robert G. Ingersoll to debate the question with him, but Ingersoll declined, saying that the question had no standing among men of intelligent reading and literary sanity. Ingersoll evidently felt as Herbert Spencer would if he were asked to argue the question of spirit materialization or "Christian Science." Donnelly knew that he was sure of his audience for his political or literary quackery among those who are described as—

The weak eclectics, groping vague and dim,
Whose every angle is a half-starved whim;
Blind as a mole and curious as a lynx,
Who ride a beetle which they call a "Sphinx."

On the 28th of December occurred the death of William Smith, who was Quartermaster on the old Kearsarge, and who had charge of the pivot gun on the quarter-deck of that historic vessel during her encounter with the Alabama. Smith was considered one of the heroes of that encounter, he having trained the gun of which he was in charge upon the rebel's water line with disastrous effect. By a strange perversity of fate, he died in the Taunton, Mass., insane asylum, having outlived all that makes life desirable. The notice of his death will announce to a generation born and grown to man's estate since the naval fight in which he took a valorous part, for the first time, the fact that he has through all these years still lived—indeed, to the vast majority the fact that he ever lived. It is achievement with which history has to do, not the minor instruments that brought it about. Hence the perishability of personal fame. Hence also the unnoted lives among us of one-time heroes and the charge of ingratitude that has been against republics.

The Agricultural Department bulletin issued December 27 deals with or presents figures so enormous as almost to stagger conception. The wheat crop of the last year of the century, as shown by this bulletin, aggregated 522,229,505 bushels, while the corn estimate on a conservative basis gave 2,105,102,516 bushels as the year's production of that great food and forage crop. The promise of the wheat crop the present year is very satisfactory. Over 30,000,000 acres are now seeded to Winter wheat, the condition of this growing crop December 1 being rated 97. Taking these figures as a basis of subsistence, man might, in this country, if necessary, "live by bread alone," literally speaking. Agricultural production along other lines, however, keeps pace with the production of breadstuffs, and gives variety to the tables of the rich and poor alike, leaving a large and yearly increasing surplus for export. Great is agriculture, the primary industry of the race, the basic industry of civilization, the ever-widening vocation of the age!

The schism between Cleveland and his party may be as real as apparent. He wants longer than four-year terms for President. But Jefferson thought four years enough. It was the Democratic instinct, which he shared, that cut down the tenure in the constitutional convention from seven years. Moreover, Jefferson considered more than two terms for any man a menace to the Republic, and Cleveland is suspected of being out for a third. If Democracy has a sire and that sire is Jefferson, it will reject with haste Cleveland's scheme for abridging the liberties of the people.

January has opened the twentieth century in a strictly seasonable fashion. There is no indication of a purpose to coquette with vegetation in a way that will bring tender, over-confiding buds to grief in February and give us a Decoration day without roses. True, there is ample time in the twenty-nine days still left to him to make good his title of "Janus-face," and by unseemly smiles give us a late Spring, but the fact remains that he has opened the century quite becomingly.

The formation of a new lifesaving district to include the coasts of Alaska, Washington and Oregon is a matter of vital importance to the rapidly gaining commercial interests of this wide section. Cape Flattery especially has been too long without a lifesaving station. Every year has demonstrated anew the need of such service as a well-equipped station of this kind at that point can alone give.

One can scarcely wonder that the flowing gasoline can finds in the tantalizing proximity of a lighted parlor match a temptation to explode, too strong to be overcome. Such action is strictly in the course of nature, and fortunate indeed are the individuals who are the instruments of this temptation, if they escape the consequences of their folly with their lives.

A Chicago clergyman wants us to pardon the Filipinos and begin the century with a clean record. But did we not pardon 1500 bolomen a little while ago? And would we not pardon the whole archipelago if they would only give us a chance? Aguinaldo needs to make a new century resolution, not we.

Astoria is going at it in a remarkable way to get "common point." It remains to be seen how much the O. R. & N. prizes a little business which has not been remunerative. The way for Astoria to make ahead is to develop trade and business before boycotting them.

If those Klondike admirers of Bryan had sent him, instead of a panful of gold nuggets, a cross of gold, it would have been more symbolic of a crucified ambition, and more consistent with the fitness of things.

Mayor Van Wyck has suppressed gambling. If he had done it last November, he would have saved Croker a lot of election bets.

Seattle is trying to stamp out vice. But where politics is the worst of the vices the main issue is doomed to oblivion.

Now that China is disposed to accept the terms of the joint note, the way is open for the powers to make new demands.

What to do with our ex-Presidents is a conundrum which they are as unable to solve as the rest of us.

Care of the Unfortunate.

Kansas City Star.

The country is becoming enormously rich. The accumulation of wealth, even in individual cases, now reaches into the billions. The public resources are unstinted, and there is no apology for distress or want anywhere. Out of the various methods which are proposed for a more even distribution of material blessings in the most prosperous Nation on the globe it may be expected that at least a system will be developed by which decent and kindly care will be bestowed upon those who may require it without the thought that they are receiving anything which they are not entitled to.

CLAIMS AGAINST CUBA.

American Responsibility Difficult of Establishment.

New York Tribune.

The inquiry of certain countries concerning the responsibility of the United States for claims against the Island of Cuba is not unnatural. The answer to it should, however, be obvious to those who have familiarized themselves with the processes by which Spain relinquished her sovereignty over Cuba. The matter was much discussed by the Peace Commissioners at Paris two years ago. The Spanish Commissioners endeavored, with much persistency of effort and subtlety of argument, to saddle upon the United States full responsibility for all pecuniary claims against Cuba, and especially for the large "Cuban debt," so-called, which the Spanish Government had contracted for subduing Cuban insurrections and other purposes. This was consistently and successfully opposed by the American Commissioners, who explicitly declared, in the annex to protocol No. 4, on October 11, 1898: "In the article proposed it is attempted to yoke with the transfer of sovereignty an obligation to assume an indebtedness arising out of the relations of Spain to Cuba. The unconditional relinquishment of sovereignty by Spain is to be changed to an engagement by the United States to accept the sovereignty burdened with a large mass of outstanding indebtedness. . . . The American Commissioners, speaking for their Government, must decline to accept the burden."

Again, in protocol No. 8, on October 24, 1898, the American Commissioners declared that "they must reject any articles that required the United States to assume, either for itself or for Cuba, the so-called Cuban debt." In the annex to protocol No. 10, on October 27, the American Commissioners again made it unmistakably plain that the United States would take possession of Cuba "for the purpose of pacifying it, but not as titular sovereign." Finally, in the Treaty of Peace as signed on December 10, there was no mention of the assumption by the United States of titular sovereignty over Cuba or of responsibility for the Cuban debt, so called, or for any claims against that island, excepting that the United States, so long as its occupation of Cuba lasted, should "assume and discharge the obligations that may under international law result, from the fact of its occupation for the protection of life and property." And in the next to the last article it was repeated that "any obligations assumed in this treaty by the United States with respect to Cuba are limited to the time of its occupancy thereof, but it will upon the termination of such occupancy advise any government established in the island to assume the same obligations."

It would be difficult to deduce from those utterances and stipulations even the slightest American responsibility for claims against Cuba based upon grounds precedent to occupation of that island by the United States. Indeed, it is difficult to see how any one can avoid the conclusion that it was the intent of the treaty makers and is the purport of the treaty that all such claims—apart from those which rest against Spain—shall rest against the Island of Cuba and against the permanent government which is to be established over it. Of that fact neither the Island of Cuba nor the world at large can deny that it long ago had complete and explicit notice.

PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS.

Better Now Than Formerly, While Necessaries of Life Cost Less.

Washington correspondence Chicago Record.

R. J. Skelton, a farmer of Bethlehem, Mo., complains that he has not participated in the prosperity of the country that he reads about in my letters and wants to know where he shall go to find it. While he has had splendid crops, he has got no more money for them than he did several years ago, while sugar, coffee, groceries, shoes, clothing and other necessaries of life, he says, have advanced in price from 25 to 50 per cent. Mr. Skelton says that his fate is similar to that of all the farmers he knows of in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Colorado and other states.

It is evident that Mr. Skelton has been swindled. He has been robbed of what he sold and on what he bought. He has paid extortionate prices for the necessaries of life, and has not realized the advance in the price of farm products as shown by the market quotations. If he will write to the Department of Agriculture in Washington he can obtain a statement showing that the prices of farm products have materially advanced during the last four years, and from the bureau of statistics he can get a statement showing that the average prices of all the necessaries of life are 6 per cent lower than they were in 1890, and less than 2 per cent higher than they were in 1895, while sugar, sheetings, drillings, shirtings, prints, coffee, coal and other articles of common family use are very much lower. The only advance has been in lumber, building materials, implements, house-furnishing goods, drugs and chemicals and othe articles that people can do without, and this advance was due to the inability of the manufacturers to supply the demand caused by the return of prosperity. The prices of all these articles are now dropping back to where they were five years ago. The following statement, compiled by the bureau of statistics of the Treasury Department, shows the average price of the principal farm products in New York in 1896 and 1900:

	1896.	July 1, 1900.
Wheat, per bushel, cents	72.00	77.00
Corn, per bushel, cents	21.50	42.20
Oats, per bushel, cents	18.70	32.30
Rye, per bushel, cents	40.90	57.00
Potatoes, per bushel, cents	28.00	40.00
Hay, per ton	$6.55	$11.00
Butter, per pound, cents	15.20	19.00
Cheese, per pound, cents	8.40	9.20
Eggs, per dozen, cents	14.70	13.50
Wool, fine, per pound, cents	18.25	28.00
Wool, medium, per lb., cents	19.87	34.00
Wool, coarse, per lb., cents	18.00	29.00

The following are "the general average prices" for the necessaries of life as compiled by the bureau of statistics:

	1900.	1895.	*1899.
Food	103.9	90.3	98.6
Clothing	81.1	87.2	89.7
Fuel and light	91.0	100.8	90.8
Implements	73.2	71.1	83.3
Lumber and building material	123.7	87.8	94.1
Drugs and chemicals	87.9	93.7	90.7
Housefurnishing goods	89.5	78.5	79.5
All necessaries of life	92.3	84.7	86.5

*The statistics for 1900 have not been published.

Business and American Fathers.

Harper's Bazar.

There is a clear lesson in a story told by the captain of a police precinct in New York. One evening a man came to the station-house, asking if any lost children were there. Three were asleep in a back room, and the man went in to see if his own was among the number. He wakened a boy between 2 and 3 years old and asked of him if he were Johnny So-and-So. The little fellow being very sleepy and frightened, could not be made to answer, and the man turned away saying he would have to send his wife over. "What! do you not know your own child?" the police official asked. "To tell the truth, I don't," the man replied. "I work on the —— line of street-cars; the children ain't up when I go away in the morning, and they're in bed when I get back at night. I never see them." Later his wife appeared and identified one of the children. It was not the one the father had picked out!

SOURCE OF WEAKNESS IN TRUSTS

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

An element of weakness in the trusts, which has been frequently pointed out before, has been recently clothed in up-to-date statistics and brought out afresh by the New York Journal of Commerce. That paper calls attention to the fact that during the five years preceding 1900, its consolidations were formed with an aggregate capitalization of $2,480,000,000. Of this sum $1,419,200,000 was in the form of common stock, $848,100,000 in preferred, and $223,300,000 in bonds. Only 16 of these consolidations were formed in the years 1895, 1896 and 1897, the other 103 having been the result of the consolidation epidemic of 1898 and 1899. But experience has so belied the prospectuses of the promoters of these vast schemes, that few if any of the common shares have received or have any prospect of receiving a dividend. Practically every share of the $1,419,200,000 of common stock is valueless and represents nothing in the shape of prospects ahead of it or assets behind it, except for the promoters, underwriters and members of the constituent companies, who received it as bonus and were shrewd enough to dispose of it before the scales fell from the eyes of the speculators. In short, practically all of this common stock is nothing more than capitalized gullibility like that of the South Sea affair or Law's Mississippi project.

The substantial assets of these concerns with few exceptions are represented in the preferred issues and in the bonds. As a rule these securities represented the value of the constituent plants or their capitalized earning power, and were, generally speaking, turned over to the owners of these concerns by the new company. The common stock usually went a share for each share of preferred, as an additional inducement to the owners, the balance of the issue being taken by the promoters and the underwriters as compensation for their services. As long as the banks would take these securities, and as long as the speculating public had confidence in the possibility of monopoly and in the wondrous economies to be effected by consolidation, these common shares could be and were disposed of to a large extent by their original owners, and the profits thereof may still be jingling in their pockets. But to those who bought them they represent practically nothing, and are never likely to become more valuable unless there should be a recrudescence of the craze. In that case the loss might be shifted though not wiped out.

For nothing can wipe it out except the realization of the prophecies of the promoters, and insuperable obstacles, rock-rooted in human nature, stand in the way of that. In the first place, this South Sea method of doing business has, in the case of many of the trusts, disturbed conservative bankers and impaired the credit of the concerns. The saving that was to be reaped from more favorable rates of discount has not materialized. Had the concerns confined their venture in these questionable methods to the mere process of organization, it might have been different, but many, if not most of them, show evidences of making their stock-jobbing operations paramount to their ostensible business of production, and have thereby repelled the conservative business elements.

Moreover, as we pointed out a day or two ago, in not having expended their energy in seeking to bring about economical production and crushing competition by underselling, they have induced numerous competitors to enter the field either in hope of selling out on favorable terms or because they believe they can maintain competition at fair profits to themselves. In several instances these new competitors have the advantage of the latest machinery and new processes that give them an initial advantage which the trusts cannot meet without making expensive changes in their plants. In short, the trusts have been disappointed in crushing out competition, in establishing monopoly prices, and in effecting in their own plants the economies which the promoters held out as an allurement. In the case of some trusts it is already reported that several of the constituent concerns are ready to withdraw and will withdraw at the expiration of their agreements. Many of these consolidations have already gone to the wall and are dissolved. Many others flourish only as stock-jobbing schemes for the benefit of their directors and heavier stockholders, and will soon have to face the alternative of dissolution or legitimate business.

That there will always be strong consolidations there can be no doubt but the experience of the last five years is far from indicating that any of them—except the few that have special advantages, either artificial, like patent rights, or natural, like the control of raw material—can ever maintain extortionate prices or even exist for any length of time unless they give to the public the benefit of low prices and content themselves with small margins on large sales. On grounds largely theoretical the Pioneer Press two or three years ago suggested that the dangers and the possibilities of industrial monopoly were grossly exaggerated. Experience is demonstrating the soundness of that position.

Pure Science and Bread.

"The Life and Letters of Huxley," by Leonard Huxley.

To attempt to live by any scientific pursuit is a farce. Nothing but what is absolutely practical will go down in England. A man of science may earn great distinction, but not bread. He will get invitations to all sorts of dinners and conversations, but not enough income to pay his cab fare.

Owen and Forbes are first-rate men—men who have been at work for years, laboriously toiling upward—men whose abilities, had they turned them into the many channels of money-making, must have made large fortunes. But the beauty of nature and the pursuit of truth allured them into a nobler life—and this is the result. A man who chooses a life of science chooses not a life of poverty, but, so far as I can see, a life of nothing, and the art of living upon nothing at all has yet to be discovered.

The Chief Engineer's Mistake.

Philadelphia Record.

A threat from Mark Hanna of an extra session of Congress if the ship subsidy bill should not be passed before March 4 next would scarcely shake the resolution of the Senators whose constituents, although Republican in politics, are unalterably opposed to squandering public money upon a few urgent and rapacious ocean transportation companies. Does the chief engineer of the Administration think that the Federal Senate—the greatest legislative body in the world—is a party caucus, to be swayed at will by personal interests?

Root Spoke the Truth.

Washington Times.

We congratulate Secretary Root upon his honest and manly defense of the Army canteen. It takes courage in these times for a public man to stand out openly against the efforts of fanaticism and hysteria to demoralize the Army. When Mr. Root says that "these misguided people" who are endeavoring to secure the establishment of illicit whisky-dives on the outskirts of Army posts "are doing satan's work" he speaks no more than the truth.

Unchristian Methods in China.

Indianapolis Press.

In the whole Chinese business, from the beginning, the American Government has been the only one that has stood out for anything like Christian treatment of China and the Chinese. The hateful ingenuity and the heartless hoggishness of the terms of peace finally agreed on by the Christian powers seem to indicate that the powers have been influenced as little by American efforts toward leniency as by the sweet and merciful spirit of Christian love.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

All that Bryan needs is a Harvey to discover the circulation of his paper.

A Massachusetts court has justified vitriol throwing. It has not yet passed on burning at the stake.

A discharged employe tried to wreck a Chicago subway with dynamite. Such underground methods are always dangerous.

The next General who achieves distinction will confer a favor on the great American paragrapher if he has a name that is handy for punning.

Harry Vardon, the golf player, is thinking of becoming an American citizen. He will find, if he does, that American golfers will take no more interest in him.

A trust went down to Boston Town,
And grabbed the beans so rich and brown,
And now the folks who live down there
By Hearth Dean thusly swear:
"Of all the words that Webster gleans,
The saddest are these, 'We can't have beans.'"

It is reported that Kruger has bronchitis. This is disappointing. After the style he has been supporting since he left home he might at least have had appendicitis.

There was one Crowe in Omaha,
Sing Billy Magee Magaw.
There was one Crowe in Omaha
Whose work was very raw.
There was one Crowe in Omaha,
And him no keen detective saw,
But six million other Crowes
Have skipped from Omaha.

A negro waiter in a New York restaurant has fallen heir to an African throne. It is fortunate that his vocation in this country has been sufficiently lucrative to enable him to purchase a crown.

Hear the soppy, soggy, swishing of the slush,
Slumpy slush;
How it clings around the lining of the skirts
that through it brush;
Feel it seeping, seeping, seeping through the
bottom of your shoes;
Feel the icy water creeping 'round your toes
and quickly steeping
Them in clammy, chilly ooze.
While you wade, wade, wade, and the tracks
that you have made,
Fill up with ice-cold water till the next man
is dismayed
At the —— —— —— —— —— slush.

The Judge of the United States Court in Porto Rico bears the musical name of Sulzbacher, and comes from New Mexico, where he learned Spanish and became the friend of Senator Elkins, which accounts for his appointment. That Judge Sulzbacher is a diplomatist and a man of ready resources a little incident in his judicial career will prove. Before the policy of Congress and the administration toward our new possessions was developed, Judge Sulzbacher prematurely decided that the Constitution follows the flag. This judicial precedent might have troubled other people, but it gave him no concern whatever, because the first time any one questioned his decision he replied: "It is true that I held that the Constitution follows the flag, but I did not say with what speed it does the following."

Among many admirable anecdotes anent the distinguished tenor singer who has so recently passed away, the following is well worthy of record. The personal friend who relates it tells how on a certain occasion the famous tenor was stranded at a country junction waiting for a train. It was cold and miserable, and the singer was naturally not in the best of tempers. While chewing the cud of disappointment, an old railway porter, who recognized him from the published portraits, entered the waiting-room.

"Good evening, Mr. Sims Reeves," he said.

"Good evening, my man," replied the vocalist, getting ready the necessary tip. But the man sought for information rather than tips.

"They tell me you earn a heap of money," he remarked.

"O!" murmured Mr. Reeves.

"And yet," pursued the porter, "you don't work hard. Not so hard as I do, for instance. But I dessay you earn—p'raps 10 times what I do—eh?"

"What do you earn?" asked the singer.

"Eighteen shillings a week all the year round," said the porter.

Sims Reeves opened his chest. "Do, re, mi—do," he sang, the last note being a ringing top one. "There, my man, there's your year's salary gone."

The amazed railway man gazed wonderingly at the singer for a full minute; then, as though his thoughts were "far too deep for words," he silently resumed his prosaic occupation.

PLEASANTRIES OF PARAGRAPHERS

"My, that was a narrow escape for me!" "What was?" "A trolley car ran over Jones, who lives at No. 694 Main street, and I live at No. 698."—Philadelphia Record.

Billy—Yes, I paid $20,000 for this country place six months ago, and now I'll sell it for half price. "Good heavens! Is that the effect you have on a neighborhood?"—Life.

Hope.—Clergyman—This is a poor way to spend the Sabath, my friends. Golfer—It is, sir; but, may be, it will clear up pretty soon, so we can have a game.—Puck.

Naturally.—Dashaway—Here comes Cawkerly. He says that you and he were thrown together quite a good deal last Summer. Cleverton—Yes. We were both engaged to the same girl.—Detroit Free Press.

His Own Fault.—Hodd—Hang it all! Do you suppose I'll ever make a good golf player? Todd (pityingly)—Never, old man. You think too much of your family and your business.—Harper's Bazar.

Catering to the Public.—Friend—Why do you dump all that dirt into your soap kettles? Soap Manufacturer—If folks don't find the water dirty after washin', they think the soap is no good.—New York Weekly.

"I wish to see a bonnet," said Miss Passee, aged 40. "For yourself, miss?" inquired the French milliner. "Yes." "Marie, run downstairs and get me bafs for ladies between 18 and 25." Bonnet sold.—Tit-Bits.

When Fluttering Hopes Have Died.

Edward Rowland Sill.

Not all which we have been
Do we remain,
Nor on the dial-hearts of men
Do the years mark themselves in vain;
But every cloud that in our sky hath passed,
Some gloom or glory hath upon us cast;
And there have fallen from us as we traveled
Many a burden of an ancient pain—
Many a tangled chord hath been unraveled,
Never to bind our foolish heart again.
Old loves hath left us lingeringly and slow,
As melts away the distant strain of low
Sweet music—waking us from troubled dreams,
Lulling to holier ones—that dies afar
On the deep night, as if by silver beams
Claspt to the trembling heart of some charmed star,
And we have stood and watched, all wistfully