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HEADLIGHT PIRATE.

Doles Out Gems of Current Topics and Events.

UNCLE SAM can doff his fighting duds, or Spain has signed the treaty of peace. Poor, ignorant, idiotic Spain, it should have known better than to have gone to war. But it is fortunate Spain quit when she did. Had our fleet and volunteers ever been ordered to carry on the war in Spain, by this time Uncle Sam would have possessions in that country.

TRUSTS are getting so blamed numerous the citizens of the United States will wake up one of these bright mornings and wonder where they are at and how they can get out of the clutches of this blood-sucking octopus.

WHERE is Aguinaldo getting his munitions of war from? By the reckless way the rebels are wasting powder it must be a considerable drain upon their supply.

STOP, consider and answer this question from a business point of view and regardless of politics. The United States has gone in the hole the past six years something like \$658,000,000, in what direction is the country drifting? These figures are enough to make one stagger, and if this goes on indefinitely the citizens of this country will be on a par with the tax-cursed countries of Europe. Surely these figures show plainly the urgent necessity of reform in making the receipts and expenditures of the government to correspond.

It is well for the United States to be generous, and like individuals, a country can be too generous. The United States in freeing Cuba did not receive the support from the Cubans it expected, in fact, when our officers around Santiago were endeavoring to get our brave and wounded volunteers from the battle field to the hospitals they absolutely refused to help. Now to distribute \$3,000,000 amongst the Cuban soldiers appears to us that the government is a little too generous with the taxpayers' money. The Cubans are already kicking like Texas steers that the amount of money is not large enough to satisfy them and they want more. The United States has done enough for the Cubans without petting and spoiling them with money bribes.

A FEW years ago some of the railroad magnates were successful in putting their roads into the hands of receivers. Now it appears to be a cut rate proposition to induce people to travel.

With due respect for General Gomez and without the slightest desire or intention to detract from the glory of either himself or his Cuban soldier, it is to be feared that none of them really know anything about the numerical strength of their army. The same fault of not being able to count seems to have afflicted all of the Cuban generals. At the beginning of the war it was stated that 30,000 soldiers could be gathered on the north coast of the island and that General Gomez had under him 10,000 more. But Captain Dorst was unable to discover anything of the 30,000 beyond a corporal's guard and those under Gomez dwindled when discovered to 167 by actual count. General Garcia reported to General Shafter that he had 12,000 soldiers ready for duty, but when they came to be transported to the west side of Santiago only 2,400 were found. General Gomez has reported the Cuban army at 47,500, but the muster rolls so far produced do not show over 2,000 and it is even uncertain whether all of those ever saw service. The truth is that probably at one time or another 25,000 or 30,000 Cubans were in the field, but it will be difficult to establish the claims of even that many with sufficient accuracy to enable them to draw their share of the money now on the way.

Of course this fact will cause no regret as it means more for those entitled to it and we may be sure every Cuban soldier who did serve his country in the field or otherwise will be on hand when the distribution is made.

COMPLAINT is made that we Americans spend \$20,000,000 a year upon amusements. But why not? Is not the amusement worth the money to an overworked and constitutionally too serious people? We are growing such crops as nobody ever heard of before. We are selling not only our grain and cotton and meat but our manufactured goods, our steel, our iron, our machinery and the like abroad to such an extent that economists are actually feeling apprehension lest we grow rich too fast. Why should we not see plays and buy pictures and decorate our habitations and in other ways lighten our lives at a cost that we can abundantly afford? Why should we not laugh? Why should we not cultivate the finer and softer side of our characters? What is money for if this not a good use to make of it?

THE President desires the commission about the meet in the Philippines "to exercise due respect for all the ideals, customs and institutions of the tribes and races which compose the population, emphasizing upon all occasions the just and benevolent intentions of the Government of the United States." The well-disposed natives will gladly accept this policy as soon as Aguinaldo's thugs are put down.

THE recent Congress was a billion and a half dollar Congress. The country, too, is a billion and a half dollar country at this time. The expansion in expenditures was chiefly due to the war, though, of course, part of it was caused by an increase in population and business. The growth in inhabitants and industrial activity will continue. It will be advisable to practice economy in public expenditure wherever this can be done without injury to the service, but at the same time it is well to bear in mind that the government of 1899 can not be run for the same amount of money that was used in 1879 or 1889.

ONE of the comments on the promotion of Dewey to be Admiral is that it removes him from the political consideration, that it places him at the top of his ambition and takes his eyes off the Presidency, if he ever had them there. Admiral Dewey, though, must be allowed to speak for himself. All that he has been represented as saying so far does not encourage the idea that he might have been a candidate for President even had he not been promoted, but how he may feel about the matter later is something that must be considered later. To be President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and Army is greater than to be Admiral, if a great man is in the position.

ACCORDING to statistics just published by the Government, our exports of manufactured goods during the calendar year 1898 reached the enormous total of \$307,924,991, and they are increasing at the rate of more than \$25,000,000 a year! To the outer world we are no longer merely or even chiefly a nation of farmers. American ingenuity in devising labor-saving machinery, American "enterprise" in organizing effort and the superiority of the American workman have made our manufactures a more important element in our commerce than is our grain. And while if we add cotton, meat and the like our aggregate farm products still lead, we have nevertheless become one of the foremost nations in the world in manufactures.

LAST year the United States imported 2286 horses worth \$200,000, and exported over 51,000 horses worth \$6,000,000. In 1899 this country imported 48,248 horses and exported only 3500. The figures show a surprising development in one article of foreign trade.

CLAIMS for damages done to American citizens during the Cuban insurrection to the amount of \$30,000,000 have been filed with the State department. Under the Paris treaty the United States assumed these obligations and if the promptness displayed in paying the French spoliation claims shall be observed the heir of claimants may be able to

get a settlement early in the twenty-first century.

THE man who asserts that there is no prosperity in the United States invites doubt as to either his sanity or his honesty. The evidence of prosperity is on every hand. It is seen in the large and growing exports of manufactures, in the activity of the iron and steel industry, in the improved condition of the cotton industry, in the large railroad earning in the demand for labor and in the advance of wages. These things, familiar to everybody who reads the newspapers, attest that the country is prosperous and gives assurance of continued prosperity.

THE craze over heroic advertisement seems to have been run into the ground by some ardent crank in Jasper, Ind. A notice of a religious revival at that place reads as follows: "Struck by lightning! Jasper all on fire! Fire started in the 'Amen corner' of the Free Methodist church last Sunday, assisted by the Rev. Laberteaux of Jasper, assisted by the Ram's Horn band of Adrian and others. The devil's fire department from hell, assisted by hook and ladder company, can't stop it. Glorious display of light and heat every night! All are invited to come and have the icicles melted from their souls. Mothers have special invitation to come and bring their crying babies. No terrestrial loafers allowed on the scene."

THE organization of trusts, which goes on at a rapid rate, has had an unlooked-for and most surprising effect upon the banking interest of the country. It was supposed that the creation of trusts would involve borrowing money to a very large amount and that the smaller as well as the larger banks would share in the profit this demand made possible. It appears, however, that instead of financial operations of that kind the greater part of these transactions have been accomplished without important borrowing, or, if there has been anything of that kind done, it has been by indirect method. On the other hand the financing of these combinations has led to large deposits, especially in the smaller banks, so that the managers of these banks have been embarrassed, finding difficulty in profitably loaning their deposits.

IN SIX years our Government has raised the principal of the interest-bearing national debt from \$585,000,000 to \$1,026,000,000—almost double. In six years our Government has raised the annual charge for interest on the public debt from \$23,000,000 to \$37,000,000—an increase of more than 60 per cent. In six years our Government has failed to meet its current expenditure with current revenues by more than \$258,000,000 and has failed to meet its legal sinking fund requirements by more than \$400,000,000—a grand total of deficiency of more than \$658,000,000. According to Secretary Gage's own estimates, nothing can be paid into the sinking fund this year or next, and the revenues will at least be \$170,000,000 below the expenditures.

BEFORE the adjournment of congress the house republicans appointed a special caucus committee to prepare a plan of currency reform or submission to the next congress. The senate authorized its finance committee to sit during the recess to consider the currency question. It is understood that the republican members of that committee will sit with the special committee of house republicans and it is said that the advocates of currency reform are hopeful that a plan will be devised acceptable to the next congress and to the country.

THE trade between the United States and Canada is steadily growing, in spite of a tariff policy which is favorable to England and is designed to promote the interests of English manufacturers in competition with Americans in the Canadian market. Last year the value of the exports from this country to Canada was nearly \$92,000,000, being greater by over \$50,000,000 than our whole exports to Central and South America. In proportion to their numbers the Canadians buy more from the United States than any other community in the world and there is every reason to expect that they will con-

tinue to be among our best customers. The extensive commercial dealings between the two countries should make for friendly relations and that it does have this effect among the people is not to be doubted, but there are Canadian politicians who seem ever ready to stir up ill-feeling and to put obstacles in the way of a closer friendship. An example of such is seen in the member of parliament who proposed that Canada organize an army of 200,000 men for defense of her border, implying that there was danger of the country being invaded from the United States. Doubtless there are others who think as he does, but it is hardly conceivable that there is any danger to that country from this. If there shall ever be a conflict between them the provocation will come from Canada.

WHILE congress authorized a small increase of the force of enlisted men in the navy, it is stated at the department that the force is still inadequate and that in order to man the new ships nearing completion it will be necessary to put some ships out of commission. This is a rather unfortunate situation and there is no remedy for it until the next congress can act in the matter. In the meantime the navy will be crippled and while no exigency may arise to render this a serious matter it is a condition that does not reflect favorably upon the judgment of the naval committees of congress. It is apparent that in this particular they would have pursued the wiser course in adopting the recommendation of the department. There is another respect in which it will perhaps be found that congress erred, though this will not necessarily have any unfortunate result. In the matter of armor plate for the new vessels authorized the maximum price to be paid by the government was fixed at \$300. The house naval bill placed the price at \$450, with a view to having Krupp armor, admitted to be the best, but the senate insisted on reducing the price. It is practically certain that the government cannot buy armor plate at the price named, either in this country or abroad. This is a matter, however, that is not immediately urgent and it is very likely that the next congress will take a different view of it.

FEELING IN PORTO RICO.

ACCORDING to the telegraphic advice the seeds of dissension are being sown in Porto Rico by the professional agitators there. It is not improbable that a few of our own agitators here at home are bearing the torch across the water to that island that submitted so peacefully to the incoming of the United States troops. When asked how many companies he could spare from his department of the army, General Henry, in charge of Porto Rican affairs, suggests that he does not believe that his force is large enough at the present. He adds that a few of the agitators are preaching local self-government to the natives, which means that trouble is liable to ensue.

The time is not far distant when these people will be accorded the same right of local self-government that is accorded every citizen of every state in the union. It is the policy of the people of this country to bestow upon the Porto Ricans this boon just as soon as they show themselves capable of exercising the right. Some little time will be required to arrange matters satisfactorily and it is to be regretted that the rumored haste has been shown, or is being shown.

Every land has its agitators. We have a few of them in this country. As a rule these people are unscrupulous, unprincipled and irresponsible dreamers. In the Philippines we have Aguinaldo, who rules his people through fear and intimidation. In Porto Rico, where civilization is more advanced than it is in the Philippines, the agitator is a duplicate of our old-time Populist. He can talk and urge inflammatory action, but he cannot think.

At the present time there is no real reason why trouble should be feared as a result of the action of the people of Porto Rico, but a great deal could be prevented if some of our agitators here at home would take a year off and rest their tired jaws.

LABOR'S WAGE INCREASE.

To a careful reader the recent increase in wages throughout the East ought to become a political object lesson. Hardly a day passes that some paper does not tell the story of a general advance in the price paid for labor in some Eastern factory or mill. "Oh, yes," the followers of hate and calamity assert, "the increase is but temporary. There is but one reason for it. The steel manufacturers and all the others are behind with their orders for the present. Do not pin your faith to the elusive star which seems to twinkle out the news that prosperity has come."

Here we have the admission of the Democratic party and its argument. It admits that the man who earns his bread in the sweat of his face has turned his face toward prosperous times and his back upon the black period of the past. We do not have to think back very far to recall the day when, under a Democratic administration, these same toilers were marching across the country an army of beggars supplicating the charity of the people. Those were the days of Coxeyism, of Clevelandism, of Waiteism, when calamity was in all its glory. At that time the Democratic party predicted that revolution—a war between capital and labor—was the only solution to the problem. The bayonet of the workingman was pointed to as the instrument through which chaos should be transferred into order.

But to-day we note that these changed conditions have come about as a result of restored confidence. Security for the capitalist and employment and comfort for the workingman. It is not a temporary prosperity. The mills and factories are not flooded with orders for the immediate present. They see before them orders increasing every day in the year. Old Glory floats triumphantly over a new merchant marine. The commerce of the world is being divided. The Orient and the Occident are demanding goods of American manufacture. This is what is putting the toiler at work. Trade is following the flag. Capital is investing its surplus and applying itself to the latest energies that have been slumbering for the past five years.

The Democratic party has always said that Republican prosperity was not permanent, but history disproves the assertion. The only thing to effect the stability of Republican prosperity is a period of Democratic rule. Note the development of the country after the civil war for twenty-five years. Take history as your proof. If not satisfied with this, ask any of the people who lived and pursued some vocation during that period.

DENOUNCING TRUSTS.

Senator W. E. Chandler has written a letter concerning trusts, and as these monopolies are getting legion, his remarks are worth reproducing. He says: "The growth of trusts in this country is destroying all incentives to individual enterprise and putting all power, industrially, in the hands of the multi-millionaires."

Ingenuous and industrious men of moderate means, whether manufacturers or traders, are being crushed out by the enormous monopolies. The brightest and best business men in the country are rapidly being forced to become mere salaried employees of corporations with immense capital. The effect of such an industrial system is deterioration in society as a whole.

The influences of such aggregations are not only powerful industrially but omnipotent politically. These enormous combinations of capital control the politics of the country, nominate the candidates, then furnish the means to carry the elections, and later direct all legislation, State and national, and dominate use of executive power.

The principal notion I have is that this condition of affairs should not be allowed to destroy the Republican party. To preserve that party and give it a national victory in 1900, doubtless under the lead of President McKinley, is my great desire.

Yet I fear that we shall not get such a victory if the party does not promptly take ground in State and national conventions against the enormous trusts and monopolies that are now being formed in every direction and in connection with every great industry.

The Financial Chronicle, as well as The World recently published an estimate of the size of the new trusts, the capital of which amounts to more than one thousand millions of dollar.

Although the men who control these trusts are principally Republicans, the great mass of Republican voters are not in favor of the new system under which aggregated wealth handled by a few men undertakes to destroy individual enterprise.

Therefore proper appeals made to the great body of the Republicans of the Republican party from being placed in the attitude in which the Democrats are endeavoring to place it—of subjugation to the trusts—while the Democratic party is loudly promising to liberate society from the dominion of monopolies.

Making such appeals, it now seems to me, should be the immediate work of the Republicans who wish for success in 1900. The Republican party should oppose trusts by all feasible means of state and national legislation. By promising and endeavoring to do this President McKinley and the party will secure an easy victory in 1900.

Our only danger will arise from failure to take the popular ground on this overpowering question.

CALLING A MAN A LIAR.

What You Get for doing it in Different States.

The Texas legislature is considering a bill which is of interest to liars there and everywhere else.

If this becomes a law proof that a man has been called a liar will become a full defense in assault and battery.

That is to say, the man with the battered nose, blackened eye and lacerated front teeth will learn in a court of justice that it "served him right," says the New York World.

The laws governing liars in other states vary. In Kentucky it is a misdemeanor punishable by a \$20 fine to call any man a liar, and a police justice in Louisville has declared from his bench that a lie in Kentucky means a blow. This memorable declaration was given in discharging honorable a man who had knocked down another fellow for calling him a liar and had been brought to court to answer.

In Virginia, by the law of 1895—1896, a man who calls another man a liar is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction may be fined not more than \$25.

In Georgia it is slander, punishable by \$1,000 fine or a year in the penitentiary, or both, to call a man a liar unless you can prove that he is one, in which case you get clear. The Georgia courts hold that a lie constitutes the first blow and justifies a violent response.

In Arkansas passing the lie is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine.

In Mississippi insulting words are civilly actionable. In South Carolina and West Virginia the same.

"What funny people live out in the country!" exclaimed little Miss Citiman, talking confidentially to her doll. "Out there they put their corn in cribs. Here in town, you know, that's where we put the babies."

TWO LIVE PAPERS.

The regular subscription price of THE HEADLIGHT is \$1.50, and the regular subscription price of the Weekly Oregonian is \$1.50. Any one subscribing for THE HEADLIGHT and paying one year in advance can get both the

HEADLIGHT and

WEEKLY OREGONIAN

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