New-York Tribune.

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A HUSTLING DEBT-RAISER.

THE BURDEN ON ST. ANDREW'S METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH LIFTED.

OVER $100,000 RAISED BY THE PASTOR, THE REV. DR. J. O. WILSON, SINCE JANUARY—THE FUND COMPLETED YESTERDAY BY SUBSCRIPTIONS OF $15,000.

Through the efforts of its pastor, the Rev. Dr. J. O. Wilson, the St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church, in West Seventy-sixth-st., between Columbus and Amsterdam aves., has been cleared of debt. Ten weeks ago there was a building debt of $100,000 resting on the church. In the early part of January Dr. Wilson set himself the task of wiping off this incumbrance. His energy in raising money was so well rewarded that prior to yesterday he had either obtained or had been promised subscriptions to the amount of $90,000. At yesterday morning's service he announced that he required $15,000 more, and this sum he obtained. He considered it advisable to ask for the additional $5,000 in case the whole of the subscriptions promised were not forthcoming. It is believed that the total is one of the greatest sums ever raised in so short a time for a similar purpose. A few years ago Dr. Wilson raised $50,000 in a very short period for the Simpson Methodist Episcopal Church, of Brooklyn, of which he was pastor.

The service yesterday morning in the church was attended by a large congregation, and it was easily apparent that something unusual was to take place. The choral part of the service was devoted to the laudations of the charitable and generous, and on one side of the pulpit was a large floral design, with the word "Victory" worked on it in red carnations.

At the close of the song service Dr. Wilson stepped forward and said:

We will dispense with the sermon this morning. We have more important work to perform. This congregation believes in action, and should I be impelled to preach a sermon it would be on that subject. There is a text I would call to your mind at this juncture: "Bring ye all the tithes unto the storehouse."

I want to congratulate you this morning on having done what no other Methodist church has ever done before. You have raised $90,000 in ten weeks. All we need is $100,000 to extinguish the debt. I was going to ask you for that $10,000, but I thought that while we were in the mood for giving we might raise the sum to $15,000. There would be no achievement in raising just $100,000. It would be a surprise and a delight to every Methodist should we make it $105,000 when only $100,000 is required.

Ten weeks ago I went to two gentlemen and said to them: "If you will guarantee $5,000 each I will raise the remaining $90,000." I want to show those disinterested gentlemen that we can do more than that. I have made this Sunday a subscription Sunday. I have gone about in the last ten weeks with this little black book (holding up a black leather-covered memorandum book) and have got names and subscriptions amounting to $90,000. I will cherish this book so long as I live, and will hand it down to my children as a rich heritage. There are many cherished names in this little book. I mentioned the fact to Bishop Newman, and he gave $50. This is a large sum for the Bishop, who has many churches to call on him for aid. "Let your light shine before men," brethren. I feel certain that we will get that $15,000 to-day. I see by the smiles of encouragement on your faces that you think we will, too. Well, if you think so, then we will get it.

The pastor then read a number of names. Prominent among the givers were John D. Slayback, $15,000; William H. McCord, $10,000; George C. Batcheller, $10,000; John Huyler, $5,000; Alfred B. Bowne, $5,000; J. W. Punderford, $5,000; C. P. Armstrong, $7,500; Richard Deeves, $5,000. There were a large number of $500 subscriptions and $250 subscriptions, and the majority of the remainder were for $100 and over.

The requisite $15,000 to complete the fund was then raised in little over an hour, and included eight subscriptions of $1,000 each.

INDIAN REBELLION ENDED.

REBELLIOUS TRIBES GIVE HOSTAGES—THE FAVORABLE BUDGET.

Calcutta, March 20.—The fighting on the Northwest frontier is now regarded as ended.

The rebels have given the seventy hostages demanded.

The budget statement to be read to the Legislative Council to-morrow is very favorable. It estimates that there will be a surplus of 890,000 rupees for the coming year, and it reviews twenty years of Indian finance, though without discussing a currency policy.

A DIABOLICAL CRIME PREVENTED.

ATTEMPT TO WRECK AN EXPRESS TRAIN IN IRELAND.

Cork, March 20.—On the Cork, Bandon and South Coast Railway, where a strike is in progress, the line patrol discovered this evening that the rails had been torn up at the approach to a viaduct seventy feet high, a few miles from Cork.

The patrol was just able to stop the express.

RECALL OF MINISTER MENDONCA.

CHANGES AMONG SOUTH AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES AT WASHINGTON.

Washington, March 20 (Special).—Three important changes in the Diplomatic Corps, which are about to occur, will remove from Washington the representatives of South American countries who have been here many years and have played prominent parts in negotiations at various times. Two of the departing Ministers, Mr. Andrada, of Venezuela, and Mr. Gana, of Chili, are promoted, as they view it, to London, while the third, Mr. Mendonca, of Brazil, goes to a post of lesser magnitude, that of Lisbon. Mr. Gana came here soon after the Chilian excitement, and has been instrumental in healing the bad feeling which resulted from that troublesome occurrence. Through Mr. Andrada's persistence the Guianian boundary dispute was finally brought to a focus by the interference of this Government, and he now goes to Europe to watch more closely the arbitration proceedings on the appointment of his brother, the new President of Venezuela.

Mr. Mendonca, who has been here more than seven years, has frequently had prominence, notably at the time of the Brazilian revolution, when he was instrumental in securing the termination of the blockade at Rio by Admiral Benham, which practically ended the rebellion. His well-known partiality to a residence in the United States, as he served a long time as Consul-General at New-York before he came to Washington, has created no little gossip and speculation in the Diplomatic Corps, where it was known that the mission to Portugal was hardly of his own selection, and it is generally understood that he only leaves Washington to make room for a successor who will be prepared to negotiate a reciprocity treaty.

It will be remembered that when the Wilson-Gorman bill swept away the reciprocity arrangements made by Mr. Blaine, no formal notice of warning was given to participating countries, and that Brazil, through Minister Mendonca, took notice of the slight. It appears that after this experience Mr. Mendonca has shown reluctance to negotiate an arrangement under the Dingley bill, and his Government, notwithstanding the failure of any other country up to this time to take advantage of the new reciprocity privileges, has shown a disposition to be the first to try the experiment again, and it proposes to send a representative here who will take up this matter aggressively.

TO SEARCH FOR ANDREE.

Berlin, March 20.—Theodor Lerner, with an expedition aided from State and private sources, will start on the steamer Hollg and next May in search of Herr Andrée, the missing aeronaut, and to prosecute scientific investigations.

VIOLENT DEATH OF AN OLD MAN.

Gloversville, N. Y., March 20.—George Wurtzenburg, eighty years old, was found dead at 2 o'clock this morning at the bottom of the stairway in the Hotel Elk. His neck was broken. He had $3,000 in his clothes.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF SOLID COMFORT Can be had on either of the limited trains of the New-York Central between New-York and Chicago, every day in the year. See time-table in this paper.—Adv't.

THE COURT'S WORK NOT ENDED.

IT WILL CONTINUE ITS SESSIONS THROUGH THE WEEK, SAYS ADMIRAL SICARD.

Key West, March 20.—The Court of Inquiry, according to Rear-Admiral Sicard, will continue its work through the coming week, as it is not yet ready to make a report on the Maine disaster.

The statement that Captain Barker carried the report to Washington is officially denied. The object of his flying visit to Key West was not ascertained, outside official circles until to-day. It can be authoritatively asserted that Captain Barker had nothing to do with the Court of Inquiry.

He came here on Friday from Tampa, on a special mission to investigate the harbor defences, following out some lines suggested by General Wilson, Chief of Engineers, in his recent inspection of the land fortifications. Captain Barker's plan, when he left here last night, was to confer with Commander McCalla, of the Marblehead, who is now at Tampa; and he will probably remain there a day or so. Captain Barker formerly commanded the Oregon.

It is impossible to say definitely whether any synopsis of the findings of the Court up to date has been sent to Washington. The notion prevails here that this has been done, but no official confirmation is obtainable. That the final report has been sent to Washington can be definitely denied.

Captain Sampson and Lieutenant-Commander Marix remained on board the Iowa to-day. Captain Chadwick and Lieutenant-Commander Porter did not leave the New-York. The Court is expected to reconvene to-morrow on the Iowa.

The two unidentified bodies from the Maine brought here last night were buried to-day in the city cemetery, with simple services. A division of bluejackets followed the hearse.

Colonel Fernando Salcedo, of the insurgent army, arrived this morning from Nassau, on the schooner Hattie Darling. With a companion he left the shores of Cuba in an open boat, and after an eight days' tempestuous passage they landed at Nassau, half dead from exposure. Colonel Salcedo is on sick leave. His companion is carrying dispatches from General Maximo Gomez to the Junta in New-York.

To-morrow the Indiana is expected from the Dry Tortugas, and that station will then be left with the Texas and the Massachusetts, which did not sail yesterday as was expected. These battle-ships will take on more ammunition, and unless their orders are unexpectedly changed, will leave in a day or two for Hampton Roads.

The survey boat Bache sailed for the Tortugas to-night to resume her usual work of surveying channels. The Mangrove will sail to-morrow for the Tortugas, and will lay buoys there. This is merely in line with the activity already shown in improving harbor facilities at the Tortugas.

The Detroit and the Montgomery arrived from the Tortugas to-day. The former put more ammunition on board the New-York and the Iowa, and then anchored in the harbor. The torpedo-boat Porter left for the Tortugas, and the torpedo-boat Dupont returned here.

The fleet off Key West now consists of the Iowa, the New-York, the Nashville, the Montgomery, the Detroit, and the torpedo-boats Dupont, Winslow, Foote and Cushing. The Indiana will be added to-morrow.

HAVANA'S LOYAL EXHIBITION.

BETWEEN $30,000 AND $40,000 RAISED FOR THE SPANISH NAVY.

Havana, March 20.—Little work was done on the wreck to-day by the divers or contractors. The city has been quiet after the festivities of last night, lasting until early this morning, at the Tacon Theatre, where a dramatic representation was given in aid of the fund for the Spanish Navy. There was plenty of enthusiasm in the crowded theatre. Every patriotic sentiment was cheered to the echo, but there were no sensational features. The proceeds are not all in yet, but it is believed that they will amount to between $30,000 and $40,000 in gold. Former estimates were too large. Even with the enormous prices paid for boxes and seats, it was impossible that any such figures as $80,000 or $100,000 should be realized, as was hoped by some.

The Austrian cruiser Donau, which sailed for New-York last evening, is not expected to reach her destination for a week or more, as she is slow, even with auxiliary sail power.

The Red Cross Society of America having decided to devote itself henceforth in Cuba to hospital, asylum and kindred work, Dr. Egan prefers not to serve on the General Committee. The Distribution Relief Committee now consists of Consul-General Lee, Dr. R. Guzman, representing the Cuban Committee, and J. L. Vanderwater, secretary of the Western Railway of Cuba, representing the American contributors. General Lee will act as arbitrator in the event of a difference of opinion between the other two members.

The food on hand will afford relief to all the needy on the island for a week or more, and additional supplies are afloat. Relief has been sent to 134 central points, from which 162 towns and villages have been supplied. Cornmeal is the principal ration, as being good food for the really hungry, but not likely to tempt beggars or the unworthy. Besides, there is no difficulty in getting it through the customs quickly.

Special Commissioner Klopsch has appointed three men to travel constantly through the island to verify the count of the needy, to see that the supplies are properly received and handled, to prevent fraud and generally to assist in the work of distribution. The latest total reported to Mr. Klopsch is 205,000 necessitous cases.

If the Government will sanction the arrangement, a large building in the suburb of Guanabacoa, where the Alfonso XII Regiment is now quartered, will be rented by the Relief Committee. Several hundred reconcentrados have just been set to work cultivating ten acres of ground surrounding the building, in this way contributing to their own support. The plan is experimental, and if successful is capable of extensive development elsewhere.

"The Union Constitucional," in an editorial to-day under the caption "Basta Ya" ("It Is Enough"), calls attention to the presence in Havana of "certain lordly men who are talking loudly, discussing Spanish and Cuban affairs and criticising the Government." It says:

"The action of these men, the Yankee correspondents, who stir up strife between nations, night, by the lies they publish, cause innocent Americans to be food for cannon in the event of war. The Maine disaster has been used as a text for foolish stories about mines, and also about dungeons worse than the Inquisition.

"Under pretence of relief the United States surrounds Cuba with the vessels of her fleet, and the Jingo spirit urges war. The United States is settled by aliens, Anarchists and the lower classes, who do not know the meaning of real charity, their motto being, 'My son, get money. Honestly, if you can; but at any rate get money.' They seek to inflict humiliation upon Spanish honor and charity by their ostentatious contributions.

"The presence of the Vizcaya and the Almirante Oquendo has helped to keep the American Jingoes within bounds, and when the fleet of torpedo-boats arrives from Spain and Admiral Manterola raises his flag here on the great ship Carlos V, all these menaces, inside and outside, will disappear."

GERMANY WILL NOT INTERFERE.

REASONS WHY SPAIN COULD NOT EXPECT HER ASSISTANCE.

London, March 21.—The Berlin correspondent of "The Times" confirms the statement that Germany has no inclination to interfere in the Cuban question. He cites the Berlin "Post" as saying that Germany's complex commercial interests, as well as her regard for the German residents in the United States, forbid such an interference.

REPORT NOT YET RECEIVED

PRESIDENT HAS NOT HEARD FROM THE BOARD OF INQUIRY.

CONFERENCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE YESTERDAY—PURCHASE OF WARSHIPS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED—THE CONFERENCE OF GENERALS IN CUBA.

Washington, March 20.—President McKinley did not attend church this morning as is his custom, but instead spent two hours and more in conference with several members of his Cabinet. Assistant Secretary Day called at 10:30 a. m. and remained until nearly 1 p. m. Secretary Long and Secretary Bliss were the other members present. They remained less than an hour. Commander Glover, in company with Charles R. Flint, who has been acting for the Government in the negotiations for the purchase of ships, also called, and was shown into the President's private office.

The members of the Cabinet on leaving the White House said there was no special significance in the meeting this morning. The report of the Maine Court of inquiry had not been received, nor was it definitely known when it would arrive. It was expected, however, early in the present week, and as soon as received it would be handed at once to the President, and when it had been read and considered by him it would be made public. Secretary Long, in speaking of the report, said that while fully realizing its importance, the country, in his opinion, would willingly accord to the President a day or two, if necessary, for its consideration. The indications seem to be that the report will be made public by the middle of the present week.

The presence of Charles R. Flint at the conference gave rise to the inference that the President and his advisers were discussing the question of acquiring additional ships. Mr. Flint, whose commercial interests are largely with South American countries, is believed, in a measure at least, to represent Chili and the Argentine Republic in any negotiations which are under way for the disposition of their war vessels. A reporter to-day asked Mr. Flint if he could say whether or not the United States had secured possession of the Chilian ship O'Higgins and the Argentine ship San Martino, but he declined to make any statement as to that particular feature of the subject. When pressed for some information in regard to the matter he replied:

"Both Chili and the Argentine Republic have the warmest friendship and admiration for the United States and her institutions. Neither country is anxious to sell its ships to this Government, basing this indisposition on the belief that we have an excellent Navy of our own. They want these vessels themselves. If the time should come, however, when it was apparent that the United States needed these vessels they would gladly part with them to us."

The attention of Mr. Flint was called to the published report that the United States would purchase the Brazilian torpedo gunboat Tuby, but this he said would not be done, so far as he was aware, as there were no negotiations under way to that effect.

Aside from the meeting of several members of the Cabinet at the White House there were no incidents of importance in the course of the day. Judge Day, Assistant Secretary Adee, Chief Clerk Michael and other officials were at the Department, but this has been quite common during the last month. Also at the War Department and Navy Department a number of the clerks of bureaus were at their desks for several hours, mainly for the purpose of disposing of the business which recently has accumulated so rapidly.

The most interesting topic of the day was based on the dispatches from Havana indicating a prospective conference between General Pando and Generals Garcia, Gomez and others of the insurgent army, for the purpose of submitting to the latter a formal offer of autonomy. The basis of autonomy as outlined in the dispatches apparently found no credence with the officials of the Spanish Legation. They stated their disbelief that a conference on the proposed lines was probable, and added that they had no information on the subject. Minister Polo de Bernabe expressed the opinion that the report from Havana was unfounded, as he said the basis upon which it was proposed to grant autonomy was absurd.

REPORT LOOKED FOR BY WEDNESDAY.

NAVY DEPARTMENT ALREADY AWARE THE EXPLOSION WAS DUE TO AN EXTERNAL CAUSE—ENGINEERS OF THE MAINE DETAINED AT KEY WEST.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, March 20.—Secretary Long looks for the report of the Court of Inquiry about Wednesday. It will probably reach Washington by that time, in the hands of Judge-Advocate Marix. Admiral Sicard had not received the evidence or findings up to last night, but was led to expect it then in a short time, and it was not his intention to delay the transmission to Washington by any extended indorsement.

The Navy Department is already aware, though it is claimed unofficially, that the explosion was due to an external cause, although its exact nature or those responsible are not known here. It is possible that Admiral Sicard will telegraph briefly a résumé of the Court's opinion. It is claimed that no information of this character has yet been received from him, nor has any official intimation come that the Court has completed its work.

Naval engineers attach some mysterious significance to the fact that while other officers of the Maine who have been at Key West the last month were granted leaves of absence, and permitted to go to their homes the last week, the engineers of the ship are still held in Key West, as is well known, much against their own inclinations. Those to whom particular reference is made are Passed Assistant Engineer Frederic C. Bowers and Assistant Engineer John R. Morris, the chief engineer of the Maine, Charles P. Howell, being still on duty with Captain Sigsbee and Lieutenant-Commander Richard Wainwright.

FOR THE TORTUGAS COALING STATION.

MORE REASONABLE BIDS EXPECTED TO BE SECURED AND THE WORK TO BE PUSHED.

Washington, March 20 (Special).—Civil Engineer Endicott, Acting Chief of the Yards and Docks Bureau, had his office force at work all day to-day canvassing proposals, drawing the plans and perfecting specifications for the Tortugas coaling station and naval rendezvous. The bids for the wharves and coalsheds to be erected at this strategic point, which were received several days ago, were considered so exorbitant that they were promptly rejected, and new proposals were solicited from firms in various parts of the country, none of the former bidders being permitted to compete. Confidence is expressed by Mr. Endicott that reasonable prices will now be secured, and the work, which is considered essential for National defence, will be promptly begun.

This is the project for which $500,000 of the $50,000,000 fund was allotted a week ago. The contract for dredging three hundred thousand feet of channel at 23 cents per foot was awarded yesterday to an Alabama dredging company which has been engaged in similar work in Mobile Bay, whence their plant will be immediately transferred to Tortugas. Here the principal object is to remove sand from two sharp turns in the channel around Fort Jefferson, depositing the sand upon the sites of the proposed coalsheds. This contract will be completed in a few weeks, and by that time it is hoped to deliver the mechanical conveying apparatus for the coal and the wharf material on the ground. It is hardly possible to finish the improvements in less than 120 days, although every effort will be made to have one wharf and shed, with its conveying machinery, finished and in operation in half that time.

The energy of the Navy in the Tortugas improvement has no parallel in the Army. The War Department is opposed to reoccupying Fort Jefferson, which, in the opinion of General Wilson, Chief of Engineers, can never be of any use as a position of defence, but is valuable solely as a coaling station, and as such must be guarded by war vessels. Any number of old smooth-bore guns are available for mounting on the old fortifications, but it is contended that the Navy, having exclusive interest in the place, must assume the entire responsibility and expense, as well as furnish the garrison.

RAILROAD STATION ON FIRE

THE PENNSYLVANIA TERMINUS AT JERSEY CITY IN FLAMES.

FIRE BREAKS OUT IN THE RESTAURANT AND THE WHOLE STRUCTURE IS SOON ABLAZE—PROBABLY A TOTAL LOSS.

A fire broke out in the Keystone Restaurant in the Pennsylvania Railroad Station in Jersey City at 2:17 this morning, and quickly gained headway and got beyond the control of the station fire brigade. Within a brief time it had extended to the waiting-room and ferry-house, and the entire structure was ablaze and burned fiercely, cutting off communication by ferry with New-York.

At 2:35 o'clock the third alarm was turned in, and the whole Fire Department of Jersey City was summoned to fight the fire. A fireboat also poured streams upon the structure. The flames ran along the woodwork rapidly, and soon the sheds of all the ferry slips were ablaze and the flames communicated to the roof of the passenger station, which fell with a great crash at 2:45, releasing the mass of flames, which shot skyward, lighting up the heavens brilliantly.

By 3:15 the force of the fire seemed to have somewhat spent itself, and there appeared to be some chance of saving the trainshed and confining the fire to the ferry-house and passenger station.

The fire worked steadily toward the pier of the Adams Express Company on the north of the ferry slips, and desperate efforts were made to save the pier and its valuable contents.

The 2:10 o'clock train had just left with the early newspapers and mails, and it is not thought that any mail matter has been lost in the fire.

It is impossible to determine the extent of the loss, but it appears that the ferry-house and the main structure of the passenger station will be a total loss, while the train shed may be saved.

END OF A QUEER LIFE.

DEATH OF A PARK ROW LODGER, WHO MIGHT HAVE LIVED BETTER.

YUILLE HAD WELL-TO-DO RELATIVES AND A COMFORTABLE STIPEND, BUT HE PREFERRED A LODGING-HOUSE AND SPENT HIS MONEY FOR UNFORTUNATE FELLOW-LODGERS.

Frank E. Yuille, forty-three years old, a nephew of William Bloodgood and the cousin of William Bloodgood, jr., of the wholesale woollen house of W. S. Taylor & Bloodgood, of No. 8 Thomas-st., was found dead yesterday afternoon in his room in the European Hotel, a lodging-house at No. 184 Park Row. Death is supposed to have been due to a hemorrhage, the blood having issued from his nose and mouth and stained the pillow on which he lay. The body was in a cramped position, and was a deep garish color, which resulted from jaundice, from which the man had been suffering.

Yuille was said to be highly educated. He had lived at the lodging-house for the last ten years. He was said to have come from a fine family, whose members are supposed to live in New-Orleans, where the man was married some years ago. From what could be learned of the man's history at the lodging-house—that portion of it that he had told to some of the inmates at various times—his wife died about nine years ago and he had two sons, who, it was said, were in Yale.

Among the effects which were found in his room were letters from Hugh S. McElroy, of No. 184 Gravier-st., New-Orleans; Westfeldt Brothers, Box No. 601, New-Orleans, and Dennistoun, Cross & Co., No. 2 Princess-st., London. There was another letter, written by himself, in which it was stated that he had retained William D. E. See as an attorney, and authorizing him to appear before the Surrogate's Court of Hudson County, in response to a notice served upon him (Yuille) to appear in a proceeding to have an executor and trustee appointed for the estate of John Ferne, deceased, in place of Frederick Baker, a former trustee and executor. This Frederick Baker, it is said, is the same one whose connection with the Seely defalcation in the National Shoe and Leather Bank caused him to commit suicide.

MONEY TO HIS CREDIT.

A statement, dated May 11, 1897, made by William Bloodgood on the Ferne estate, showed that there was a credit standing to the account of Yuille, of $676 38. It was said by those who knew Yuille that he was the recipient of a stated sum of money every week, which was paid by B. S. Brooks, the cashier of the Bloodgood firm, and would have permitted him to live in the most comfortable circumstances. This money which he received, it was said, was spent in the relief of fellow-lodgers, whose circumstances were much inferior to his own. He was in the habit, if any one in the house was taken sick, of going to the Roosevelt Pharmacy in Park Row, where he had a weekly account, and purchasing medicine, and, in cases where men were afflicted with rheumatism, he would go so far as to purchase crutches for them, and do everything in his power to alleviate their sufferings.

The letter from Dennistoun, Cross & Co., of London, was written to Westfeldt Brothers, of New-Orleans, and was in the form of an inquiry as to the whereabouts of Frank E. Yuille. Westfeldt Brothers apparently forwarded this letter from London to Yuille, inclosed in one written by themselves.

It appears that he received frequent communications from his cousin, Minnie Bloodgood, of Elizabeth, N. J., during the years 1894 and 1895. All the letters written by his cousin were in relation to the health of the family, and contain inquiries in regard to his welfare.

A PECULIAR LETTER.

Yuille, while in Galveston, Tex., in 1894, wrote a letter which was evidently never sent, and from the peculiarity of its construction is interesting. It is as follows:

When we endeavor to bring within our financial mind's grasp the proportion of loss to profit, resulting from the study of the possibilities of crops not planted or of moneys not coined, we may fail into the error of having forgotten how much more the human system may be nourished by the consumption of a beefsteak than by the guess at its weight. There are armies of the most valued statisticians in the cotton trade, business or profession. Any of the three terms may suit. We have the fertilizer freak, the interior movement maniac, the drought demon, the worm wrangler, the plowing-time pedant, the rainy roarer, the overflow oracle, the strike sermonizer—all these we have—to tell what poor King Cotton must do.

There are, however, numerous causes this year for increased consumption of cotton. The rapid increase of population in this country must be a leading factor in our figuring—say 60,000,000 souls—of which 50,000,000 use teeth, both from necessity and from chewing tobacco and other products. Of these teeth let us average twenty-four to a head, or, say, 1,250,000,000. We take these small figures to make allowance for lost trade and stolen teeth. Now, at least 10 per cent of these teeth will be found to be hollow, leaving 125,000,000 that will need plugging with cotton.

THE CRISIS APPROACHING.

BELIEF AMONG CONGRESSMEN THAT SUSPENSE WILL SOON BE ENDED.

A SPEEDY SOLUTION OF THE CUBAN DIFFICULTIES EXPECTED—VIEWS OF CONGRESSMAN GROUT—HE EXERCISES HIS YANKEE PRIVILEGE OF GUESSING.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, March 20.—Within the last three days there has been a visible and marked increase of earnestness and seriousness, not to say anxiety, among Congressmen in discussing the Cuban question and the relations between the United States and Spain. There is a general feeling that matters are fast approaching a crisis, which cannot be much longer postponed or averted. Whatever differences of opinion may exist respecting the significance of Senator Proctor's speech, there is no room for doubt that it stimulated this feeling.

Despite his disclaimer, many members of the House of Representatives profess to believe that the Senator spoke for the Administration, and that his speech, correctly interpreted, meant intervention in order to restore peace in Cuba and prevent the extermination of its non-combatant population by disease and starvation. There are others who believe, and stoutly assert, that the speech was delivered without any previous consultation with the President or members of his Administration, and that it possessed no significance whatever except as an individual expression. In fact, a prominent New-York representative, in conversation with a Tribune correspondent yesterday, asserted that he knew this to be the case.

But whatever diversities of opinion exist in regard to the correct interpretation of Senator Proctor's speech or the proper degree of significance to be ascribed to it, all of the many Congressmen with whom the Tribune correspondent has conversed on the subject in the last two or three days, agree in the opinion that the next few days, or weeks at most, will end the painful suspense and anxiety which now exist.

As a sufficient reason for this, they point to the active military and naval preparations on every hand; the large appropriations for National defence, and the extraordinary expenditures for ships, arms and munitions of war, and the increase of the permanent force of officers and men both in the Army and Navy, and declare that such preparations and appropriations and expenditures would not be recommended and could not be justified except by the existence of an emergency such as has not yet been publicly disclosed. Moreover, they say, the country will not be willing to have the scale of expenditures continued very long on a semi-war basis unless the necessity is clearly shown.

As Mr. Dingley observed: "Spain has exhausted her resources in fruitless efforts to suppress the Cuban insurrection, and if the United States should now be compelled to intervene this fact would be to our advantage; but it would not seem wise for us to enter upon a process of self-exhaustion, or continue our expenditures long on a semi-war basis, without some tangible reason or result. I think, therefore, that everything points toward a speedy solution of the Cuban difficulties, so far as the United States is concerned. Whether or not that solution is to be a peaceful one is not for me to attempt to predict. I am content to leave it with the President, whose just attitude and wise course thus far have won the confidence of his own countrymen and the admiration and respect of foreign statesmen."

It is a noteworthy fact that as the day approaches when the report of the Maine Court of Inquiry is expected, and its findings are to be made public, there is a marked change of sentiment in regard to its probable immediate effect. Of course Congressmen, as a rule, continue to assert that if the Court should find and report that the Spanish authorities were criminally responsible for the destruction of the warship a declaration of war against Spain would inevitably and immediately follow, and that if the report should show that the disaster was one due to the culpable negligence of those authorities it would be difficult, if not impossible, to avert war; and yet they appear somehow to have become impressed with the belief that "the Maine incident," as it has already begun to be styled, will not otherwise figure as a vital factor in the solution of the Cuban troubles, so far as the United States is concerned.

Nearly all of them now believe that the explosion which sent the Maine to the bottom of Havana Harbor was caused by an external agency, but comparatively few of them now declare, as nearly all of them did only a few days ago, that that fact alone "would mean war or a demand for an indemnity." Reflection and study have led them to conclusions which they would then have pronounced false and absurd. A few Congressmen may be found who have reached conclusions or formed theories which they are willing to explain. One of these is Colonel Grout, of Vermont, who was one of the seventeen who voted against the Cuban belligerency resolution in the last Congress.

In conversation with a Tribune correspondent Mr. Grout said: "Of course, I have no information whatever in regard to the findings of the Court of Inquiry, or what course the President may take, but I can exercise my inalienable Yankee right of guessing. I guess that the explosion which destroyed the Maine was due to external causes. I guess the Court of Inquiry will not report that the authorities of Spain were criminally responsible for the explosion, or that it was due to culpable negligence on their part; and, finally, I guess the Court will report that it has found itself unable to ascertain the exact cause or fix the responsibility.

"But suppose that culpable negligence on the part of the authorities should have been found, and that a demand for indemnity should be made on Spain, and denied on the ground that the findings of the Court of Inquiry were not warranted by the evidence or on any other ground? The President might then inform Spain that, while the Maine incident was by no means regarded as closed, further discussion of it on the part of the Government of the United States would be postponed until a more convenient season, and pending the settlement of certain other questions; and he might then proceed to recognize the independence of Cuba, accompanying the recognition with a proclamation of strict neutrality between the belligerents. Would that result in a declaration of war by Spain against the United States? I think not; but if it should, Spain would not be entitled to or receive the support or sympathy of other nations on account of it."

YELLOW FEVER ON THE STRABO.

THE COOK DIED AND THE CAPTAIN IS TAKEN ILL, BUT RECOVERS.

The steamship Strabo, which arrived here yesterday morning from South American ports, was held at Quarantine for disinfecting on account of several cases of yellow fever which had occurred aboard her. While the ship was taking on her cargo at Rio Janeiro two of the crew were stricken with the disease, and were sent to a hospital in the city. Soon after leaving port the cook, Henry Kearton, thirty-two years old and a native of Liverpool, fell ill with the scourge, and, although he was carefully nursed by Captain Jardine, who has had much experience with yellow jack, he died on March 2, and was buried at sea. To cap the climax, Captain Jardine himself was stricken at about the time the cook died, but he was not extremely ill, and before the Strabo reached St. Lucia he was able once more to attend to his duties. The Strabo will probably be released to-day.

BAILEY ASPIRES TO BE SPEAKER.

Pittsburg, March 20.—Congressman Joseph W. Bailey, of Texas, will be a candidate for the Speakership of the House at the next session. Mr. Bailey was in this city yesterday, in conference with a number of prominent Democrats, and to them he disclosed his ambition to succeed Speaker Reed. He thinks his chances for success are good. He believes free silver will win in 1900, and is anxious to have Joseph Sibley make another contest for a seat in Congress. He favors the candidacy of J. M. Guffey for Governor of this State.

AUTONOMY'S FINAL CARD.

THE LATEST EFFORT TO TREAT WITH THE INSURGENTS IN CUBA.

BELIEF IN HAVANA THAT IT IS DOOMED TO FAILURE—THE SPANISH PROGRAMME AS TO THE MAINE—LOYAL EXHIBITIONS.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Havana, March 19, via Key West, March 20.—The Spanish inquiry into the Maine disaster has gone to pieces in seeking to establish the accident theory. This admission is privately made in Government circles. The nature of the Board's report will not be changed. The explosion will be charged to unknown causes, but the Spanish finding will be with a view of making a case to be passed on by a third party. The work of their divers has not been thorough, yet apparently they have found so little evidence on which a theory of internal explosion can be based that the Spanish Court is not willing to stand unequivocally on the theory of accident which it set out to maintain. These facts have been known for three or four days. They may account for statements from Madrid that the Maine incident will not be a cause of war between the two countries and also for hints at arbitrating the disputed question of fact. This talk is semi-official. The Spanish authorities realize the improbability of successfully controverting the case which will be presented when the report of Captain Sampson and his associates on the American Board of Inquiry is published. They have had an inkling that the evidence on which an external explosion due to foul play will be charged is meant to satisfy not simply the American people, but the judgment of experts throughout the world. How strongly this conclusion of the American Board is fortified will soon be known. The cue received from Madrid is to have a counter-case ready so that suspension of the world's judgment can be asked until diplomacy can arrange a satisfactory settlement. The evident hope of Blanco's Government is to keep the Maine incident entirely distinct from other Cuban questions. Notwithstanding the lack of confidence in their own theory of accident, it cannot be learned that the authorities are doing anything to uncover the conspirators who were responsible for blowing up the Maine.

AUTONOMY'S FORLORN HOPE.

More importance is given to the final effort of the Radical Autonomists to negotiate with Gomez and the insurgent leaders on a new basis than its certain outcome warrants. The chief interest is in the knowledge that the negotiations are, in fact, Blanco's, and that if they are entertained in any form they will be immediately clothed with a full official character. A few officials profess confidence that Gomez and the other insurgent leaders will, at least, permit the propositions to be made, and will then dictate their own terms under which Spain's flag may remain. No ground whatever exists for this delusion. Gomez has already given an indication of his answer. The insurgents will treat with Blanco's representatives only on the basis of independence. With that understanding they will agree to an armistice while the good offices of the United States are employed in arranging an indemnity and other details under which Spain might be willing to withdraw her troops and abandon the island.

"The Government is groping in a circuit," is the phrase applied to the final effort to make terms with the insurgents. It does not go fast enough to travel. Probably the best thing for all parties is to have the failure of the attempted negotiations with Gomez made known promptly and emphatically. If there were a faint prospect of success this could only come through double dealing.

THE BASIS OF ALL OFFERS.

The fifteen propositions of Giberga and Govin are still the basis of all offers made to the insurgents. Among these is included the disarming of the Volunteers. This organization holds the written assurance of General Parrado, authorized by Captain-General Blanco, that no such idea will be entertained. The Sagasta Ministry in Madrid indorsed the statement. The Volunteers are petted. They are now taking part in the regular manœuvres of the army as well as in the artillery practice. They could not be disarmed without a revolution, and the attempt will never be made. Nevertheless, the insurgents have been asked to accept a scheme of enlarged autonomy, of which the disarmament of the Volunteers is part of the programme. They will not be fooled, nor will the Volunteers be fooled. The deception was meant to be practised on the United States, in seeking to make it a party to the negotiations and in a measure responsible for their failure. That was the politics of the Palace, in Havana. It would hardly have been adopted here had it not been acceptable in Madrid.

The Autonomist Cabinet, or the Radical members of it, will not be left entirely alone to serve as scapegoats. General Salano, chief of the General Staff, while not indorsing all the articles in the programme of final concessions to the insurgents, had approved them in the main. He favored inviting Gomez to take part in the new Cuban Government that was to be formed, with the Spanish flag as about the only thing left to Spain. A few other officers of high rank, who are devoted to the monarchy, sympathize with Salano, and would join him in making the sacrifices which these concessions would demand. The mass of the army officers, however, would revolt against the propositions if there was a chance of their acceptance by the insurgents, just as they revolted in the January riots against autonomy. That these insubordinate army officers are quiet is the best evidence that the attempt to negotiate on a new basis never had sincere support. Consul-General Lee is making reports to the State Department on this matter. They are based on full and authentic information. General Lee's reports show that the United States would be powerless to persuade the insurgents to accept "amplified autonomy." Government officials here have been making anxious inquiries regarding the feeling of the Administration on this point, and also whether American public sentiment would sustain mediation of that kind. They have received unfavorable answers.

THE PROBLEM BEFORE BLANCO.

The problem which now confronts General Blanco is to conceal his military weakness, which must inevitably be exposed when the failure of the last attempt to negotiate with the insurgents is known. General Pando, next in command, is along the line of the Jucaro Moron trocha. If Gomez and Calixto Garcia were willing to treat for anything short of independence Pando's presence would be convenient. As the military commander, it is inconvenient, for he must meet the responsibility of a situation which finds thousands of insurgents in Puerto Principe Province ready to cross the trocha and take part in a march westward.

Possibly an exaggerated idea of the strength of the insurgents may be formed from this circumstance. They cannot sweep westward in large bodies to the very gates of Havana as they did in 1895. Nevertheless, they can make a demonstration which should convince the blinded people of Spain that the insurrection cannot be put down by Spanish arms. Fierce quarrels are raging among the representatives of the Government over the responsibility for the failure of the military and civil policies. It is felt that