asked, however, what he intended to do with the staff, he said:

I do not come into office with any desire to make a clean sweep, and I have no desire to do so. I shall study every man's record and test him, and then judge him on his merits alone.

Several members of the staff were so pleased with these remarks that they confided to friends that they had now little fear of removal. The idea seemed to be generally entertained among them that Mr. Gardiner would be renominated for District Attorney at the next election and triumphantly re-elected by way of vindication. Their wishes might have been father to their thoughts, however.

When Mr. Gardiner was asked if he expected to be renominated, he would only say, enigmatically: "I am in a position where I expect everything or nothing." Among politicians the idea seemed to be that Mr. Croker could find plenty of lawyers in the Wigwam who would prove just as pliant as Mr. Gardiner, and yet would not say so many dangerous things for his enemies to make use of.

GERMAN CLAIMS ON CUBA.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM.

Washington, Dec. 24.—The German Embassy has laid before the State Department the claims of a number of German subjects for damages to their interests in Cuba as a result of the Spanish-American War and the insurrection which led up to the war. This action of the German Government has raised a most important issue, and the State Department has given it the closest consideration. It has been decided, however, that the United States Government cannot accept responsibility for the claims. They are regarded as practically the same in principle as the claim of Porto Rico against Cuba for $2,500,000 on account of a war loan. Although in that case Governor Allen of Porto Rico represented the United States in preferring the claim, this Government was obliged to deny its liability or the liability of Cuba under present conditions. The answer to the German presentation will be based upon the reply to Governor Allen. It is known that other Governments besides Germany have claims aggregating a large sum, based on the Cuban insurrection and succeeding events. They will not be abandoned on account of the attitude of the United States Government, but, on the contrary, probably will be held in abeyance until Cuba becomes independent, when they will be presented directly to the Government of the island.

CHILI AND BOLIVIA AT ODDS.

OFFICIAL TEXT OF THE CIRCULAR LETTER TO CHILIAN MINISTERS ABROAD—ANSWER OF THE BOLIVIAN MINISTER AT SANTIAGO.

Washington, Dec. 24.—Another instalment of documents relative to the dispute between Chili and Bolivia has just been received and discussed in the diplomatic circles of the capital. These documents are of later date than the pamphlet "Bolivia and Chili," already commented on in a Washington dispatch to The Tribune of December 7. The new pamphlet contains the full text of the remarkable circular letter addressed to all the Chilian representatives abroad by Señor Errazuriz Urmaneta, the ex-Foreign Minister at Santiago. In that letter he tries to explain away and to apologize for the rather hard and undiplomatic language used by the Chilian Minister at La Paz, who presented a kind of ultimatum which forbade Bolivia to insist any longer upon the restoration of one of her former seaports on the Pacific as the equivalent of her final cession to Chili of the inland Bolivian territory occupied by the Chilian conquerors in the war of 1879-'83. But Señor Urmaneta maintains that if the Chilian Minister at La Paz was undiplomatic in his language he was correct in declaring that vanquished Bolivia could never expect to sign a definite treaty of peace with Chili unless she should surrender, as a basis of negotiations, her request for a seaport necessary for her communication with the outer world.

The second part of the pamphlet contains four articles published in the "Ferrocarril," a Santiago newspaper of great importance, which would not have printed them if, though opposed to Chilian pretensions, they had not been written in moderate and conciliatory language. Their authorship seems to have been an open secret, and they are attributed to a distinguished diplomatist, Señor Claudio Pinilla, the Bolivian Minister at Santiago, where he is still at his post, highly esteemed in social and official circles. He demonstrates, especially in quoting former declarations of Chilian writers and functionaries, like Señor Bulnes, an ex-Minister of Foreign Relations, that the conditions imposed upon Bolivia are unjustified de facto and de jure. After that demonstration, based upon promises made by Chili in former tentative negotiations, he reminds, in very guarded sentences, the Santiago Government that its honor and reputation before the world will suffer if too harsh conditions are imposed upon Bolivia. Señor Pinilla shows that the seizure of territory by right of conquest may be a European, but is not an American doctrine; and that Bolivia is willing to cede a portion of her inland or even seacoast possessions as an indemnity for Chilian war expenses. But he adds that his country is in absolute need of a seaport, and that "justice, reciprocal convenience and the solidarity between States compel no one to stifle a sister nation by depriving it totally of the patrimonial territory with which it came to a sovereign and independent life." The Bolivian diplomatist and writer proves with official documents that since the conferences held off the port of Arica, on board the United States vessel Lackawanna, in 1880, when Chili did not accept the arbitration of the United States, Bolivia and Peru have remained the same friends as before, and that the delays in settling finally the questions still pending cannot be attributed to their alleged contradictory claims. Señor Pinilla shows that, on the contrary, it was to the interest of Chili to defer a final settlement so long as she was enjoying the usufructs of the immensely rich districts snatched from Bolivia and Peru by force of arms, which it was solemnly agreed in the diplomatic instruments of 1883 should be returned to the two vanquished States in return for a territorial or pecuniary indemnity, which they are ready to give to Chili.

TO CELEBRATE M'KINLEY VICTORY.

The Business Men's Republican and Sound Money Association, which made such a fine impression by its parade in the Presidential campaign, proposes to celebrate the victory of November 6 with a jubilee dinner at Delmonico's on January 15. The committee which has the matter in charge, appointed by the Executive Committee, consists of E. A. Drake, chairman; George T. Wilson, secretary and treasurer; Frank Brainard, Eugene H. Conklin, Alexander Caldwell, Charles H. Sherrill, George J. Seabury and William Ray. It is expected that speakers of National reputation will address the business men. The applications for tickets indicate that there will be a large outpouring of the business men at this celebration.

The Fad

Of the modern woman is health by exercise. It's an excellent fad, provided that it is always remembered that exercise cannot cure womanly diseases. Indeed, when such diseases exist exercise is apt to aggravate the condition rather than to help it.

The first step toward establishing the general health is to establish the local womanly health. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription cures womanly diseases which undermine the general health. It establishes regularity, dries enfeebling drains, heals inflammation and ulceration and cures female weakness. When these are cured, backache, headache and nervousness are things of the past. The universal testimony of weak and sickly women, cured by "Favorite Prescription," is this: "It has made me feel like a new woman."

"My wife has used three bottles of Dr. Pierce's medicine, and I never saw such results," writes A. B. Haynes, Esq., of Aurora, Lawrence Co., Mo. "It was wonderful in its work. We had used lots of medicine, also had one of the best physicians in Aurora, but my wife got no better; we heard one pitiful groan after another, day and night. A friend handed me a copy of Dr. Pierce's book, the 'Common Sense Medical Adviser,' and after reading the testimonials of Dr. Pierce's successful treatment, and seeing that the cases described were similar to my wife's, I bought for her a bottle of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. Before she had taken all of the medicine she was up and helping to do the work. She has taken three bottles and is now about well. Has better health than she has had for years."

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets cure constipation.

ARID LAND IRRIGATION.

POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING VAST AREAS IN THE WEST.

A HALT IN SETTLEMENT DUE TO THE INCREASING DIFFICULTY OF SECURING WATER—A PROSPECT OF GOVERNMENT AID.

I.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, Dec. 24.—A halt has come in the settlement of the arid lands in the West. This is due to increasing difficulty of securing water for irrigation. The point has been reached where large capital is required for the reclamation of most of these lands and where the domain of public policy is invaded in the further appropriation and conservation of water by private interest. The situation can be briefly expressed in figures. The United States still owns 600,000,000 acres of public land topographically possible of settlement. One hundred and sixty-six million acres are forest of more or less commercial value. Sixty million acres are desert of no value under present circumstances. Three hundred and seventy-four million acres of these lands are suitable for grazing, though of such aridity that they are not available for farming purposes. The census of 1890 showed three million acres of irrigated land in the United States, and the census of 1900 will show seven million acres. Irrigated land is intensely cultivated and supports a population averaging one person to each acre. It is estimated that by the year 1925 the population of the United States will be 150,000,000. The hydrographic department of the Government states that if the present supply of water be properly conserved and regulated 100,000,000 acres now suitable only for grazing can be used as farming land and thus support an additional population of 100,000,000 people.

GREAT ENTERPRISES USUALLY FAILURES

The history of irrigation in the United States demonstrates that, whereas irrigation enterprises on a small scale have been uniformly successful, enterprises on a large scale have been almost without exception disastrous failures. Wherever it has been possible to secure water at small cost or by associated labor, settlers have crowded in, appropriated the available moisture, built their ditches and reclaimed their land with great profit to themselves. Government land bringing from $1 25 to $2 50 an acre has by these efforts been increased in a single year to a salable value of from $20 to $100 an acre, depending on transportation, market facilities and the character of the crops raised.

The opportunity for development of this land has practically disappeared with the exception of well digging, which is still possible in places like Western Kansas, where there is an enormous underflow of water close to the surface of the ground. As soon as it was realized that the opportunity for individual effort on a small scale had passed capital was attracted by the enormous returns promised in the putting of water on large areas of cheap land. Opportunities were apparently abundant. Great rivers wended their way through fertile plains, the waters of the rivers being free to all, and the land to be secured from the State or Federal Government at minimum prices. On this basis it was easy to prepare a prospectus which would show returns of several hundred per cent on the money invested in the construction of dams and canals. Promoters and speculators were not long in entering this field, and not only were large amounts of American capital sent into the arid waste for this purpose, but European investors eagerly grasped the apparently golden opportunity.

The history of these investments is one of disappointment and disaster. A few of the great canals which were constructed in this way have been the means of reclaiming a large amount of land, and a very few have returned some profit to the men who furnished the capital. The latter cases are exceptionally rare, the rule being no profit, and in most cases a direct loss of money expended, and the impossibility of securing the return of any of the original capital. English investors have been particularly unfortunate in this matter, and the wrecks of promising enterprises are now scattered from Eastern Washington to the Rio Grande until it is almost an impossibility to secure from capital a moment's consideration of an irrigation enterprise. For this reason an apparent limit has been reached in the immediate reclamation of more arid land in the West.

STATE AND GOVERNMENT AID.

For many years Congress has been asked to cede to the various States the arid lands within their borders. The purpose of this was to allow State enterprises to undertake their reclamation by the placing of bonds or some other encouragement to capital based on a guarantee of adequate returns. Direct Government aid has also been favored by many for an equal length of time, but the opposition of the humid States, with their preponderance of representation, has heretofore rendered this a hopeless contention. The idea of ceding the arid lands to the individual States apparently made considerable headway at one time. Congress received many memorials in its favor, and numerous committees have journeyed to the capital from distant points to lend the weight of their personal influence to the movement. The experience of recent years, however, has been such as to make the transfer to the States of Federal property or authority unpopular. Where States have owned large bodies of land the trust has been shamefully abused. Leases of this land in large tracts have been secured by political influence and bribery, and it has been given away to individuals or corporations without adequate return to the people. The State Governments have shown little conception of the importance of reserving to the homesteader the virgin lands of the country or of encouraging the small highly cultivated holding which increases the population and community wealth at a tremendous ratio. The advocates of the cession idea fought long and hard before acknowledging defeat, but within the last year they have given up all hope of the success of their scheme and have turned their attention to securing Federal aid in the reclamation of land within the arid States. Ten years ago such a proposition as this met with scanty attention from Congress. Less than three years ago the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture made the statement at one of the irrigation congresses that the farmers of the East would never consent to the enlargement through Government aid of the competitive agricultural area of the country.

CONGRESS LIKELY TO GIVE AID.

A change has come over the spirit of the Nation in the treatment of such matters, and there seems to be no longer any hesitation in giving serious consideration to anything which may improve the commercial facilities of the country or increase the habitable area to make room for a rapidly growing population. Encouraged by this attitude the movement for Federal improvement of arid lands is taking shape and has become a tangible influence in National legislation, and while it is possible that nothing will be done at the present short session of Congress it may be regarded as inevitable that some time in the near future a portion of the National surplus will be appropriated to start a movement which, if fully carried out, will lead to an increase of enormous proportions in the amount of land available for the people and one possessing tremendous significance in its future influence on the balance of population and a consequent readjustment of commercial conditions.

A bill is now being prepared which is regarded as the entering wedge of this great work. This bill will ask for an appropriation for the construction of one or more of the reservoirs and canals which have already been surveyed by the Hydrographic Department and selected as being the most desirable. Some of the promoters of this idea are in favor of asking at first a comparatively small amount of money, say, $1,000,000, for building a single reservoir, preferring to secure the indorsement of the principle involved rather than to alarm the economists and the politicians by demanding at the start an amount of money which would attract public attention and evoke unfriendly criticism. Others favor taking the bull by the horns and asking for at least $15,000,000 to construct a large number of these reservoirs. If such a large appropriation is asked its promoters will not expect to secure it, but will hope to secure a compromise allowing them to begin the work on a comparatively small scale, their theory being that the same amount of discussion would result over the principle involved, no matter what the amount of the appropriation asked. Some such bill enunciating the principle of Federal reclamation of arid lands will be introduced this winter, probably soon. It will be drawn by Thomas F. Walsh, of Colorado, president of the National Irrigation Association, under the advice of the Government irrigation experts. Mr. Walsh will spend the winter in this city in the interest of such legislation. He will have formidable support, for the representatives of nearly every State west of the Mississippi are interested in his success, and as far east as Chicago the commercial bodies of the Western cities dependent on the irrigated area for a large part of their trade will bring their influence to bear in support of this measure.

AWAITING ARMY LEGISLATION

RETURN OF VOLUNTEERS FROM THE PHILIPPINES POSTPONED.

Washington, Dec. 24.—As the result of a conference between the Secretary of War and Quartermaster-General Ludington it has been decided that no further action can be taken with regard to the return of the volunteers from the Philippines until Congress shall make provision for their replacement.

The War Department is considerably embarrassed by the failure of Congress to make provision before the recess for the relief of the military situation in the Philippines. Acting on representations made by General MacArthur, the Department has decided that it is absolutely necessary to maintain an army of sixty thousand men in the Philippines until the current policy of establishing municipal governments throughout the archipelago has been executed. It is said at the Department that any reduction of the military strength below that figure under existing conditions would undoubtedly prove most disastrous to the interests of the United States.

There are now about sixty-nine thousand troops, regulars and volunteers, in the Philippines, and arrangements have been made already for bringing home nine thousand of that number. No further reduction will be made until the War Department is advised fully of the purpose of Congress with regard to army legislation. When the necessary authority has been given, it is the purpose of the Department to bring home as rapidly as possible all the volunteers and regulars whose terms of enlistment expire on June 30 next, but not before it is possible to replace them man for man with recruits enlisted under the terms of the new Army bill. It therefore appears that after the nine thousand volunteers have left the Philippines, no more troops will be withdrawn from that country until they can be relieved by fresh troops recruited in the United States in accordance with legislation yet to be enacted.

It is expected that Congress will act promptly on the Army bill soon after it reassembles in January, but even in that event, it is said at the War Department, it will not be possible to get the fresh troops to the Philippines inside of two months' time.

The general homecoming movement of the mass of the volunteers therefore will have to be postponed until about the first of February. That will give the Quartermaster's Department only five months to bring home the remainder of the volunteers and the regular troops whose terms will expire at the same time, aggregating about forty thousand, before July 1. This undertaking is believed to be beyond the capacity of the transport service as at present organized and may compel the charter of additional steamships. All arrangements, however, will be held in abeyance until definite information has been received of the intention of Congress with regard to the proposed increase of the Regular Army.

Recent cable advices from General MacArthur indicate a strong desire on the part of the volunteers generally to return to the United States, and that comparatively few of them are likely to re-enlist without the most liberal inducements are offered. It is understood that General MacArthur has recommended that a bounty of $250 be allowed to each soldier in the Philippines who re-enlists for another term, and the plan is said to be favored by the officials of the War Department.

LI HUNG CHANG VERY ILL.

CANNOT RECEIVE JOINT NOTE AND MAY NOT CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS.

London, Dec. 25.—Dr. Morrison, in a dispatch to "The Times" from Pekin, dated Sunday, says:

Prince Ching alone will be able to receive the joint note to-morrow. Li Hung Chang is in a condition of great prostration, which causes grave anxiety, for, even if he recovers, it is doubtful that he will be able to undertake negotiations after the acceptance of the note.

CONGER ANNOUNCES HIS SIGNATURE.

THE MINISTER FILED A STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE ATTITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Washington, Dec. 24.—Secretary Hay has received a cable dispatch from Minister Conger, at Peking, announcing that he had signed the agreement reached by the foreign Ministers, but had done so with a written explanatory statement setting forth the exact position of his Government. The text of the statement was not forwarded by Mr. Conger, but it is understood to be based on the last instructions he received from the Department, which, while disapproving the inclusion in the agreement of some of the more severe language, accepted it as the best arrangement that could be made at this time. It is believed that the United States also, while sanctioning the provisions of the agreement relative to the maintenance of permanent lines of communication, legation guards and prohibition of the importation of arms into China, indicates clearly that constitutional reasons prevent the Executive from making any pledge to take part in the execution of these plans.

The signature of the agreement by the Ministers closes what is regarded here as the first, the most important and the most difficult phase of the negotiations, for it is not doubted that the Chinese envoys will subscribe to the agreement without amendment. Its conclusion has been marked by one of the most curious mistakes in the history of international exchange, for by a cipher error the majority of the signatories found to their amazement that they had contracted to do exactly what they did not intend, and, moreover, the error was irretrievable.

HOW DR. AND MRS. HODGE DIED.

FIRST DETAILS OF HOW THEY PERISHED AT THE HANDS OF BOXERS.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Dec. 24.—The first positive and definite details of the tragic deaths of Dr. and Mrs. Van Rensselaer Hodge, of New-York, missionaries at Pao-Ting-Fu, China, were received here to-day by Robert S. Sinclair, a brother of Mrs. Hodge. Under date of October 22 the Rev. J. W. Lowerie, writing from Pao-Ting-Fu, says:

They—the Hodges, Simcox family and Dr. Taylor—defended themselves to the last in the Simcox house, and all perished in the flames except the two Simcox children, Paul and Frances, who, nearly suffocated, ran out of the house and were decapitated by the Boxers and thrown into a well.

HIGHER WAGES FOR CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Syracuse, N. Y., Dec. 24.—As a Christmas present to its employes the Syracuse Rapid Transit Company announces that it will increase wages from 7 to 9 per cent, according to the length of service. About two hundred and fifty men are affected.

FATE OF THE SUBSIDY BILL

CHANCES STRONGLY AGAINST PASSAGE AT THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS.

SENATOR HANNA STILL HOPEFUL, BUT OPPOSITION GAINING GROUND.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, Dec. 24.—Two weeks ago The Tribune pointed out in detail the obstacles in the path of the Ship Subsidy bill. It was said then, on the most trustworthy information, that if the supporters of the bill were unable to get a vote before the holiday recess of Congress, all the probabilities would be against its passage in any form at this session, so that in the absence of a special session of the LVIIth Congress it was not likely that any Government aid to the shipping interests of the country could be extended for fully a year, or until the regular meeting of the next Congress in December, 1901. What two weeks ago appeared to be a probability can now be considered almost a certainty. Senator Hanna, the most active supporter of the bill, is still hopeful of getting favorable action on it before this Congress expires on March 4, but his hope is not shared in great degree by many of the other friends of the measure.

When it is recalled that in the first week of this session Senator Hanna told a friend that if he did not get action on the bill before Congress took its holiday recess it was not likely to be passed at this session, it cannot be well understood on what he now bases his hope of success. The opposition to the measure is quite as strong and determined now as it was when Mr. Hanna spoke despairingly of its success. Indeed, the enemies of the bill are tactically in a stronger position at present than they were at first, as will be shown further on. In the hope of mollifying the opposition, Mr. Hanna has taken pains to let it be publicly known that the supporters of the bill were willing to accept amendments which would reduce the measure nearer to the form demanded by its enemies than was originally contemplated by the promoters of the bill. Some amendments already have been offered and referred to the Committee on Commerce, of which Senator Frye is chairman, and others will be offered and similarly referred soon after the expiration of the holiday recess. It is regarded as possible that some of these amendments will be so stringent and severe that there will be a split in the Committee on Commerce, as the result of which majority and minority reports will be made. If this should happen it would be exactly to the liking of the opposition, because it would lay the groundwork for a long and bitter struggle that would be much more apt to postpone than to force action on the bill at this session.

OPPOSED BY WESTERN REPUBLICANS.

But aside from this purely speculative aspect of the situation is the virtually settled fact that a powerful coterie of Western Republican Senators, led by no less influential a person than Mr. Allison, chairman of the great Appropriations Committee, are resolved to beat the bill so long as it contains even the semblance of features that are objectionable to them. In the House there is also an influential group of Western Republicans, led by Mr. Burton, who represents Mr. Hanna's district, who are uncompromisingly opposed to the present bill. Indeed, it is by no means certain that Speaker Henderson himself, who is a lifelong friend and a fellow townsman of Senator Allison, is not numbered with the enemies of the measure.

An interesting if not significant phase of the attitude of the House is that almost without exception every Democratic member from the Eastern seaboard is committed to the support of the bill in its present form, and doubtless would vote against it if it should be amended in any material detail. Thus it is evident that the division on the bill is sectional rather than partisan or political. However it is possible that if the bill should run the gantlet in the Senate its friends could sweep aside all Republican opposition in the House through caucus action. Therefore, it is important only to analyze its prospects in the Senate.

If it were not that Senator Allison has promised the outspoken opponents of the measure to shunt the Senate off from final action at this session if they would so consume the time until the holiday recess that a vote could not be forced, the prospective condition of the legislative calendar is so unfavorable to the bill as to make its future very dark. For example, not one of the dozen or more appropriation bills has yet received the consideration of the Senate, and, in accordance with the terms of the original proposition, these bills, which always have the right of way over everything else, could be so manipulated for the remainder of the session as to prevent Mr. Hanna from getting a vote on his Shipping bill.

THE SENATE'S TIME FULLY OCCUPIED.

But at least one other necessary measure—the Army Reorganization bill—is to be put ahead of it. It is conservatively estimated that one-third of the remaining portion of the session will be devoted by the Senate to the consideration of the Army bill. If there were nothing else besides this measure and the appropriation bills to be considered, the entire time of the Senate from its reopening, on January 3, to final adjournment, on March 4, could be consumed, to the complete undoing of Mr. Hanna's bill. The fact that Senator Hanna insists that the Shipping bill will get through at this session without material modification is, it is generally conceded, the most favorable sign of its success. It is still thought that Mr. Hanna's confidence is inspired by knowledge that President McKinley has not yet been convinced by its opponents that the bill is not in line with National welfare and necessity. Senators McMillan, Spooner and Thurston are said recently to have pleaded with the President to speak the word that would put an end to the bill, but what effect their talk has had on the judgment of the President is not yet known.

WHY SENATOR HANNA IS HOPEFUL.

Another factor of great potency that is generally supposed to be now working for the bill is that the conflicting shipping interests have composed their differences and are unitedly exerting their influence for the measure. It is believed that what chiefly has brought them together was the award last week by the Navy Department of contracts for new warships aggregating about $50,000,000. It is explained that before these contracts were awarded the shipping industry of the country saw in the Subsidy bill a profit mainly to the American Line, of which Clement A. Griscom, of Philadelphia, is the directing genius, but that the letting of so much Government work in a block has encouraged the hope and quickened the energies of the general shipbuilding industries so as to harmonize interests which heretofore have been conflicting. This, of course, carries with it the influence of the coal, iron and steel interests, and against such a combination it is submitted that it will be hard for any opposition to prevail. For this reason Senator Hanna and other supporters of the Shipping bill are willing to make concessions in the matter of amendments to the original bill. These amendments, it is understood, must be confined singly to the demands of shipbuilders who directly or indirectly are interested in the recent awards of the Navy Department. The concerns which are to build $50,000,000 worth of new ships for the Navy will have to put in a considerable amount of new machinery, and this expense, it is explained, will make a wide cut into their profits from the Government contracts unless while they are working on the naval vessels they get orders for merchant ships which they can construct largely with the increased operating forces employed to work on the warships. The conditions of work on warships are such that operations necessarily are frequently suspended for a considerable time. During these suspensions work can be done on private contracts, and thus waste is reduced to the minimum.

Of course, it is the certainty that a general revival in the shipping trade would follow the passage of the Subsidy bill, creating an immediate demand for more American made ships, upon which reliance is placed for a share in the benefits of that measure by shipbuilders and owners who, as explained, have heretofore opposed the Hanna bill because they perceived that in its original terms too much favor, either by design or accident, was extended to the American Line.

CROKER'S CLUB SUFFERS.

MOVEMENT IN THE MANHATTAN TO OVERTHROW TAMMANY RULE IN THE CITY.

A movement among independent Democrats of the city to form a new Democratic organization opposed to Tammany Hall is having an effect to decrease the membership and influence of the Democratic Club and to increase the importance of the Manhattan Club as a Democratic headquarters. The absence of Richard Croker from the country, the growing sentiment against Tammany organization rule and the increasing belief that the organized opposition to Tammany Hall will prove successful in the municipal campaign next fall are said to be causes of the decline of interest in the Democratic Club.

Over one hundred members of the Democratic Club have been dropped from the rolls for non-payment of dues recently. They are men who were induced to join the club early in 1898 in the expectation that their membership in the club would be helpful to them in the scramble for appointment to office. They have been disappointed, and as the present Tammany administration is drawing to its close they have been unwilling to continue dues in the club and have allowed their names to be dropped. They joined the club when Mr. Croker gave the word that all who expected favors from the Tammany administration should become members. Now that Mr. Croker has left the country for an indefinite time and there is no plunder in sight before another administration is elected, the disappointed officeseekers are leaving the club without settling their accounts.

Some of the deserters from the Democratic Club are already members of the Manhattan Club, and it is expected that there will be a large increase in the membership of the Manhattan when the campaign of next year is fairly under way. Ten members of the Manhattan Club have formed a plan to organize a new Democratic organization in New-York County that will aid in the removal of Mr. Croker's dictatorship and the election of a reform administration for the city next fall. It is reported that the ten men have engaged to find ninety other Democrats to help them form a commitee of one hundred that shall take charge of the work of party reorganization. Each member of the committee, it is said, will put up $1,000 to help defray organization expenses. The committee will make the Manhattan Club its headquarters, and its work will be expected to add greatly to the importance and membership of that club.

ENORMOUS EXCISE REVENUE.

RAINES LAW CAUSES A DECREASE IN ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS.

Albany, Dec. 24.—Henry B. Lyman, State Commissioner of Excise, to-day issued a statement concerning the operation of the State excise law during the last year. He states that $61,289,275 has been collected in excise taxes since the Raines law went into operation, and in this connection says:

In addition to the enormous revenue collected the statistics show a marked decrease in arrests for drunkenness within the State, being for the last year nine to the 1,000 population, instead of twelve to the 1,000 population, as under the last year of the old law. The decrease of drunkenness appears to have been in about the same proportion as the decrease in the places licensed to sell, so that there is an improvement from the moral standpoint as well as from the consideration of revenue derived.

The total receipts in the last year under the old law were $3,172,376. The receipts each year under the new law were: First year, $11,245,374; second year, $12,372,340; third year, $12,633,981; fourth year, $12,689,056; from May 1 to November 30, 1900, inclusive, $12,351,522.

Notwithstanding the large increase in revenue under the liquor tax law the number of places where liquors were sold have been decreased from 29,427 to 27,130, a decrease of 6,307.

More than half of the criminal cases prosecuted by district attorneys were upon evidence secured by the State special agent force.

During the year litigation in 185 civil actions was completed, including 43 bond actions, in which there were recoveries of $30,572, and 37 revocation proceedings, the balance being rebate proceedings, penalty actions, enumeration cases, certiorari proceedings, mandamus proceedings, injunction and local option cases, in which the State Commissioner recovered in penalties and costs $3,459, making a total recovered for penalties and costs for the year of $34,031.

In conclusion the statement says:

The successful administration of the law has required the earnest and united efforts of those connected with the conduct of the Department. At first the most mischievous doctrine that the law was only to be enforced by the officials of the Excise Department was persistently promulgated. This doctrine was willingly indorsed and adopted by officials who were disinclined to do their duty under this or any other excise law.

In 1898, before the law was fairly in operation, its repeal was made a party issue, but the party making its repeal an issue was seriously disappointed at the result, and since that time have carefully refrained from making an attack on the law in its political campaigns. This indicates that public opinion sustains the law and its administration.

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TRIBUNE POPULAR BALLOT.

For Mayor of New-York.

Please cut out the ballot and forward it to THE TRIBUNE, naming both your first and second choice for the nomination for Mayor of New-York. Vote for anybody whom you may think fit and worthy. It makes no difference what his politics may be. To add interest to the plan, it is desired that each person shall select both a first and second choice. The names and addresses of voters are asked as a guarantee of good faith and to insure value for the result of the voting as a true expression of public opinion, but the names will not be published and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Readers are urged to indicate second choice as well as first. By doing this the voters may, perhaps, contribute toward an important result. It might appear, for instance, that some "second choice" candidate had a majority of all the votes, whereas the best that any "first choice" man could do would be to get a plurality, which would be a minority of all the votes cast.

Announcement of the present state of the balloting will be made to-morrow.

Address all ballots and nominations to

MAYORALTY CAMPAIGN, Tribune Office, New-York.

KILLED A WOMAN FOR A WITCH.

AN ATROCIOUS MURDER FOR WHICH TWO FILIPINOS ARE SENTENCED TO TWENTY YEARS' HARD LABOR.

Washington, Dec. 24.—News has been received at the War Department of a peculiarly atrocious murder in the Philippines, the circumstances of which were developed at the trial of six natives before a military commission at Capiz, Panay. It appeared from the testimony that two of the prisoners were responsible for the death of the wife of one of their neighbors. With seven or eight other men they went to the house of a native named Victor Pere and forcibly took him and his wife to the Panay River, where they bound their hands behind them and told them that their last day had come. The woman was struck with a bolo and her body was thrown into the river. Her husband witnessed the murder, and, expecting similar treatment, sprang into the river, and, although his arms were pinioned, managed to reach the opposite shore. According to the witnesses the motive for the crime was a superstitious belief that the murdered woman was a witch, possessed of powers whereby she had in some mysterious way brought about the death of a neighbor's child. The two men were sentenced to be hanged, but General MacArthur commuted sentence in each case to confinement at hard labor for twenty years, out of consideration for the exceedingly low order of intelligence and blind superstition of the accused men.

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