The Sun.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1896.

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The United States as a Base of Supplies for the Cuban Patriots.

The vague notion entertained in Spain that our Government has not used due diligence to enforce its neutrality laws will not stand the test of criticism.

The first and fundamental error may be in assuming that many voyages from our ports to Cuba are forbidden by domestic statutes or international law, which are really violations of neither. Gen. TRACY has just emphasized this error of conception in his argument for the defence in the Laurada case. He declared that sellers of arms and ammunition in this city might openly advertise them for shipment to Cuba, and thereby commit no offence. Even as to the shipment of men intending to fight in the patriot cause, he insisted that scores of persons might go to Cuba in the same ship, if unarmed, with the intention of enlisting after they got there, and yet not constitute a perfected military enterprise in the eye of the law. Above all, the masterly charge of Judge ADDISON BROWN in this case declares that "the essential features of military expeditions are the concerted action of bodies of men, and the fact of their being armed with weapons and under command." With those elements wanting, the mere presence of an unusual number of passengers, who are bound to Cuba to help the patriots, or the carriage of arms to the latter as part of the vessel's cargo, is not unlawful. And this explains why some cases which Spain may fancy to be examples of the miscarriage of justice, before American juries, are really vindications of the law, and are not offences against the United States. If our country is used by Cuban sympathizers as a base of supplies, that in itself may not be a just cause of complaint.

Spanish representatives are prone to bring up the Alabama case as a parallel to the conduct of our authorities regarding Cuba. But the two have nothing in common. The Alabama was a ship built and armed to serve as a war vessel and to prey on commerce. When was such a vessel ever allowed to escape from our ports? It would be hard to reckon how many ships carried arms, ammunition, and men to the South from the British ports, running the blockade; but we never called England to account for that. The stopping of these vessels was our business, not hers. So long as military expeditions of arms and organized men, or ships fitted out and armed as war vessels, were not allowed to leave her ports, we could not object to the ordinary trade in firearms, or to the carrying of passengers who sought to run the blockade, provided they had not already enlisted and were not under orders.

If such instances of lawful shipments of men and munitions are subtracted, how many unlawful expeditions remain? How many are there which have not been made the subject of careful inquiry, and perhaps of actual trial of the accused, with due respect to the maxim that innocence is presumed until guilt is proved? And even of those few, the offences in the case of some may have been against our own port regulations rather than against international law.

This brings us to one more point, namely, the contrast between what Spain thinks due diligence required of us in preventing unlawful expeditions from setting out from our shores, and what she considers proper activity and skill on her part in preventing them from landing. She has every port in Cuba under her control; she has everything at stake in patrolling its coasts; she has put her navy upon this task, and has ordered dozens of new vessels for it. Yet how many expeditions did she ever stop? A Competitor case is a most rare occurrence.

We have thus far looked at this question in the light of the current Laurada case, and of the fact that a report about 300 pages long has been prepared for the Spanish Legation, on the United States as a base of supplies for insurgent war material in Cuba. In that report the Alabama case, the Itata case, the Wiborg case, and the Commodore case are dwelt upon; and the surmise is created that a big bill of damages is to be handed in to the United States. We have suggested some reasons why such a bill would be founded on fallacies.

But practically we are looking for a different and shorter solution of the whole question. If the patriot arms triumph, if Cuba is freed, her independence will be recognized by Spain on terms to be arranged with her; and therewith all grievances and claims upon the United States on her account will vanish into air.

As to Gen. Maximo Gomez.

How can we explain the inactivity and quietude of Gen. MAXIMO GOMEZ, the Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban revolution, all through the past half year? We have had hardly any news about him since May last. We have not heard where his army, which must be a good-sized one, was located, if it has had any fixed location, or of its movements, if it has made any, or of its Commander's plans, which are doubtless the best that his mind can devise.

We may be pretty sure that he has not fought any important battle, that he has not suffered any defeat, gained any victory, been driven from any field, or captured any Spanish stronghold. Had there been any incident of the kind, we would certainly have got a report of it. All that the friends and foes of General-in-Chief GOMEZ know about him is that he has been out of sight for many months, during a part of which time the condition of affairs in Cuba has been such as would seem to have called for his services.

His quietude for so long a period becomes all the more inexplicable when we think of his ceaseless and prodigious activity during the first fifteen months of the war. Hardly ever a day passed in which we did not receive news of his exploits, often from the Spaniards. As in the case of one of our Generals during the war for the Union, his headquarters were "in the saddle." All the time we heard of his fighting the forces of the enemy, driving him from one province or another, capturing the enemy's ports, frightening his garrisons, taking him by surprise, destroying his supplies, or ravaging the regions from which he derived his revenues. He was the heart and soul of the revolution, the great leader in the war for Cuban freedom, a heroic figure, a highly endowed soldier, a master of strategy, a veteran of large experience, a man who commanded the devotion of the brave army of Cuban emancipation. It was with reason that many a time we spoke of his character and his deeds in the language of unstinted praise.

But where is MAXIMO GOMEZ, the leader, in these times of trial for Cuba, when WEYLER is in the field at the head of the most powerful army that has ever taken the field in Cuba, when the revolution is assailed in a way which Spain believes will be decisive, and when ANTONIO MACEO, encamped among the hills of western Cuba, is striving to hold his ground against the concentrated forces of the enemy? The question must remain unanswered; but we may say that we have as much faith as ever we had in MAXIMO GOMEZ. We believe that he has formed his plans, and that he will carry them into execution with all the energy of his character, so soon as the promise of success shall make it desirable that he should do so.

Most surely, he is somewhere in eastern Cuba, and we suppose that his army there, which is the chief army of the revolution, is at least four or five times the size of that of MACEO, in the west. We have had successive rumors within a month that he was in the province of Puerto Principe, that he had advanced into the province of Santa Clara, and that he was steadily but cautiously pursuing his way toward the western region in which WEYLER has begun to carry on operations. We know that parties of skirmishers from the east, and sometimes large parties of them, have recently rendered services in the province of Matanzas and in the province of Havana, which have prevented WEYLER from carrying out his designs against MACEO, and compelled him to keep strong bodies of his troops in those provinces. By these and other manœuvres in the direction of the enemy's capital, we are led to guess that Gen. GOMEZ may be about to deliver a blow, the result of which will not be known until it has been delivered. We hardly think he will leave MACEO to fight alone, or that he will hold his army in a state of inactivity while the battle rages among the hills that are not far off. He may make a diversion in the interest of MACEO; he may sweep across the trocha, as once before he swept; he may force WEYLER to withdraw his army for the defence of Havana; he may strike the enemy in some way or some place not thought of, as he has often struck him before. But it were useless to make conjectures as to the designs of Gen. GOMEZ, at this critical period for Cuba and for Spain.

We have not a doubt that GOMEZ will pursue the course which he regards as the most promising for the revolution. We believe that, during the long period of his apparent inactivity, in most of which campaigning was impossible, he has been constantly preparing for the approach of the times which are now at hand.

How Gordon Would Have Solved the Turkish Problem.

The Armenian question is discussed in all the London reviews for November, but the most interesting feature of the discussion is a letter published in the *Nineteenth Century*, which was addressed in 1881 by Gen. GORDON, the hero of Khartoum, to Sir EDMUND DU CANE. Curiously enough, his proposal coincides with that submitted to the same periodical in an article printed in French by DIRAN KELEKIAN, a representative of those subjects of the Sultan who believe the Turkish empire capable of being reformed from within.

What Gen. GORDON advised was that the British Government should unceasingly try, in conjunction, of course, with other European powers, to get the Midhat Constitution reëstablished. The Chamber of Deputies, provided by the Constitution framed by MIDHAT Pasha, would, in his opinion, prevent any great catastrophe, and would so coerce the successor of ABDUL HAMID, who would be expected to swear to maintain it, as to offer the country a promise of regeneration. To the objection that the Turkish peoples are not fit for representative institutions, GORDON answered that these have succeeded fairly well in Roumania, Servia, and Bulgaria, although in those countries also they were innovations. "If," he says, "the peoples never have a chance, they will never be able to show what they can do. Had we Englishmen waited until our monarchs or our lords had given us representative assemblies, we should be without them to this day." His experience in Mohammedan countries had convinced GORDON that the only way of dealing with misgovernment in Turkey was to call on the Turkish peoples to carry out the desired reforms, both legislative and administrative, through their elected representatives.

Substantially, the same conclusion is arrived at, as we have said, by DIRAN KELEKIAN, after a careful examination of the causes and possible remedies of the present crisis in the Ottoman Empire. A Sultan may reign, but he must not govern; there is nothing to be hoped for, so long as he shall retain the power of meddling with the affairs of State. That is the fundamental principle of the solution to be adopted. To that end, for the existing autocratic system should be substituted representative institutions, which should have for their basis a Constitution framed upon the principle of decentralization, the only principle which can satisfy the different elements composing the population of the Ottoman Empire. DIRAN KELEKIAN would take as a model the Constitution of the Austro-Hungarian empire, which gives to each nationality its separate Diet and a distinct local Government, while permitting each to take part, through delegates, in deliberations concerning the collective interests of the whole monarchy. Even if, however, a Constitution of the Austrian type were adopted in Turkey, it is the writer's opinion that the incessant supervision of the European powers would be needed for several years to thwart the manœuvres of the sovereign, who unquestionably would try to abolish the rights of his subjects, as he did when he suspended indefinitely the Midhat Constitution.

How would it be possible to obtain the assent of ABDUL HAMID to the reëstablishment of representative institutions? It is DIRAN KELEKIAN'S belief that nothing would be easier than to gain his consent, provided the European powers could once arrive at a sincere agreement. If, he says, the Ambassadors of the six great powers, combining loyally, would go to the palace of Yildiz and present to the Sultan the peremptory mandate of Europe, backed by the threat of an immediate collective rupture, everything required would be accepted in ten minutes. On the other hand, so long as any one of the great powers shall intrigue against the rest, either openly or privily, or shall merely maintain an attitude of reserve, the Sultan will agree to nothing. Evidently DIRAN KELEKIAN concurs with Lord SALISBURY rather than with Mr. GLADSTONE, for he considers a general concert of the powers an indispensable condition of effective intervention in Ottoman affairs. Such a concert could be brought about if Russia and England would act together, for their joint wishes would not be opposed by any of the other four powers. Since the Czar's visit to Queen VICTORIA a hope has been expressed that he may have become more favorable to such coöperation, but much will depend on the view taken of the Turkish question by the new Russian Chancellor. If he is resolved to carry out the deep-laid plans of his predecessor, Prince LOBANOF, he will advise his master to refuse to combine with England even for the purpose of rescuing the remnant of the Armenians from destruction. It was LOBANOF'S desire not to reform Turkey, but to let the process of disintegration and collapse go on amid the execrations of Christendom until she fell an easy prey into the hands of Russia. Should some of the powers, meanwhile, try to impose reforms on Turkey by force, it was LOBANOF'S intention that the Czar should offer to protect the Sultan and thus make of him a vassal. That is to say, he meant to revert to the programme embodied in the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi made in 1834. Had England permitted that treaty to be carried out the Ottoman Sultan would have long since become as completely the vassal of the Czar as is now the Ameer of Bokhara.

The Period of Fifty Years.

The statement from Caracas that Venezuela assents to the fifty-year clause of the OLNEY-PAUNCEFOTE protocol, while unofficial, is yet wholly credible.

It is true that the Schomburgk line was drawn fifty-five years ago, in 1841; but it did not result in the settling of the region which it arrogantly claimed, and in fact England soon afterward pulled up the posts which marked it. There were no new settlements of consequence for years thereafter, nor until much later than the year 1846, which would be the starting point under the pending agreement.

The real colonization of which Venezuela complains, and which caused her to break off diplomatic relations with England, began about the year 1884. No doubt there were oases before that time of Englishmen going into Venezuela for mining, railroad, and other enterprises, and residing there, just as Germans and Americans went there. But it was not until about a dozen years ago that magistrates, armed policemen, and other functionaries were sent out from British Guiana to occupy various points in the disputed tract, with the view of attempting to hold it.

Thus the encroachments of which Venezuela has complained in the diplomatic correspondence are seen to date many years after the half-century mark agreed upon for prescriptive title. But presumably not until the exact wording of the agreement is made known shall we hear officially of her attitude toward it.

Split Squarely in Two.

New Hampshire, unlike its western neighbor Vermont and its eastern neighbor Maine, has usually been a closely contested State, and the majority for the successful party has rarely been large. A New Hampshire Democrat was in office as President when the Republican party was established, and since that time the State has been carried by the Democrats several times.

In the State election of 1886 the Republican plurality on the Governorship was less than 500, in that of 1890 it was less than 100, and in the Presidential election of 1892 the vote stood thus: Republican, 45,658; Democratic, 42,081, and Prohibition, 1,297. There has been a considerable emigration of French-Canadians into New Hampshire of late years and a corresponding decrease in the native population, through emigration from New Hampshire to other States, New Hampshire men being found throughout the country in large numbers, in the States of the West particularly. By the census of 1870 the foreign-born population was 29,000, in a total population of 318,000. The present population is 376,000, but the foreign-born population has increased from 29,000 to 72,000, and of this 72,000, 46,000 are natives of Canada, mostly French Canadians. This change has been favorable to the Republican party and has turned it from a closely contested State into one in which the Republican majority is small, as shown by the vote of the last preceding Presidential election.

The official returns of the late Presidential election in New Hampshire have been declared by the Governor and Council at Concord, and they make a most creditable showing for the Democrats of the Granite State who refuse to be drawn away from their former allegiance to the traditional principles of Democracy by the Chicago plotters and Populists. Indeed, it may be doubted whether the Democrats of any State stood out more steadfastly than their brethren in New Hampshire against Populism and Repudiation.

In the Presidential election of 1892 there were 42,000 votes cast in New Hampshire for the Democratic electors. In the recent election there were 21,000 votes, just one-half, cast for the BRYAN and SEWALL electors, or to be more exact, 21,271. The Democratic vote in New Hampshire, under the bane of Populism, fell off one-half in four years. As many Democrats in New Hampshire refused to vote for BRYAN as voted for him.

What became of the 21,000 Democrats who refused to give their support to BRYAN? The figures tell their own tale. A majority, 12,000 of them, voted for Mr. MCKINLEY. The Republican vote, which was 45,000 four years ago, was 57,000 this year, a gain of 12,000. On the Governorship it was 9,000 less. As many as 3,420 Democrats voted for PALMER and BUCKNER, and 6,000 abstained from voting, the total vote of the State being 6,000 less than it was four years ago.

There never was, and never could be, any doubt of the question where New Hampshire would stand on the issue of honest money against Repudiation. But in no other State, so far as present figures show, was the revolt of intelligent and patriotic Democrats against Repudiation so clear and emphatic. Well done, Democrats of New Hampshire!

Sheehan Now Issues a Reprieve.

Early in October Mr. JOHN C. SHEEHAN promulgated an edict decreeing the everlasting banishment from Tammany Hall of all Democrats who should refuse to support BRYAN. This sentence was pronounced by SHEEHAN in an interview published in this town, and was repeated by him in a letter to a Democrat in Ohio who had written to ask if such things could be.

SHEEHAN described the honest-money Democrats as "a crowd of men calling themselves Democrats, who are using the name to defeat our candidates."

He added, in language pitiless as a blast from the Arctic zone: "Any man who claims allegiance to Tammany Hall, and does not do his best to elect BRYAN and SEWALL, will have no standing in the organization. Every leader of every district will mark the traitors. *Never, now, or hereafter*, will any traitor be recognized in Tammany Hall."

That was SHEEHAN. It was SHEEHAN himself who spoke.

We observe that on Thursday evening Mr. JOHN C. SHEEHAN, the utterer of the awful sentence above recorded, reversed the irreversible and put a time limit on eternity. His "never, now or hereafter," is now interpreted by the mighty SHEEHAN as meaning six weeks, or eight weeks at the longest. We quote again the words of SHEEHAN:

"Many of our friends who still have the welfare of this organization at heart, have for reasons satisfactory to themselves seen fit to oppose the position taken by the organization during the late campaign. Their right to do so cannot be questioned. While we believe that we stood for Democratic principles and for party loyalty and regularity, we must grant to them the same rights as we claim for ourselves. Democrats by association and training, and Democrats by conviction, I believe that in the future they will be found working for the success of this grand old organization."

Consider what a change in the attitude of the august SHEEHAN. Six weeks ago it was, "A crowd of men calling themselves Democrats, who are using the name to defeat our candidates." Now it is, "Our friends who for reasons satisfactory to themselves saw fit to oppose the position taken by the organization." Six weeks ago it was, "These traitors." Now it is, "Their right to do so cannot be questioned; we must grant to them the same right as we claim for ourselves." Six weeks ago it was, "Never, now or hereafter, will you be recognized in Tammany Hall." Now it is, "Come right back and work for the success of this grand old organization."

Surely, this is one of the most merciful edicts ever credited to any despot, antique or modern.

Let the Cut Be with Honor.

The Knights of Labor, led by their ridiculous chief, SOVEREIGN, have reaffirmed their allegiance to free silver at 16 to 1.

Now we desire to state three well-known facts before we address the general body of working people with a few words of advice or entreaty: First, The silver dollar which the Knights of Labor desire to have issued without restriction, is worth in actual value fifty cents. Secondly, The records of history prove the complete futility of a Government's effort to give its coins any fictitious or imaginary value; a coin is worth as money what it is worth as bullion. Thirdly, On every occasion of debasement, and hence inflation of the currency, such as free silver coinage would be, the price of labor, that is wages, has been the last to rise in response. Free silver coinage would cut wages in two.

While workingmen have been incited to favor free silver out of a thirst to strike at capital with any weapon, regardless of themselves, the mass of people behind the free silver cause have had as a single and clear-cut aim, the lower wage-scale accompanying it, and bound up in it. That's what the free silver land owners, the agrarians all over the world, are after; capitalists who have seen the value of their products falling, while the value of labor was rising steadily. Manufacturers who happen to be found in the silver movement have the same purpose. For example, a great carpet maker in England, a noted bimetallist, Sir HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON, has warned his fellow citizens that the adoption of the silver standard is the only possible means of meeting the ever-growing competition of the East, where wages are little better than slaves' wages, or nothing but board and lodging. A more familiar friend of our free silver agitation, also an Englishman, Mr. MORETON FREWEN, in the November number of the *National Review*, quotes as an argument for his side a remark made to him by a Shanghai merchant that "the election of Mr. BRYAN would bring disaster to those of us who have been investing fortunes in the newly erected mills and factories of China and Japan." How else could it enable our artisans to compete with their rivals in China and Japan, except by lowering wages here down to the Oriental level? The business boom promised by the Bryanites was the boom that any fool could see would follow a proclamation by the united wage earners of America that they would work for just half of what they are asking now. That would cheapen and stimulate production with a rush. Reduced wages is the meaning, if not the wording, of the appeal for free silver.

This being the case, we earnestly entreat the laboring men, if they are bent on reducing their wages, to do it directly and openly, and not by a method which, like the free coinage of silver, would destroy forever the honor of the country. The United States owes money, and so do thousands of private citizens in it, and to say that they can settle with fifty cents on a dollar, the practical effect of free silver coinage, would be gigantic and indelible fraud. In bringing about such momentous domestic changes, let us be honest among ourselves, and don't let us stain the Stars and Stripes.

Mr. W. K. VANDERBILT can probably get anything he wants with the Republican Administration. He has credit on Mr. HANNA'S books for $150,000 worth of "influence."—*Atlanta Constitution.*

What's the use of lying? Southern cheating in the count of votes at the election was easier and far more effectual than were all the lies of the Atlanta paper during the campaign. Mr. CORNELIUS N. BLISS, who kept "Mr. HANNA'S books," denies that Mr. VANDERBILT made any such contribution.

The Patrons of Husbandry have done a queer thing in asking Major MCKINLEY to appoint as Secretary of Agriculture "a man actually engaged in agricultural pursuits." What has that officer to do with agricultural pursuits? It is his duty to sit in a large office armchair and read the bulletins issued by the Bureau of Ornithology and Mammalogy; and very hard work it must be, too. A practical farmer could never stand so much and so fatiguing indoor labors. Hour after hour the Secretary must count woodpeckers and crows, or listen to full accounts of the diet of each, accompanied with a detailed catalogue of the contents of their stomachs. Very much more of a job than manufacturing a scarecrow or crying "Shoo!" to a flock of trespassing crows. Then the amount of Latin polysyllables which drones through the Secretary's office is appalling. The Hon. JULIUS STERLING MORTON'S propensity for writing letters to the public is largely due to his desire to get a little practice in the rudiments of English. Latin, prairie dog Latin, is the official language of the Department of Agriculture. Latin is thought by the philosophers of that concern to be very beneficial to the crops, but probably only a few men actually engaged in agricultural pursuits make much use of it.

Then there is Dr. CLINTON HART MERRIAM, chief of the division of Ornithology and Mammalogy, who knows more pocket gophers than any other man of science in the world. Whenever the business of analyzing the hoardings of birds' stomachs is light, he is sure to caper into the Secretary's office with an expression of rapture and a new kind of pocket gopher. The Secretary has to authorize the publication of a new bulletin forthwith. Then chemists and bug-hunters and rain-coaxers and grasshopper charmers and mildew-exterminators and moth-slayers and cyclone-stoppers and pig-protectors and 17,519 other kinds of friends of agriculture swarm about the Secretary. If he knew the first thing about agriculture, he would be ruined. Let him be taken from any other trade or profession under heaven, but a farmer he should not be. What has the Department of Agriculture to do with farming? It is an institution for the cultivation of bugs, woodpeckers' stomachs, pocket gophers, and bulletins.

Does THE SUN ask its readers to believe that in its opinion the Southern and Western Democrats deliberately and of design adopted free coinage, free riot, repudiation, and the overthrow of the Supreme Court, not because they favored these things, but merely as a part of their tactical apparatus for "diverting attention" from Clevelandism in order that they might win the fight in spite of the odious record of the Administration?—*New York Times.*

That is exactly what THE SUN tells everybody concerning the men who got control of the Democratic machine. The free-silver movement owed its impetus to the popular and Democratic revolt against Clevelandism. It was due to hatred of Clevelandism rather than love of silver; and the political tacticians artfully used this extensive and well-nigh universal feeling among the Democrats of the South and West to get control of the Democratic organization. Having obtained the control, they proceeded to start the free-silver issue and stir up the public mind in regard to it, for the purpose of relieving the Democratic party from the necessity of defending the indefensible Clevelandism. They made an adroit move, precipitated a new issue, unloaded Clevelandism; and unquestionably they won far more popular and electoral votes than they could have done if they had undertaken the hopeless task of trying to apologize for an Administration which had brought continuous suffering to the country and greatly increased the bonded debt. They failed with free silver; but with Clevelandism they would have been utterly crushed. A large part of the leaders in the movement really believe no more in the silver humbug than do the *Times* and THE SUN. They took a desperate chance, for the Democratic party was in desperate straits.

My position is most painful—THOMAS EVERGREEN WATSON.

O, THOMAS, THOMAS, wherefore art thou THOMAS? Your position is the most comfortable advantageous and conspicuous you ever occupied, and you are happier in it than a squirrel under a nut tree. Your hat is off because you are using it as a speaking trumpet. Your bright bronze hair blows in poetic turbulence about your alert and spreading ears. There is a cheery twinkle and no cranklike stare in your eyes, TOM. You are enjoying yourself thoroughly, and well you know it. Raise your voice, if so you please, and contract your ADAM'S apple, and put the semblance of indignation into the veins of your forehead. Stamp the earth with your impetuous brogans, and make the air hiss with your gestures. It's all in the part. Will you last four years, TOM, or will somebody with a still more comic "act" and feet more agile in the clog rise up and take your place, TOM? At any rate, you are a present blessing, and your town of Thomson ought to drop the h in honor of its most entertaining citizen.

The Hon. ANNA L. DIGGS, the greatest living Populist stateswoman of Kansas save one, has applied to the Hon. BLOWHLOOD LEEDY, lately elected Governor, for the place on the State Board of Charities lately held by the Hon. MARY ELIZABETH LEASE. If LEEDY is wise—but everybody knows that LEEDY is one of the most foolish critters in Christendom—LEEDY, then, will probably appoint Mrs. DIGGS, who is a stateswoman of much force of opinion and vocabulary, but not loved like a sister by the leading stateswoman. The Hon. MARY ELIZABETH LEASE has before this pursued a Populist Governor of Kansas with fire and sword. She will not spare LEEDY, if he offends. The sight of a ferocious Populist Governor like LEEDY fleeing for his life before the leading stateswoman is likely to be photographed upon the retina of the world in a few weeks. LEEDY talks red, but fun will be had with him.

If the monuments and busts in Westminster Abbey could be endowed with life they could not form as imposing an assemblage of intellect as was seen in Jefferson City, Mo., last Tuesday. The Hon. GEORGE GRAHAM VEST, the Hon. FRANCIS MARION COCKRELL, and Governor WILLIAM JABBERWOCK STONE met and conversed. A report of that Convention would make the world willing to give in exchange all the books in all libraries. The Conference was such a parliament of mind as was never known before and never will be known again. Even JONES, FAULKNER, and the inimitable and immortal DIFFENDERFER, in solemn session, would be no more, compared with the Jefferson City Convention, than a wart to OSSA. Where are the painters and the sculptors? If the words spoken must be lost, at least the characters in the momentous consultation should be preserved in oil and marble and bronze and petrified butter for the admiration of mankind. Where is GRUBE SINKENZOOPER, the Bard of the Ozarks? His lyre must swell itself tumultuously in honor of this noblest of themes.

A grave military and æsthetic responsibility rests upon and perplexes the Hon. ROGER WOLCOTT, acting Governor and soon to be Governor of Massachusetts. He has to select his staff, to choose from the unnumbered Colonels of Massachusetts the flower and quintessence of Colonels, the very Colonels of Colonels, the elect and hallowed shapes which shall be stiff with gold and illuminate with buttons during his administration. There are no staffs like the staff of a Governor of Massachusetts. And though there were, as there are, more Colonels in the United States than there were soldiers in the civil war, there are no Colonels like that Governor's Colonels. Other Colonels may be terrible; his are simply and compoundly sweet. Others may bristle like the horsehair plumes of war; his are as the gentle burnished iris of the dove is. They are less active as warriors than as missionaries of the beautiful. They frighten the horses and fascinate the ladies in a hundred villages. They make college commencements a picture and cattle shows a pageant. They are a golden dream. In the silent midnight watches the acting Governor paces the floor, and wrinkles of anxiety begin to show on his handsome features. Who shall his Colonels be?

How Do They Look on Them?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Your article on the new philanthropic scheme of the University Settlement reminds one of the remarks of a cultivated English enthusiast who had "settled" in the Whitechapel district of London to do good to the people by precept and example.

He said that the denizens of the region came to have a kindly feeling for him, but that obviously it sprang chiefly from pity. "They looked upon me," he said, "as an idiot." If the people about our New York University Settlement should express their opinion of those who make it up, would it not be like that in the Whitechapel district? If they said what they really think, might we not find that they regard those good men as simple cranks and fools? COMMON SENSE.

NEW YORK, Nov. 21.

Self-Protection in Boston.

From the Boston Journal.

A man of genteel breeding and intellectual force told us the other day that he wears sewed to his undershirt a card with this inscription: "My appendix has been cut out." And he gave this reason for his action: "You see, these are the palmy knifing days of the surgeon. If a man falls in a fit or faints, or is disguised mentally by a drug, and is carried consequently to a hospital, the surgeon operates on him for appendicitis without delay."

Only the Whites for Repudiation.

From the Alexandria (Va.) Gazette.

The States that formed the Southern Confederacy went for Mr. Bryan solidly, and that, too, though the large illiterate negro vote in all of them was cast solidly for his successful competitor.

Harper's Magazine for December takes on a Christmas character, with a new cover by Howard Pyle, and a Christmas frontispiece, a Christmas carol, and an account of an English miracle play on the subject of the nativity. Mr. Pyle contributes a story, with its illustrations; Mr. Bigelow affords the second part of his "White Man's Africa;" there are five short stories; the third part of Du Maurier's "The Martian," and an interesting article on "Electricity Direct from Coal," by Dr. W. W. Jaques. It is a notable number.

NOTES OF LEGAL EVENTS.

The decision of the California irrigation cases by the Supreme Court of the United States on Monday involved interests of immense importance to the Pacific coast. Curiously enough, the decisions of the State Courts in California in respect to the irrigation laws were upheld, while those of the Federal Courts there were reversed. The principal statute, known as the Wright act, provides for the creation of irrigation districts upon the application of a majority of the owners of lands susceptible of a uniform mode of irrigation from a common source. An election is held to determine whether a proposed irrigation district shall be organized, and at least two-thirds of the votes cast must be in favor of the project in order to carry it through. Upon the completion of the organization of a district, its board of directors is authorized to construct the necessary irrigation works and to acquire land for the purpose of such construction, which is declared to be a public use. The Supreme Court of California pronounced this legislation constitutional. Judge Erskine M. Ross, however, of the United States Circuit Court for the Ninth Circuit, decided last year that it was in conflict with the Federal Constitution, because it assumed to authorize the taking of private property in order to furnish water to the landowners of the district only and not to the general public on equal terms. This, he said, was not such a public purpose as would justify the exercise of the power of eminent domain. In rejecting his view and adopting that of the California State tribunals, the Supreme Court holds that the existence of millions of acres of arid lands in that State makes their irrigation a public use, while in a State where the conditions were different, the legislation in question might not be valid.

The opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States in the California irrigation cases was written by Mr. Justice Peckham. He made an innovation in the practice of the court by merely announcing the conclusions reached instead of reading the whole opinion. Much time would be saved if his associates would adopt the same course. Days are wasted in reading decisions aloud in the hearing of those who as a rule are not interested in the result. It would be wiser to file the opinions without thus reading them, and devote the hours thus saved to the hearing of arguments in other cases.

The order of Mr. Justice Dickey, appointing Benjamin B. Odell, Jr., of Newburgh and Edward H. Hobbs of Brooklyn receivers of the Murray Hill Bank in this city was reversed by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in the Second Department on Friday. The opinion was written by Presiding Justice Brown and concurred in by all his associates. The Appellate Division holds that Judge Pryor had jurisdiction to appoint the original receivers in the proceeding instituted in the First Judicial district for the voluntary dissolution of the bank; and the Supreme Court having taken possession of the bank's property in that proceeding for the purpose of preserving it and applying it for the benefit of the creditors, there was no necessity or occasion for naming other receivers in a suit brought by the Attorney-General in another district.

The new County Judge of Suffolk county, Benjamin H. Reeve of Greenport, Long Island, received a majority at the recent election which is said to be larger than any ever before given for a candidate in that county. He is highly esteemed by men of all parties as a good lawyer, possessed of sterling common sense. It is hard for his friends to believe that the *Long Island Farmer* can be correctly informed when it says that the following items appear in Judge Reeve's certificate of election expenses filed with the County Clerk:

Paid Fred Klapp for cigars to warm the hearts of the boys, $17.50.

Paid for same purpose to J. Peter Drach, $8.

A. Krancher, for one pair of No. 7 shoes to "run in," $6.50.

Paid Long Island Railroad for car fare so as to have a chance to meet the voters and shake hands, $20.

Paid gas tank to work against me and thereby insure my election, $000.

Uncle Sam for postage, $31.

Enthusiasm at the triumph of sound money in the recent election will excuse a good deal, but upon reflection Judge Reeve himself will probably conclude that his facetiousness was a little exuberent.

The death of District Judge Isaac C. Parker of the Western District of Arkansas removes one of the most notable figures in the Federal judiciary. His time was largely devoted to the trial of criminal cases at Fort Smith. Many of these were prosecutions for murder, and he had probably pronounced judgment of death more frequently than any other judge that ever lived in America. It was his great grievance against the Supreme Court of the United States that the Judges of that tribunal reversed so many of the convictions obtained before him in capital cases. In a single year that court has been known to set aside four such convictions, out of six which came up for review from the Western District of Arkansas. Indeed, in the very last batch of decisions handed down by the Supreme Court in Washington there was a reversal of a judgment of death in a murder case from that district. It is to be hoped that Judge Parker's successor will be a man of equal firmness and honesty of purpose, whose zeal for the punishment of criminals will be governed by a little more discretion. His influence for good was considerably lessened by the repeated reversal of his rulings, which could readily have been avoided if he had been willing to heed the suggestions of the higher courts.

An occurrence on Thursday in the Court of General Sessions in this city illustrates the possibility of unjust convictions being procured from motives of revenge. A man named Norlander was the complainant in a prosecution for larceny before Judge Cowing against two young girls. While the trial was going on Norlander was identified by a person in the audience as a swindler, and was forced to admit on the witness stand that he was a convict who had recently served a term of three years in the State prison. The girls were acquitted and Norlander was arrested on a charge of larceny shortly after leaving the court room. Had it not been for the identification of Norlander, which was due only to a fortunate combination of circumstances, two innocent women would probably have been convicted. A similar incident has occurred here within a year; and both events are unpleasantly suggestive of what may happen when false accusations are made by scoundrels who are successful in concealing their identity.

The city of Baltimore has had a political sensation during the week, growing out of the decision of the Maryland Court of Appeals in the controversy between the Mayor and the City Council in respect to the appointment of local officers. The present Mayor of Baltimore is an Independent Republican named Hooper. He was authorized under the law in force when he assumed office to make city appointments subject to confirmation by the Council. His nominees were not agreeable to the Council, and very few of them were confirmed. Finally, the Council passed ordinances depriving the Mayor of the power to nominate local officers, with a few exceptions, and vesting the right of appointment solely in the Council itself. These ordinances have now been declared by the court of last resort to be invalid.

Mayor Patrick J. Gleason of Long Island City continues to figure prominently as a litigant in the courts, both on the civil and criminal sides. He has been indicted for violating the Election law, in disregarding its provisions concerning the appointment of inspectors. This charge he confidently avows his readiness and ability to meet and disprove. He has been cast in damages to the extent of $5,000 in a slander suit brought against him by Police Captain Anthony Woods, who complained because in 1895 Mayor Gleason had publicly declared that, three years before, he had been ejected by force from the City Hall "by a gang of thieves, murderers, and pirates, at the head of whom stood that old gray-headed scoundrel" (meaning Woods). In this case Justice Gaynor has just granted a new trial. He says that although the words quoted would have been libellous if written, they were merely spoken, and are not actionable unless they impute the actual commission of a crime or tend to injure the plaintiff in his office, occupation, or business. He doubts whether the case was made out in either respect, and also declares that the damages were excessive. The learned Judge points out that it is not slander to call a man a pirate, if it appears from the circumstances that the speaker did not intend to charge the crime of piracy.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN SOCIETY.

The keynote of the fashionable season in great cities is always struck by the opening of German or Italian opera, and if the appearance of the Metropolitan on Monday evening last may be accepted as an augury of coming gayeties, then we have an unusually brilliant winter before us. Strangers and foreigners, those who are familiar with the auditoriums of London, Paris, Vienna, and Milan, were unanimous in praise of the proportions of the Metropolitan building and the careful adjustment that had been made of stage, footlights, and audience, one to another. This effect was enhanced by the uncovered heads of the ladies in the parquette, and the absence, therefore, of the harsh difference that formerly existed between them and the boxes.

The house, packed to the remotest corners, with not a void anywhere, was really a pageant of color and glitter, in which every one present formed a part of the great living picture. Still, while there was a perfect appreciation of the merits of the opera and a warm welcome in every heart for the singers, the applause was cold and undemonstrative. It is unnecessary to dilate upon the exquisite sweetness of Mme. Melba's high notes, or upon the artistic rendering of the familiar *Faust* of Jean de Reszke and the *Mephistopheles* of Edouard. All was complete and satisfactory, but failed to awaken the enthusiasm it deserved.

As the eye travelled slowly around the circle of the grand and parterre tiers, it was arrested here and there by a face more beautiful than any that had been seen before, or by a constellation of diamonds that was almost too dazzling to be agreeable. In Mrs. Astor's box both were to be found, as Mrs. Jack Astor was lovely in pink satin, with diamonds gleaming here and there wherever they were most becoming, while the elder matron was resplendent in white satin, with necklace stars and stomacher of brilliants. Just in the centre of the house Mrs. Royal Phelps Carroll's, in rose pink, was decidedly the handsomest head that the eye rested upon. She was in Mrs. Hitchcock's box, wore rose-colored satin, and had a background of three or four good-looking men. Near the stage Mrs. August Belmont looked lovely in black velvet, and nearly opposite to her Mrs. Henry Sloane, in black and white, attracted much attention. Both ladies wore a profusion of jewels in necklaces and stomachers. On Wednesday night, when Mme. Emma Eames made her first appearance for two years, there was an enthusiastically crowded audience, but a dark spot here and there in the auditorium, which marked a box belonging to one or more of the Vanderbilt family, detracted somewhat from the glittering picture of Monday evening.

In the *entr'actes* every voice was raised in admiration of Mme. Eames, her beauty and grace, both greatly augmented since she had been last seen, and the added fire and spirit which she threw into her acting. A good deal of regret was expressed when it became known that she would not be seen this season in the part of *Juliet*, Mme. Melba, it was said, having by contract reserved the rôles of *Juliet* and *Marguerite* for herself. Mme. Eames's *Marguerite* was never her greatest part, but as *Juliet* she is incomparable. Figure, face, voice—all fit her admirably for Shakespeare's adorable heroine, and even the old and travel worn seemed to renew their youth when watching and hearing Eames and De Reszke in Gounod's musical setting of the English play.

On Thursday evening, which was an off night at the opera, Mr. Reginald de Koven received quite an ovation at the Herald Square Theatre when his opera of "The Mandarin" was performed for the fiftieth time. Mr. de Koven wielded the conductor's baton, there were several new songs, and the score had been much improved since it was first given here. The audience was larger and was made up of artistic, literary and social friends of the composer. One box was occupied by Mme. Melba, M. Lassalle, and the Messrs. De Reszke. Scattered about in boxes and stalls were Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Belmont Tiffany, M