The Sun.

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The Platform Ready.

When the great Republican Convention of 1896 was about to meet there was profound anxiety regarding the platform on the money question. Would it be wabbling or clear, crooked or straight? Fortunately it was clear and straight.

This year the platform is ready made for every Republican organization met to nominate candidates. It is the St. Louis platform, the opposite of the Democratic platform of Chicago. Every Republican body everywhere is bound to put it at the front of its campaign, and therefore to choose a sound and unmistakable champion of it as the candidate.

That is why all original Republicans, and all whom the force of circumstances has made allies of the Republican party, look forward with satisfaction to the expected Republican nomination of BENJAMIN F. TRACY for Mayor of New York.

Mr. Sheehan's Great Trick.

For several months past Mr. JOHN C. SHEEHAN has been practicing assiduously a trick of political legerdemain to be played by him at the Tammany Convention on Thursday evening. It is a trick requiring the greatest steadiness of nerve, for it involves the nicest adjustment of weights and balances in order to be successful.

The feat is to hide the Chicago platform from the goldbugs, and at the same time to show it to the Bryanites. It is played with the aid of various and complicated contrivances to produce an optical illusion, and it cannot be successful unless the machinery is in perfect adjustment and the nerve of the political juggler is absolutely firm. Mr. SHEEHAN'S long practice of the trick has not yet reached the point of absolute perfection, but by continuing it day and night up to the hour of the convention it is hoped by his friends that he will be able to make the performance satisfactory to the audience.

Accordingly, it is especially desired that the word "Chicago" or "Bryan" should be avoided in Mr. SHEEHAN'S presence, for they may disturb his equipose. Mr. BRYAN is said to have written incautiously to Col. WILLIAM L. BROWN on the subject of the trick, and it is feared that the letter may possibly result in marring the performance on Thursday evening.

Meantime the public, goldbugs, Bryanites, and everybody else, are waiting curiously or anxiously to see how Mr. SHEEHAN'S feat of political legerdemain is going to turn out.

On the Indian Frontier.

As yet none of the fighting on the Indian frontier is taking place at a greater distance than thirty-five miles from Peshawur, the British base of operations. Before any advance can be safely attempted up the Khyber Pass, the country of the Mohmunds north of the defile, and the Tirah country to the south of it, must be cleared of the enemy, and the influence of HADDAH Mullah, if possible, broken. At present he seems to hold to the Afridi tribes the same position as the frequently killed and still living OSMAN DIGNA holds to the Arabs of the eastern Soudan. His capture, if it could be effected, is therefore of great importance, and it is hoped that supplemented by bombardment by mountain guns and the play of Maxims the Mohmunds might be sufficiently dispirited by it to submit. It is improbable, however, that this result will be attained at an early date in the campaign, as the difficulties attending the advance of any considerable force into the mountains inhabited by the tribesmen are immense.

The most the present British force operating among the frontier hills can do is to clear away the veil hiding what is going on behind the Afghan frontier, and prepare the way for the advance to the boundaries of the Ameer's dominions of the larger army that is being slowly assembled behind Peshawur. The great difficulty is that of transport. The loss of camels during the last Afghan war was so great that the supply is still very limited, and efforts are being made to procure animals from Somaliland and the border country of Abyssinia. The reinforcements being sent from England have also to be waited for, so that extensive operations are not to be anticipated for some time yet.

The first movements undertaken by the English regiments as yet have not been encouraging, the men having proved incapable of standing the fatigue and privation incident to hill warfare. In one regiment nearly 50 per cent. of the men were declared on inspection to be medically unfit for arduous service, and they had to be relegated to the inglorious safety of garrison duty. This explains the fact that as yet the principal fighting has been done by Sikhs and Goorkhas. Some satisfaction is expressed that the Twentieth Punjab Regiment that captured the enemy's position at the Bedmanai Pass on Wednesday is partly composed of Afridis. There is nothing very remarkable in this, as this regiment is one of those known as mixed regiments, that is, made up of companies each of a different race or religion, in which one race would be overpowered by the others. The inability of the English troops in India to face the fatigue of actual war is a startling confirmation of the predictions made some short time back when the diseased condition of the men composing the English regiments was exposed, and it cannot but be the cause of considerable anxiety to both the Indian and English Governments. Indeed, it is said that the question of introducing compulsory military service in the United Kingdom is already under the consideration of the English Government, as a consequence of the danger disclosed by the medical reports of the physical incapacity of the army as at present constituted.

But as if they had not trouble enough already on their hands, in the frontier rising, the increasing ravages of the plague and the famine, and the general discontent, the Indian Government has taken the extraordinary course of arbitrarily extinguishing the State of Jhalawar, whose political and separate political existence was guaranteed by the British Government, and adding its territory to that of the neighboring State of Kotah. The official excuses for this are the "economy of administration" and the "scientific adjustment of boundaries." With the exception of the official organs of the Indian Government the Anglo-Indian journals denounce this inopportune action as "insidious" and tending to unsettle the accepted position of Indian States, as a flagrant breach of treaty rights and "presenting a grave and disturbing aspect." The transaction was carried through by a secret bureau without reference to Parliament or to the Queen in Council, and solely on the authority of the Secretary of State, and, as one journal remarks, raises the question "by whom is India governed?"

The natural result is that suspicion of the good faith of the British Government has been roused among those native Princes who have reason to know that their own tenure of sovereignty stands in danger of scientific adjustment, and so adds to the internal difficulties that the maladministration of India has rolled up for the British Government and people.

Mr. Bourke Cockran's Consistency.

The rich and virile utterance of the Hon. BOURKE COCKRAN, published on Sunday, with regard to the coming campaign in New York, is the natural expression of an honest and a logical mind. Mr. COCKRAN is not beating about the bush to see how he can preserve an appearance of consistency in supporting this year a party which he rejected with scorn last year, though the distinguishing doctrine against which he revolted so indignantly is still held fast in its political creed.

In all this republic there was no other citizen who rendered greater service to the national honor and integrity last year than BOURKE COCKRAN. It was the more potent because it was undeniably disinterested and performed purely as a patriotic obligation. Mr. COCKRAN did not turn half around; he turned around squarely and denounced from the beginning, and with all the power of his persuasive and convincing eloquence, the degradation of his party to the service of repudiation and destructive socialism.

Mr. COCKRAN stands now exactly where he stood then. He is a Democrat by the old Jeffersonian standard, but he is not a Democrat by the new Bryanite standard. He refuses to have any part or parcel with the Democratic party or any of its organizations until the new standard is torn down and cast away and the old standard restored positively and emphatically. A merely negative course, a simple evasion of the Chicago platform will not be tolerated by him. It must be rejected positively and contemptuously.

Nobody can regard this attitude of Mr. COCKRAN with other than profound respect. Democrats professing the same principles and convictions are preparing to surrender ignominiously to Bryanism on the plea of temporary expediency, but he stands bravely by his guns. The "National Democrats," so-called, have even approved the candidacy for Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals in this State of a Judge of the Supreme Court who seeks Bryanite support by the degrading confession that he voted for BRYAN last year! He voted to bring ruin on the people of this State and to subvert the authority of the greatest tribunal on earth, the Supreme Court of the United States, yet those Democrats, professing last year to regard such a vote as morally criminal, now turn about and promise to assist him in his infamous attempt to become Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals!

Mr. COCKRAN disdains association with such politicians. He will train only in the company of those who fight against the Bryanized Democratic party; for he sees clearly that whatever assistance is now rendered to any Democratic organization which does not repudiate the Chicago platform squarely contributes directly to the strength of that odious political revolution in 1898 and 1900.

Mr. COCKRAN'S references to SETH LOW express the feeling which the latter's wabbling and dishonorable course arouses in every man of honesty and true discernment. LOW'S intellectual barrenness is too apparent to make its discovery evidence of remarkable insight, but Mr. COCKRAN deals with it in a way that is fresh, and with the contempt which such a character awakens in a man of a strong and fertile mind.

An American Woman on American Divorces.

There are some statements of fact, and there are also some curious misstatements, in an article on divorce in the United States, contributed by GERTRUDE ATHERTON to the *Contemporary Review*. The misstatements should not be passed over, lest they gain currency in England, owing to the fact that the writer of the article is an American woman.

As for the grounds of divorce which are recognized by the laws of the various States, these are, of course, obtainable from any legal text book on the subject, and they are set forth correctly by Mrs. ATHERTON, so far as she goes. It is when she comes to deductions from the statutory premises that she sometimes falls into error. She is quite right in saying that the women of the United States are by no means divorce-mad, but that, on the contrary, they shrink from the publicity of the divorce court and the inevitable newspaper notoriety. In most cases they bear their burden as long as they can consistently with self-respect. Mrs. ATHERTON also does well to contradict an idea which has found more or less acceptance in England, that American women have a habit of divorcing one man in order to marry another. As a matter of fact, such cases are rare. The women who seek relief in the divorce court are, as a rule, extremely tired of matrimony and in no haste for another experiment. Mrs. ATHERTON, however, is unjust to her feminine compatriots when she goes on to qualify this well-founded assertion by affirming it to be unquestionable that "if an American woman became convinced that she had met the right man after having suffered the infliction of the wrong one, she would walk straight through the courts to the church." It is a matter of common observation that thousands of women who find themselves in the predicament named do, nevertheless, pursue unflinchingly the path of duty in spite of "streaming eyes and breaking hearts." They are not, as their detractor says in the *Contemporary*, "determined at all costs to be happy." They could not be "happy" if they violated what a great many of them believe to be not only the contract, but the sacrament of marriage.

It is, of course, true, as Mrs. ATHERTON avers, that no matter how favored a woman may be in respect of wealth and social position, yet, if she divorce one man in order to marry another who has publicly compromised her, society will arise in wrath and subject her to ostracism. This does not indicate with adequate emphasis the attitude of society with reference to divorce. Mrs. ATHERTON is mistaken when she goes on to assert broadly that "there is no prejudice against divorce among the upper classes dwelling in the large cities of the United States, provided no scandal has preceded the suit." There will always be a strong prejudice against divorce in the United States so long as it is unrecognized by the Catholic Church, and so long as the clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church refuse to marry either of the parties to a divorce during the lifetime of the other. The most extraordinary error of fact, however, in the *Contemporary* article, and the last to which we shall refer, is presented in the following statement: "Up to the last third of the century divorce was the exception in the United States. To-day divorce is the rule." Were this true the women of the United States would indeed be "divorce-mad." But it is very far from being the truth. If Mrs. ATHERTON will be at the pains to glance at the latest available statistics concerning the number of marriages and the number of divorces in the United States, she will discover that the latter constitute but an insignificant percentage of the former. Instead of the day when divorce will be the rule being within measurable distance, there have been noticeable of late many indications of a reaction against the disposition lightly to rupture the marriage tie.

Theosophy Under Mrs. Tingley.

The fine old days of Theosophy, the days when BLAVATSKY, Col. OLCOTT, and KOOT HOOMI were working in harmony and JUDGE was a mere kindergarten pupil, appear to have departed. There is little in the present TINGLEY-HARGROVE combination to thrill the imagination or stimulate public interest. This combination has been all around the world at the expense of some generous unilluminated Theosophist or Theosophists, but the net results, as stated by Mrs. TINGLEY herself in the October number of *Theosophy*, are not particularly impressive. As might be expected, the TINGLEY-HARGROVE party encountered in India derisive opposition from the OLCOTT faction, and they seem to have made no attempt to penetrate the Desert of Gobi, or to get practically any nearer to KOOT and the Heart of the Oasis than they are when at home here in Madison avenue. Col. OLCOTT must have laughed sardonically when he beheld the TINGLEY crusaders turning their backs upon India without having seen KOOT.

No wonder the promoters of the cult in America feel the absolute necessity of hurrying up the organization of the Point Loma School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity. Unless they get the laboratory of that institution into working order, and revive a lost mystery or two for advertising purposes, there is danger that the whole movement will degenerate into a moderately philanthropical, mildly philosophical concern with no more startling function than to preach drowsily vague doctrines concerning the Brotherhood of Man. It was not the ethical rubbish or the half-baked metaphysics of Theosophy that commanded the attention of the entire civilized world at the time when the Colonel was in his prime, and Madame BLAVATSKY was working miracles to the music of the bells of the Eighth avenue horse cars, and mahatmas and astral bodies were darting in every direction through the magic-laden atmosphere of Madison square.

We are promised that the next number of *Theosophy* will contain a full official report of the ceremonies which attended the laying of the corner stone of the mystic university at Point Loma. This account, provided it throws more light on the character of that educational enterprise, and the sort of lost mysteries which are to be revived by the professors and students, and the mystic curriculum from the beginning of freshman year to graduation day, may serve to reawaken partially the interest of the general public in old KOOT and his North American disciples.

Such will be the case, we doubt not, if the November number of *Theosophy* should happen to announce that the School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity has secured the services of Dr. E. BENJAMIN ANDREWS as its President.

Minister Hoshi's Explanation.

The statement made by Mr. TORU HOSHI of his Government's attitude toward Hawaii shows Japan's sincerity, but does not increase the prospect that the proposed arbitration will soon be carried out.

Japan, it will be remembered, consents to arbitrate only on condition that the ownership of the required $50 by each rejected immigrant and also Hawaii's theory that the treaty of 1871 is limited to the merchant class of immigrants shall not be questions to go to the arbiter. These conditions have seemed strange.

But Minister HOSHI holds that the point in regard to the $50 was not raised by Hawaii at the outset, or until long after the immigrants were expelled, so that it could not have been on that account that they were sent back. Since it was an afterthought, and since the difficulty in now proving ownership would be great, Japan cannot consent that this matter shall go to arbitration.

But it does not appear that Hawaii fully disclosed in detail her objections to the immigrants when she rejected them. In February last the Shinshiu Maru reached Honolulu with nearly 600 immigrants, and Hawaii refused to allow them to land there. Within the two months following the Sakura Maru and Kinai Maru arrived with as many more immigrants, and the same ground was taken about them. In all, if we do not err, about 1,200 immigrants were sent back. The Supreme Court was applied to for a writ of habeas corpus in these cases, in order that the legal questions might be decided, and held that the immigrants had not yet come within its jurisdiction. It can easily be understood that Hawaii may not at the time have had any evidence that these immigrants were temporarily supplied with funds not their own, so as fraudulently to evade her laws, and yet may think she has it now. It would seem a sufficient protection both for the steamship companies and Japan to agree that the presumption shall be possession and ownership of the funds by all the immigrants, on account of the lapse of the time, and that Hawaii must affirmatively prove the contrary, which she might find it difficult, if not impossible to do.

But the main question seems to be whether Hawaii surrendered by her treaty with Japan her sovereign right to restrict immigration by laws. It would seem that the interpretation of the treaty has too important a bearing on this point for Japan to insist that it shall not go to arbitration. She says that her reading of the treaty is the only possible one; but if so, the arbiter will certainly adopt it. She says that the admission of Japanese without distinction of class for so many years proves her point; but, if so, she can confidently lay that evidence, too, before the arbiter.

A difficulty sometimes encountered in international arbitration is that one of the parties to it wishes to get before the court all that it is able to prove, and at the same time to bar out what its opponent may be able to prove. It would be wise for Japan to avoid even seeming to drift into this attitude. Her true policy would appear to be that of facilitating arbitration instead of obstructing and delaying it. Points that seem to her too clear for dispute can, for that very reason, be allowed to go to a competent arbiter without hesitation if her adversary insists. It seems highly probable that within a few months Hawaii will be a part of the United States, and then it is certain that her immigration treaties and all other treaties with Japan will lapse.

Tracy or Tammany.

The Hon. WILLIAM LYSONG STRONG delivered himself of the following opinion after hearing that Gen. TRACY was willing to take the Republican nomination for Mayor of New York:

"That means TRACY OR LOW."

That means either TRACY or a Tammany man; in the present mood of Tammany a Chicago platform and Bryan man. In any case, a Tammany man whose election will be a victory for the Democratic party and the Chicago platform.

There is no question of LOW in the campaign. If he is sincerely desirous of being a unifying force among the friends of good order and honest money, he will withdraw in favor of Gen. TRACY, who will be the strongest representative of those causes, and the only representative of them who also represents and is sure to be supported by a great, solid, and responsible body of voters.

If Mr. LOW insists upon being a disunifying force, and allows the Citizens' Union to go upon its melancholy way as a wagonful of political gypsies, he may hand over the government of this city to Tammany, whose principles and whose policy are hostile to the interests of any community that cares for the good government upon which the heart of Mr. LOW'S friends are supposed to be set.

Either Mr. TRACY, an admirably competent person, in talent, experience, and public service as much superior to Mr. LOW as Morningside is superior to an elevator well, will be the next Mayor of New York, or some Tammany man who has paid for his nomination by agreeing to the Tammany programme, local and domestic, will be the next Mayor of New York.

If Mr. LOW wants to be a faithful public servant, his duty is clear. If he prefers to continue to be an idol, the clay of his legs will be unpleasantly conspicuous.

By far the best and soundest article we have ever seen in the *New York Times* was published in that newspaper on Sunday. It was entitled "Thomas C. Platt," and was copied from THE SUN of the day before. It shone in the columns of our esteemed contemporary like a ray of light in a dark place.

We confess that our regard for the intellectual ability of our laborious contemporaries of the New York press is not as high as we wish it could be, but we should hate to put them down so far in the intellectual scale as to believe that their unanimous glorification of the commonplace and shifty SETH LOW is sincere. Of course, we know that the kindergarten graduates, whose employment on the *Evening Post* has been a consequence of the retirement of Mr. E. L. GODKIN from its editorship, take him with awful seriousness; but inasmuch as they take themselves in the same way, that is not surprising. It can't be possible that the kindergartens are the source from which the intellects of all our esteemed contemporaries are recruited.

The appeals to SETH LOW to stick as a candidate and to keep on disunifying come mainly from newspapers preparing to support the candidate of Tammany Hall.

Joy glitters from the brows of the Hon. JOHN W. LEEDY, Governor of Kansas, and of all the other Populist officials of that State. Since they have had the gold seals supplanted by silver seals on official documents they feel that the accursed claws of the Money Power no longer rend them. The Hon. WEB MCNALL, Superintendent of Insurance, hurls new and fiercer defiance at the plutocratic insurance companies of the East, and produces official documents just for the pleasure of affixing the silver seals to them. There will be great crops of Kansas official papers henceforth, and there has been no lack of them heretofore. The silver seals inspire and rest the Populist mind, besides filling it with a proud consciousness that at last silver has won a famous victory.

"Eclipse first, the rest nowhere," said the great horse's owner.

"Low or Tammany first," say the Low boomers. "The Republicans nowhere," the other side of their programme, they don't dare to say.

It is the duty of Republicans and anti-Bryan men to put the Republican party first, and keep it there.

The National Irrigation Congress meets to-day in Lincoln, Neb., a place which is memorable for the copious showers of language which fall upon it and gush out of it. It seems strange that these showers have had no effect. It seems stranger still that all the thunderous cannonadings of Populist and Popocratic conventions and orators have not touched and melted the iron bosom of the firmament and brought down rain enough to make the whole country west of the Mississippi and south of the Missouri an ocean with nothing but the Rocky Mountains and the head of the Hon. CYCLONE DAVIS visible above its waters.

The Massachusetts Democrats will hold their State Convention to-day for the purpose of ratifying the Hon. GEORGE FRED WILLIAMS and the Chicago platform. The Massachusetts Democrats can have no hope of success, but at least they can and will show that they are not afraid or ashamed of Democratic principles.

During the last decade congratulations to some new steamship as the swiftest on the Atlantic Ocean have been an almost annual ceremony. The lack of novelty, however, in no wise diminishes the fervor of our interest in welcoming to that place the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse. Our only regret is that the North German Company should have felt itself called upon to flatter the vanity of the fresh young German Emperor by giving to its new craft the ridiculous title of his invention, "Emperor William the Great," instead of the true and much more honoring title "Emperor William I."

To-day the Germans, who, in seamanship, are to-day or any other day second to none, have the best ship. We expect to see the William the Great do the equivalent of the Queenstown course in five days, or so little short of it that the odd hour will look like a mere accident of weather. And while the brightest sun of fortune is shining upon her we hope that the Teutonic scientists will be studying unflaggingly how to expand successfully the little thirty-five knot Turbinia into a ship whose keel will outmeasure even that of the William the Great, and squeeze the five days that she must take in crossing down into three.

Nine Boston policemen fainted away in the crowds which stood all day yesterday in front of the bulletin boards. No cars were allowed to run until after the result of the game in Baltimore was known, and then considerable trouble was caused by the efforts of some enthusiasts to carry the cars on their shoulders. The Hon. JOSIAH QUINCY was so unusually warmed up by the victory that the messengers in the City Hall were able to be comfortable without their winter overcoats. On account of the multitudes the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company was on canteen duty at the Parker House through the afternoon and evening. The Sacred Codfish in the State House showed uncontrollable excitement accompanied by tumidity and congestion. At 5:30 he was swelling at an enormous rate, and it was evident that the building would soon be too small for him. To save him and the Bulfinch front, the firemen and architects were called out and he was extricated with difficulty. He was at once lanced by the Boston Lancers and nine air-pumps were applied to his head. At 2:10 this morning he was resting well in the Massachusetts General Hospital, and his size was about that of two dolphins and a half.

Nine black and blue crow orioles were heard cawing in a raucous and sinister tone on the banks of the Patapsco early last night. At 9 o'clock sharp they threw themselves in with a melancholy *kerchug!*

Curiously enough the worst friend visible to-day of the McKinley Administration and of the Republican party organization is the eminent H. H. KOHLSAAT of the Chicago *Times-Herald*.

A Stillwater philanthropist imparts to the *St. Paul Globe* his "belief that all employers of men, or as many as could be persuaded to, should hold a general meeting, and devise plans for a general raise of wages." We should suppose that a general meeting would not be necessary. A small convention would suffice, and all it would have to do would be to pass a resolution declaring that wages ought to be and hereby are raised. The effect of resolutions on the market price of commodities is well known. It would be pleasant if all wages could be raised, but as it cannot be done at present without expense to the raiser, it may have to be postponed. It may not have occurred to the Stillwater philanthropist that in Utopia or Altruria wages will pay themselves; and so nobody will have to bother his head about them.

A Cleveland despatch says that the wages of 400 employees of WILLIAM TOD of Youngstown were raised 10 per cent. yesterday. According to the Hon. HORACE LEONIDAS CHAPMAN, the Democratic candidate for Governor of Ohio, there are "millions of idle" men about, and "wages in almost every branch of industry have been reduced from 10 to 25 per cent." Why, then, has this man TOD raised wages when there are millions of the idle? Clearly he is a member of a Republican conspiracy to discomfit the gloomy HORACE LEONIDAS.

The Hon. SETH LOW seems to have inflicted a cruel and an unusual punishment upon the Hon. JAMES B. REYNOLDS. For the last six days he has not permitted Mr. REYNOLDS to talk politics. If the Citizens' Union has any remarks to make, I, SETH LOW, am the man to make them. Such have been the orders of Mr. LOW, and faithfully have they been obeyed, though with a saddened heart, by the faithful REYNOLDS. He is accustomed to issue daily bulletins to the city. He is full of politics. Since the cruel command he has been full of suppressed politics. He suffers and says no word. No other man in the Citizens' Union has suffered so much for the cause. Mr. LOW ought to revoke his silencing edict. Until he does Mr. REYNOLDS might distract his woe by the composition of some more Low poetry buttons.

Democracy and "Public Ownership."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The ownership and operation by the Government of works of public utility is in direct conflict with the principles of Democracy as laid down by Jefferson. In the early days of the republic the Federalists sought to engraft it on our institutions as a permanent feature of administration. With that object in view they invested in a copper mine over in New Jersey for the purpose of making all the copper that was required in the navy yards. Down at Harper's Ferry, if my memory is not astray, they had an iron mine, from the product of which cannon for the army and navy were to be manufactured. As may be naturally expected, these two holes in the ground yielded iron and copper in the inverse ratio to the amount of gold and silver put into them. When Jefferson became President he closed them up and bought copper and iron in open market for one-half the sum paid by his predecessors.

But the fundamental principle on which he set his face against all enterprises of this character was that they did not come within the legitimate domain of Government, national, State, or municipal. He reprobated the paternal theory in every form whatsoever and believed that the people, left to themselves, could better manage their own affairs than could the Government manage for them. Corruption in the public officeholders was one of the great evils he feared from the embarkation of the Government in public works. Centralization of power was the second one, and in the combination of the two he foresaw the ultimate overthrow of republican Government.

The various projects of ownership and regulation, now sought to be placed in the hands of the public authority, are so stupendous in their magnitude, so intricate in their machinery and so colossal from a financial point of view, that, were unhappily the policy carried out, the foundation would be laid for the most overwhelming industrial catastrophe the world has ever witnessed.

F.

NEW YORK, Sept. 27.

Bossism.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Permit me to thank you for your editorial of Saturday regarding Mr. Platt. It is a tribute he deserves and must appreciate, but will doubtless value most for its indorsement of the principle he stands for—perpetuation of Republican control

To my mind the outcry of bossism in politics is nonsense. No household gets on well but under feminine example of it. One-man power runs everywhere prosperous business of large dimensions. In military affairs it is "the born leader" who can evolve triumphant armies from a mob. I am sure the instrument of unequalled, harmonious development in the Church claiming my allegiance is a perfected boss in the highest sense. And the present deplorable muddle over the Mayoralty is warning enough of the disaster to follow unless the leadership of a man trained and able as Mr. Platt is evoked to avert it.

Your article is admirably opportune for developing recognition of this, and again I thank you for it.

GEORGE MACCULLOCH MILLER.

Hail to the New York Republicans.

From the Providence News.

It is stated that for the first time in the history of the politics of New York the entire vote of New York county will be cast as a unit in the coming City Convention.

And ex-Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy is the candidate for whom this flattering vote will be cast by the Chairman of the County Committee.

The proposition illustrates how solidly the Republican party of the Greater New York is going into this, the new city's first municipal contest.

No specious claims of Goo Goolism, no Mugwumpery, no "better element" claptrap, has had any effect on the Republicans of New York in their purpose to have the party represented by a straight ticket, so far as is now indicated.

There is vigor in the organization and enthusiasm in the rank and file.

A party that is good enough to control in nation and in State ought to be good enough to administer the affairs of the chief city of the State and the metropolis of the country.

And Gen. Tracy is about the biggest and ablest man in the big town.

AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. LOW.

A Signer of the Low Petition Requests Him to Retire.

To the Hon. Seth Low.

DEAR SIR: You have referred publicly to your obligation to the 102,000 signers of the Low petition to become a candidate and to remain a candidate for Mayor of the Greater New York. I deny your right either to become a candidate or to remain a candidate, or to cite the Low petition as a ground for your present attitude.

I signed that petition on the distinct understanding that you would not enter the field except as a "unifying force among the friends of good government." I understood the friends of good government to be the enemies of Tammany Hall, and your statement of last Wednesday shows how even you hold the success of Tammany Hall to be the greatest calamity which can happen to the city.

I believe I was but one of many thousands who signed the petition on the strength of your pledge not to be a candidate except as a unifying force. As a signer of the petition on which you pretend to act I demand that you retire from the canvass. It is plain that you at least cannot be a unifying force. Respectfully,

GEORGE FENTRICK.

NEW YORK, 102 West Sixty-fourth street.

SPEECH TO THE GRAND JURY.

Charges Against the Tax Commissioners Presented in Forensic Style.

John A. McCall, President of the New York Life Insurance Company, was a witness yesterday before the Grand Jury, which is investigating charges made by the Law and Legislative Committee of the Central Labor Union against taxpayers and the Tax Commissioners. The Central Labor Union alleges that the Tax Commissioners have shown partiality to men of wealth in this city, while levying taxes, thus discriminating against the man of small means, and that the men of wealth have sworn falsely as to their taxable property.

After hearing a statement made by Mr. McCall and another made by Secretary Tyng of the Tax Commission, who produced the Commissioners' books and papers for inspection, the foreman of the jury, Col. W. C. Church, sent for Dr. W. J. O'Sullivan, who is counsel for the persons making the charges. When Dr. O'Sullivan had presented his allegations, several of the jurymen asked him to furnish the evidence which he said he possessed. This he refused to do, saying that he would rather withhold the evidence until an indictment was found against the Tax Commissioners, so that he could use the evidence at the trials. He declared that the Equitable Assurance Society had filed affidavits that they possessed over $16,000,000 worth of property in this city, and that the Tax Commissioners had figured it out at only $4,000,000.

Dr. O'Sullivan further stated that great corporations in this city had for years been using the law to oppress labor unions both by injunctions and police court proceedings. It is said that he undertook to make a further speech to the Grand Jury and was promptly sat upon. The Grand Jury finally gave Dr. O'Sullivan to understand that he had no case, and it is alleged that he replied that politics played an important part in the matter. The foreman of the Grand Jury insisted upon having a more explicit statement of what he meant by that, and when Dr. O'Sullivan offered no satisfactory answer he was dismissed. When he came out of the Grand Jury room he seemed to think that he had been turned down by the Grand Jury.

To-day the Grand Jury will probably listen to the statements of William J. O'Brien of the Granite Cutters' Union, John S. Henry of the United Wood Carvers' Association, Daniel Harris of the Cigarmakers' Union, and the representatives of various other labor organizations. The Tax Commissioners may also be examined by the Grand Jury to-day, but so far as could be learned yesterday the Central Labor Union has not been able to substantiate the charges it has made.

WOULD CURTAIL BISHOPS' POWER.

Methodist Ministers Who Propose a Change in the System of Appointments.

The regular monthly meeting of the Methodist preachers, held yesterday, was given over to a discussion of the propriety of limiting the power of the Methodist Bishops in the matter of the control of the ministers of their dioceses. At present the Bishops have absolute control of the appointment and transfer of clergymen, but of late there has been a manifest disposition in certain quarters to divide the power of appointment by the naming of a committee which shall share with the Bishops the responsibility of selecting the occupants of the various pulpits.

This desire for a change in the present procedure was made known at the last conference of the Methodist East Conference, when a request was received from certain clergymen for the re-transfer of a popular preacher who had been transferred from among his friends to a church with whose congregation he was not familiar. This request created a commotion in the conference. Those in favor of the change claim that it is one of vital importance, as it concerns the preservation of a basic principle upon which the Methodist Episcopal Church in this country was founded.

More than 100 preachers were present when the meeting was called to order yesterday. The main paper was read by the Rev. John A. Thompson, at one time pastor of the Jane Street Church in this city. He cited arguments for and against the continuance of the present system, and was understood to advocate a change. Reporters were not admitted to the meeting, and no details of the discussion that followed the reading of the paper were made public.

THE OLD WARSHIP YANTIC

To Be Transferred to the Detroit Naval Militia.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27.—Arrangements for the transfer of the old warship Yantic by the Government to the Detroit naval militia were completed at the Navy Department to-day. Commander Wilkes of the Detroit organization and Acting Secretary Roosevelt arranged the details. The Yantic will be towed from the Boston Navy Yard to Montreal and there transferred by the Navy Department to Commander Wilkes, who will have a crew of naval militiamen on hand to assist in getting the ship through the Welland Canal. A Montreal firm has undertaken the contract of towing her through. Although an adverse answer was made by a naval constructor in reply to the question whether the Yantic could be navigated through the canal, officials of the Navy Department believe there will be no trouble. All the false work will be taken away and the guns removed. It would have been necessary to remove the guns anyway to meet the requirements of the Rush-Bagot convention between the United States and Great Britain, limiting the number of armed vessels on the great lakes.

BUYING UP GAS PLANTS.

New York Financiers Contract to Purchase Those of Buffalo and Detroit.

Emerson McMillin of the banking firm of Emerson McMillin & Co. said yesterday that a syndicate, composed of J. & W. Seligman & Co., Lehman Bros., Hollister & Babcock, and his own firm, had contracted to purchase the Buffalo, the Mutual, and the Citizens' gas companies of Buffalo. The only other gas company in Buffalo is the Queen City, said to be controlled by J. Edward Addicks. The authorized capital stock of the new company will be $7,000,000 and the authorized bonds $7,000,000.

Emerson McMillin & Co. have also contracted for the purchase of the Detroit Gas Company properties, which will be turned over to a new company with a capital stock of $5,000,000 and an authorized bond issue of $6,000,000.

The Death of Rose Pompon.

From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

PARIS, Sept. 12.—The news has just been received of the death of Rose Pompon, who for nearly a quarter of a century was famous, or infamous, as one of the most prominent figures of the demi-monde. Rose was of something more than respectable parentage, for her father was a natural son of Charles X. Her blonde beauty, her wit, and her general attractiveness, served her well for something like thirty years, but at last neglect, starvation, and misery overtook her. Three years ago she became a bankrupt, and, after making a forlorn attempt to obtain her living as a fortune teller, she was turned out into the wintry streets, homeless and utterly destitute. Mlle. de la Tour du Pin, a well-known philanthropist here, took pity upon her and placed her in a refuge conducted by the Sisters of Charity at Nantes, and there she died last week, contrite, it is said, and repentant, though to the last the ruling passion was strong, and almost upon her deathbed she insisted upon blackening her eyelashes with the burnt ends of matches, a touch which seems to belong rather to fiction than to real life.

RECONCILIATION OF THE SPRAGUES.

The "Governor" and His Daughters Meet After a Separation of Eighteen Years.

From the Washington Star.

Society in Washington is looking for some energetic demonstration on the part of Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague when she returns from Columbus, O., where she is now visiting, for since her departure from this city a reconciliation has, it is said, been effected between her three daughters and their father, former Governor William Sprague of Rhode Island. When, eighteen years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Sprague were divorced, the latter was given the charge of their daughters, Ethel, Kitty, and Portia. At the time of the separation of their parents Ethel, the oldest daughter, was about 5 years old, while Kitty and Portia were 3 and 2, respectively. From that time to the present Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague has forbidden her daughters to have any communication, either directly or indirectly, with their father or any of his relatives, and she succeeded in having her commands respected until a few weeks ago.

Some time since Miss Portia, who is now about twenty years of age, was appointed to a position in one of the departments. She then left her mother's house, took board at a fashionable house on New Jersey avenue, and was not long in ascertaining that she was able to exercise her individual rights. She concluded to write to her father, and did so. The letter contained an earnestly expressed wish that her father would come to Washington to see her. The father wrote an immediate reply from his Narragansett Pier home, telling Portia that he would come, and day before yesterday he arrived in Washington. Not only was Miss Portia waiting at the depot, but her sisters were there also, and a most touching greeting followed. Tears streamed down the face of the father as he embraced each of his daughters, and the young ladies tenderly caressed him.

It was many minutes before Mr. Sprague could regain his composure, and when he did so he presented them to his wife, Mrs. Ines Sprague, who had accompanied him on his journey here. A little later the whole party entered a carriage and were driven to the home of Miss Portia. It is understood the daughters have already arranged to spend next summer with their father and Mrs. Sprague, and that, if their mother condemns the girls for their pars in the reconciliation, they will accompany him to Europe upon a trip which he contemplates taking in the early future.

AUTUMN'S YELLOW AND GOLD.

What a Botanist Knows and Does Not Know About the Color Change of Leaves.

From the Washington Star.

"Probably not one person in a thousand knows just why leaves change their color in the fall," remarked an eminent botanist the other day to a reporter for the *Star*. "The green matter in the tissues of a leaf is composed of two colors, red and blue. When the sap ceases to flow in the autumn the natural growth of the tree is retarded and oxidation of the tissue takes place. Under certain conditions the green of the leaf changes to red; under different aspects it takes on a yellow or brown hue. The difference in color is due to the difference in combinations of the original constituents of the green tissues and to the varying condition of climate, exposure and soil. A dry, hot climate produces more brilliant foliage than one that is damp and cool. This is the reason that American autumns are so much more gorgeous than those of England and Scotland.

"There are several things about leaves, however, that even science cannot explain. For instance, why one of two trees growing side by side, of the same age, and having the same exposure, should take on a brilliant red in the fall and the other should turn yellow, or why one branch of a tree should be highly colored and the rest of the tree have only a yellow tint are questions that are as impossible to answer as why one member of a family should be perfectly healthy and another sickly. Maples and oaks have the brightest colors.

"People should be careful not to touch the gorgeous red and yellow autumn leaves or shrubs and climbing plants which are not known to be harmless. Our two poisonous native plants display the most brilliant autumnal colors of any species in our woods and highways. The poisonous sumach resembles a group of young ash trees. The poisonous ivy resembles the harmless woodbine. Its leaves, however, have but three leaflets, while those of the woodbine have five."

SUNBEAMS.

—In nine years the Indian population of Tama county, Ia., has increased by thirteen. The red people there now number 394.

—Plenty of deer are reported in Vermont, and great numbers of partridges escape the hunters' attention because all have their thoughts on deer.

—Mortgages are being paid off, by reason of the good times, in Cowlitz county, Wash., the interest on which has been left unpaid for two or three years.

—A couple of dozen onions seem a few for a bushel, but J. R. Douglas of Albany, Or., has exhibited twenty-seven onions which together weigh sixty-five pounds, or fifteen pounds more than a bushel.

—By wiping perspiration from his face with the back of his hand while counting coin F. J. Eighmey of Waterloo, Ia., poisoned his eyes badly, apparently with dust from the foreign accretions on the metal.

—There may be a deadly monotony in