The Sun.

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If our friends who favor us with manuscripts for publication wish to have rejected articles returned, they must in all cases send stamps for that purpose.

The Flag Rejected by the Democratic Caucus.

We inquired on Monday whether any Democrat would have the courage, foresight and patriotism to carry into the House caucus the United States flag, and offer that emblem to the minority as the only sane Democratic policy with regard to the Philippine question and other questions of national advancement.

One Democrat did just that thing. His name is JOSEPH WHEELER, and he hails from Alabama and from Santiago.

This American, honored and beloved equally in the North and in the South, warned the Democratic leaders in Congress against the inevitable political results of the policy they contemplate. He talked as he fought. He showed them the flag. He told the caucus in plain language that any party which fails to stand by the flag now will be discredited in the eyes of the country and of all mankind. He protested against the passage of resolutions deliberately committing the Democracy to such an attitude.

The protest did not avail. What is JOE WHEELER in the present councils of the Democracy as against JOE BAILEY or WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN? Gen. WHEELER'S status even in the caucus of Democratic Congressmen is doubtful, thanks to the constitutional and legal researches of the other JOSEPH from Texas. Who is he to advise Democrats what resolutions to adopt? He is only a hero, a patriot, and an American. His title to represent the Eighth district of Alabama is clouded. The only clear title Gen. JOE WHEELER has at present is to represent Santiago.

So, in spite of the veteran's protest and warning, in defiance of the flag which he planted in the caucus, BAILEY and BRYAN had their way.

Blind leaders of the blind!

The Attempt to Obscure the Great by Magnifying the Little.

It is natural that the discontent and mortification of the Spanish, because of their complete defeat in the war, should provoke bitter criticism of their army and the conduct of their military operations, and the Parliamentary inquiry into the subject which it is said that Marshal MARTINEZ DE CAMPOS is about to ask for in the Spanish Senate is a reasonable proceeding. His motion is to be made at the request of all the Generals in that body, we are informed, and the inquiry it calls for is undoubtedly desirable in the interests of the army itself.

After a humiliating defeat in war a country is neglectful of its honor if it does not search for the causes of the disaster, with a view to discovering if they were due to any defect in its military system and management, and the army is most concerned that the investigation shall be exhaustive. In our own country, however, we are witnessing now the spectacle, unprecedented in the history of war, of a political faction and a cabal of newspapers engaged in a concerted effort to tear away the glory of victory from our arms and exhibit us to rebels against our military authority and to jealous foreign criticism as a nation divided against itself over petty questions of military administration. Meanwhile our army is continuing to distinguish itself by unvarying victory over enemies whose hostile demonstrations were provoked by this very spirit of unpatriotic criticism and are persisted in because of the encouragement still offered by it. Naturally enough, the Filipinos look on such a malicious internal assault upon the American Government as an indication that they have allies in America itself who are endeavoring to aid them by getting up a political diversion to hamper it in subduing their desperate rebellion.

They regard such a demonstration as an evidence of weakness, and in his overestimate of its importance AGUINALDO is keeping up his hopeless struggle at the cost of the lives of American soldiers. He is proceeding on the theory that this wretched faction represents a serious division in American sentiment which will divert our government from him to the necessity of defending itself at home.

A crowd of petty maligners are seeking to thrust minor, superficial and inevitable blemishes of detail in the conduct of our war into a prominence which will hide the great achievements of the most successful war in American history. They blow up the louder outcry because they have no definite facts with which to justify their noise; because, in truth, the facts are against them. When the uproar was started last summer the Government promptly set forthwith to appoint a voluntary commission to find out if there was any occasion for it, but nothing of the sort was discovered after four months of investigation. Accordingly, of course, the cry of "whitewash" was raised. So soon as that inquiry was concluded, however, the Government ordered an official military inquiry to set the matter at rest; but the cry is still kept up, as if the Administration was not doing its utmost to bring out the whole facts exactly as they are in a public military investigation, and, by inviting full light upon its conduct of the war, large and small, was not proving itself ready and willing to bear the consequences and accept the responsibility in every detail.

All the same, the political and newspaper malignants persist in their efforts to bring discredit on a war which gave to American arms the greatest renown they had ever received. Such specific allegations as they had made being under adjudication, they fall back on general accusations, the only foundation of which is mere assumption or pure suspicion. The facts that the war was uniformly successful, that three great military expeditions were sent to great distances in the tropics with astonishing celerity, and that each was completely victorious, with a minimum of loss in such warfare, and that in none were military operations delayed or hampered by deficiencies of supply or defects of administration are obvious reasons for national pride and satisfaction, but this malignant faction passes them all by as if they had never occurred, and instead of uninterrupted success there had been only reverse and disaster. The best-fed army ever put in the field is described by them as if it were the victim of corrupt mismanagement and an intentional conspiracy to starve and poison it. The War Department is assailed as if all the military expeditions conducted under its administration had failed as utterly as the Spanish forces failed in their efforts to resist them.

Wherein lay the maladministration so vociferously asserted is not explained. All they can do is cry out "Algerism!" "Algerism!" "Beef!" "Beef!" What "Algerism" is nobody knows and nobody undertakes to define. The exact facts as to the beef are under inquiry. The victory at Santiago and the thorough preparation which made possible our splendid series of victories in the Philippines are carefully avoided as uncomfortable contradictory evidence, and they fight shy of the demonstration of successful management afforded by the lowest death rate from sickness in the history of war. "Algerism," put forth as if it were a term of unutterable reproach, is all the ammunition in their magazine. In a few weeks everybody will know all about the matter and it will be disposed of finally, but, conscious of the weakness of their case, the malignants and imbeciles keep on yelling "Algerism!" all the louder.

The Spanish have good reason to inquire into the conduct of a war so humiliating to them in its results, for the honor of their army is involved and the officers are demanding vindication. Our army, however, needs no vindication; its uniform victories have been vindication enough. It is well, however, that all carping, all malicious aspersion, should be silenced by the conclusive military inquiry now proceeding. When that is over, perhaps it will occur even to the malignant assailants of the honor and the fame of their country that they can find some more popular employment. Great events and large responsibilities are before us, and this people henceforth will have something bigger to think about than their senseless cries. Even now only petty and trifling minds are giving any serious consideration to them.

No Misfortune.

The failure of Congress to provide at this session a permanent form of government for Hawaii would be no setback to any public interest. On the contrary, further delay in legislating for the islands may prove to be the best thing that can happen.

There are two courses possible with regard to the future of Hawaii, and the question which is the better course in the long run continues to concern the Administration and Congress.

One policy is to preserve as far as practicable the local system previously existing, and consequently the control of affairs by the men who promoted the revolution against monarchy; those who were in power when annexation occurred.

This policy may be described roughly as taking the small boat in tow behind the great ship.

The other course is to Americanize Hawaii thoroughly, to infuse into the administration of its affairs new American blood, to govern it as an integral part of a nation of which Washington and not Honolulu is the capital city; in short, to take Hawaii aboard the ship instead of merely towing it along.

The opinion of the best friends of Hawaii and of many of the earliest advocates and promoters of annexation is changing somewhat with respect to the advisability of the first policy. This change of opinion, it is proper to say, has been brought about not merely by the circumstance that Hawaii is now only one item in the larger questions of national expansion. It is due to a certain extent to some not altogether pleasant revelations as to the spirit in which the Hawaiian leaders of the past accept the privileges and responsibilities of American citizenship.

That is why the final settlement of Hawaii's status can very well be postponed a while longer, if the Fifty-fifth Congress should fail to legislate for it, as now seems likely to be the case.

Meanwhile Hawaii can be towed along very comfortably behind the ship of State.

The Wilmington's Cruise.

The cruise of our gunboat Wilmington on the inland waters of South America is a significant sign of the times. She is ascending the great rivers in the interests of American commerce. She is studying the needs of the people, the resources of the river valleys, and the opportunities for extending American trade. A few weeks ago she steamed up the Orinoco to visit the region above Ciudad Bolivar, the chief town on the river, and practically the western outpost of civilization in the great valley. We know with what avidity Great Britain and Germany are improving every trade opportunity in South America, and we are not surprised to hear that the British have already begun to investigate the commercial possibilities of these up-country districts.

In 1897 Major STANLEY PATERSON spent several months in these new fields above Bolivar, which are little known to science and less to business enterprise. He returned with the report that the country must be of great value. "The rich, rolling savannas," he says, "will support countless herds of cattle and horses. The surrounding forests yield large quantities of natural products, such as rubber, quinine and other commodities. The upper waters of the Guaniamo tributary are so affected by the sarsaparilla that grows profusely along the banks that the natives drink the water and bathe there to cure themselves of skin diseases. The forest trees are of magnificent growth and endless variety." He names many varieties of commercial woods, including mahogany and cedar, and several varieties of plants yielding rubber. "I am fully convinced," Major PATERSON concludes, "that this valley will some day develop into one of the richest commercial centres of the West, but its development will require capital."

The Orinoco has one tributary, the Guaviare, with an extent of navigable waters at least equal to that of the main stream which, with its affluents, presents a navigable highway from the Atlantic to the foot of the Andes. "In the whole of the Orinoco basin," says RECLUS, "there are at present not more than about 800,000 inhabitants, whereas it would contain 200,000,000 were it as densely peopled as Belgium, which it might well be, considering the immense resources of the land."

Our despatches from Washington say that the Wilmington is still engaged in this fruitful field of research. The results of these investigations doubtless will be of great value in the extension of American enterprise through the Orinoco Valley, and they will have additional interest as a contribution of our navy to the widening of our commercial horizon. But we are not likely to receive full details of the Wilmington's explorations in the Orinoco Valley for some time, as Capt. TODD has been instructed to take the gunboat up the Amazon to the head of navigation, for similar researches in that still greater country.

Of course the British and Germans are looking in the same direction. All the German textile journals are advising the clothmakers of the empire to take their wares up the Amazon to Iquitos, in Peru, which is destined to become a large trade centre, communicating, as it does through the Amazon tributaries, with a large extent of country east of the Andes that is rich in agricultural possibilities and in minerals, timber and rubber. Ocean steamers can ascend the Amazon to Iquitos, 2,400 miles from the Atlantic. The British firm of BOOTH & Co. have put on the steamer Clement to open direct trade between Europe and the upper Amazon, and it is said they are building three more vessels for the same route. Trade in that region and on the Orinoco may be of slow growth. The population is still sparse, the people, measured by Anglo-Saxon standards, fall far short in enterprise and perseverance, and the climate is not salubrious. But the trade of the lower Amazon and of its great upper reaches in Peru east of the Cordilleras is now growing steadily after a long period of stagnation. Immense territory is open for commercial conquest among the foothills of the mountains.

The Wilmington and other agencies will place us among the pioneers there, and we shall secure a new and permanent outlet for our products and new sources of raw material.

The Navy Bill.

Some of the amendments to the annual appropriation bill for the navy proposed in the Senate would be harmful.

Mr. TILLMAN'S project to lay out $4,000,000 for a Government armor plant and its machinery is neither economical nor judicious. That matter was discussed for days and weeks together in the last Congress, after months of study by ordnance experts, and the conclusion reached was that the manufacture of ship armor by the Government is inadvisable. Apart from the great original cost of the plant, it would be expensive to run, because it could be used only in turning out the plates needed for our war vessels, whereas factories like the Bethlehem and CARNEGIE'S are connected with general steel and iron manufacture, and also can and do make armor for other navies than ours. It would take a long time, too, to build and equip such a factory, and meanwhile we should need armor for the ships now to be authorized.

The proposal to authorize only two battleships and two armored cruisers instead of three each, and two protected cruisers instead of six, is also unwise. Armored ships take a long time to build, and we ought to authorize the full number of them provided by the House, even if all the unarmored cruisers are postponed. We had none too many fighting ships last year, when war with Spain was impending. We scoured all the yards of Europe in search of warships, and our next conflict may not be with a navy so weak as Spain's.

The less said about additional promotion for SCHLEY the better. The House bill provided for reviving the grade of Admiral in order to promote DEWEY, and on that proposition both branches are unanimous. It can well stand at that.

A House for $750.

Some time ago our esteemed contemporary, the *Carpenter and Builder*, offered prizes for the best plans of a dwelling house not to cost more than $750. The first prize has been awarded to the plan drawn by a young woman of Worcester, Mass., and a very ingenious little house she has designed. It is a story and a half high, the half story being always desirable in small houses, and, aside from space, being treasured for its romantic appearance. A half story is supposed to give a little house something of the benediction of a real cottage and a thatched roof. Even the builders and real estate agents here pride themselves on half stories as a sure sign of "coziness." So a roof steep enough for a toboggan slide is always supposed to be "cozy." You not only may but will knock your head against something every time you go upstairs, but you have perpetual arnica in the reflection that "it's so delightfully cozy." Anybody who has ever lived in the country in a house with a steep roof will remember that his guests invariably collected bumps and said as they rubbed them apologetically, "it is so delightfully cozy." We know not what others may think, but as for us give us the steep roof and the cozy. But the longest person in the family should be made to sleep in a truckle bed as near the eaves as possible. It is no object to have a steep roof unless the rules are rigorously observed.

The prize $750 house has a steep roof, and is therefore acceptable. There is a beautiful pitch to it, so that there is a front bedroom or chamber, as it is always called in small houses, a bedroom so big that it seems a pity, and you feel like cutting it in two were it not that there are two small bedrooms or rear chambers behind it. These are not so large as Madison Square Garden, but they are comfortable and tight, provided the roof does its duty.

We have entered the house from the top because it was just as easy on the plan, and because it was right to salute the steep roof first. Going downstairs we find a hall, a parlor or sitting room, and a kitchen. There is no dining room, the sitting room being versatile. Or perhaps the kitchen is versatile. Or perhaps the front chamber can be used as a drawing room and the parlor as a dining room. You can have all sorts of fun in a small house, and all the joys of moving without the expense.

There is no plumbing in this little house, but that would cost too much. Well, our ancestors got along tolerably well without plumbing, but it is handy, and even a $750 house seems a trifle incomplete without it. As compensation for plumbing there is a little covered porch or piazza into which the front door opens. Plumbing can be dispensed with, but a small house must have a piazza of some sort. Even the smallest family could not be at home in a small house without a piazza. And as more than compensation for all the plumbing in the world, there is a bow window for the parlor. What is a parlor without a bow window? The bow window may look out on nothing in particular, but it gives an air of moral grandeur to the little house. The gratified owner swears by that bow window. He is conscious that it is a distinction and a happiness. It may make the house a little cold in the winter, but what of it? Hasn't a little house as much right to be cold in the winter as an Italian palace? In spring and summer you ought to sit by that bow window. In short, a bow window is indispensable in a little house. It makes the house, and plumbing and all the brood of plumbers will not be missed.

The cost of the prize $750 house is estimated according to Worcester prices. In some parts of this town it would cost more. But this is a mere detail. Houses always cost more than the estimates, and even the builders of $750 houses must be prepared for trouble.

What a Chance for the Mayor!

We reprint here a portion of the statement which Mr. GEORGE GOULD yesterday laid before the Manhattan Elevated Railroad directors. It is intended to be a guide to the Hon. ROBERT A. VAN WYCK, who, although the Tammany strike upon the road has been checked in the municipal legislature, still has a couple of strike measures before him for consideration:

"You have doubtless noticed that an attempt is being made by the sudden and concerted use of the municipal machinery of the city to embarrass or thwart the company in its proposed improvements.

"This attempt first came to the surface simultaneously with this company's failure to comply with a demand made on behalf of the New York Auto-Truck Company to enter into a contract with that company to let it fasten its pipes on the entire railway structure of this company for a nominal consideration.

"Immediately after it became evident that the contract would not be signed by this company the opening attacks upon this company by the Board of Health commenced, which have been followed by like attacks on the part of other departments of the city government."

If Mr. VAN WYCK, in dealing with the elevated railroad resolutions now before him, will keep his eye on their most pronounced characteristic and act accordingly, he will win fame he never dreamed of when he was elected. He will begin the hearing appointed for to-day with an address like this:

"My fellow citizens, and representatives of the elevated roads: Upon the merits of the bills advertised for hearing I don't propose to speak; neither do I desire argument from you. They are, as the public knows, schemes of blackmail. I am no blackmailer, nor while I am Mayor will I permit the municipal government of New York to be an instrument of blackmail. I refuse to put the Mayor's signature to tainted resolutions, or to hear them discussed. Good morning."

If Mr. VAN WYCK will say this he will say what 999 out of every 1,000 men within the borders of New York believe to be true, and what is true.

If he will send back the elevated road resolutions to the place they came from, with notice that he will consider no scheme to regulate any great business corporation of this city while the scent of blackmail is in the air, he will receive the virtually unanimous applause of his fellow citizens and rid the city of a vile stigma.

Is the job too much for him?

The Pacific Cable.

The message of the President asking Congress to provide for a telegraphic cable in the Pacific has resulted in an amendment to the Sundry Civil bill for laying such a cable from California to Hawaii. It limits the cost to $2,500,000, and provides $500,000 for beginning the work. Its construction is intrusted to the Navy Department, which may make contracts for any part of the work, as may be deemed expedient, and its operation for military, naval and postal purposes to the Postmaster-General. For other than the Government messages the toll is to be not over 25 cents per word.

Such a project comes fairly within the field of the Sundry Civil bill. Four years ago a like appropriation was, with rather less suitability, added by the Senate to the Diplomatic and Consular bill. It is worth noting, however, that then as now the amount voted for beginning the work was $500,000, and the cable to Honolulu was to be laid under Government supervision, and, when completed, to be under Government control. Several years earlier, and indeed before Hawaii became a republic, the Senate had also voted in favor of this great enterprise, but then in the form of a liberal subsidy to a private company that proposed to lay the cable.

That practical steps in the work should be taken at this session the President's message has made clear. While preliminary surveys are still needed for a Philippine cable on the stretch between Honolulu and Guam, and particularly on the final stretch between Guam and Manila, and for any branch to Japan and China, the preparatory work from California to Hawaii has already been done.

Between October, 1891, and May, 1892, the Albatross and the Thetis ran three lines of deep-sea soundings, two along great circles between Monterey and Honolulu and between Point Conception and Hilo Bay respectively, and the third on a rhumb line between the two former points. This last was the one recommended, but all were found favorable, and easier than that marked by the Tuscarora several years before. Especially satisfactory was the even bottom of ooze, resulting from the decomposition of shells; and although some high peaks and deep valleys were encountered, yet, as Lieutenant-Commander TANNER of the Albatross expressed it, the surveys showed that telegraphic communication was practicable. But additional surveys are provided for in this bill.

Congress should not fail to provide at least for a cable to Hawaii. Any line we shall lay across the Pacific, whether under private or public auspices, will touch at Honolulu, and on all accounts it is desirable to provide for this section of the ocean telegraph forthwith.

Will the Hon. JERRY SIMPSON deliver a farewell address or does his emotion choke his speech as he thinks of the peril to which the country will be exposed when he is no longer in Congress?

The Hon. RICHARD FRANKLIN PETTIGREW seems to be the statesman who is most in sympathy with the Hon. GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR at present. This must be a source of noble satisfaction to Mr. HOAR.

Complaint of the Porto Rican Post Office.

From the San Juan Correspondencia.

We, the branded stepchild of a great and powerful nation, appeal, once for all, to the postal authorities in Washington to order a complete and radical change in the Post Office.

The *Century* for March has as frontispiece a tinted reproduction of Ross Turner's extremely interesting painting, "The Golden Galleon," a fascinating picture. Other features of the number are Gen. F. V. Greene's first article on the capture of Manila; the final article by Mr. Hobson descriptive of the sinking of the Merrimac; articles by Lieut. Bernadou on "The Winslow at Cardenas," and Lieut. Winslow on "Cable Cutting at Cienfuegos," and the continuations of Prof. Wheeler's life of Alexander the Great, and Mr. Crawford's "Via Crucis." There are many other contributions, timely and interesting.

UNIFORM DIVORCE LAWS.

Some Obstacles to Them Pointed Out.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* As announced in THE SUN of to-day, there is to be a meeting on Thursday of the Legal Aid Society for the purpose of establishing a Woman's Auxiliary in the affairs of that organization, the members of which are to agitate for the establishment of "a uniform national divorce law." Fools rush in where angels fear to tread and opponents of "a uniform national divorce law" run, inevitably, the risk of being included in the category of fools, particularly when the numerous and sometimes serious objections to the existing system of separate divorce laws in each of the forty-five States are taken into account. Undeniably, as is stated, the present system has many serious defects, it gives rise to much injustice, and occasionally in some States to such flagrant disregard of the mandates of judicial tribunals as to amount to contempt of law, as well as contempt of court.

But there are two sides to all questions, and no question can be said to be permanently settled—and to be settled right—until, at least, both sides have been heard, and there is another side, the side of opposition, to the "uniform national divorce law" as proposed. Permit me to summarize briefly the most serious of these objections:

I. If there is to be established by authority of the national Government a uniform divorce law, operative equally in all the States, it must of necessity recognize as lawful the principle of divorce. At present the State of South Carolina has no divorce laws, and by a clause in its Constitution, recently amended, provides that divorces in that State shall at no time be lawful. This is no new thing in South Carolina, and the first of the effects of a "uniform national divorce law" would be to impose upon the people of that State and upon the people of other States, adopting similar prohibitive legislation, a divorce law where none now exists, an object foreign and repugnant to the agitation of those who are displeased with the present system.

II. In a number of the States, and particularly in most of the Southern States, marriages between white persons and colored persons, or those of negro descent, are not only prohibited, but a penalty is prescribed for the violation of the local laws concerning them. This prohibition exists in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia among Southern States, and also in California, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon and Utah among those in the West or Northwest. There is no such provision of law in any of the Eastern or Middle States, and in New York particularly such matrimonial alliances, if not frequent, incur no penalty. A "uniform national divorce law" operative in all the States would have either to allow the legalizing of such marriages in the States, where they are now prohibited and a penalty is imposed—a proposition which would encounter the most violent opposition in many of these States—or it would have to make void such marriages hereafter in the Northern and Eastern States. The objections to such marriages, which may be reasonable enough and justified by existing local conditions, are not subject to the same objections elsewhere, and in Louisiana, for instance, where there is a large mulatto population, and where there is a larger population of foreign ancestry from continental Europe than is the case in most other Southern States, no such prohibition exists.

As the law now is the State of Mississippi has one marriage law and the State of Louisiana, adjoining it, has another. These laws differ in essential particulars, but each is deemed to be satisfactory to the requirements of the State, the conditions of population and of residence, the conditions of sentiment and the social usages of the two States being unlike. To point out no other distinction (and there are several), Mississippi is under the rule, except as amended, of the Common Law, whereas Louisiana is under the Code Napoleon, having come into the United States through purchase and not through settlement or discovery. To make uniform the divorce laws in the two States, taking these only as an illustration of the others, it would be necessary either to abolish the present prohibition against inter-racial marriages in Mississippi or to establish it in Louisiana, a condition clearly impracticable. This objection applies only to marriages between white and colored people or whites and those of colored descent, but in four of the States there is a like prohibition between the marriage of white persons and Indians, and in three States against the marriage of Caucasians and Mongolians. How these provisions could be harmonized in a generally satisfactory manner and without totally disregarding the existing usages in some of the States, Texas notably, where the former Indian descent is considerable, is a problem, not a diversion.

III. The causes for which divorces are granted vary so radically in the States of the country that any attempt to harmonize them by the adoption of a uniform national divorce law would be almost out of the question; but assuming that it was attempted and attempted in perfect good faith, this difficulty would inevitably arise: In the more enlightened and progressive States, particularly in New York, where the rule is invariable, divorces are granted for one cause only. In other States various other causes suffice—desertion in some, habitual drunkenness in others, cruel and inhuman treatment in others, and voluntary amicable separation in two. In one State the marriage of a member of a religious sect which believes the institution of marriage to be unlawful is a ground for divorce. In some States, there are three in this group, the attempt upon the life of the husband or wife is ground enough for divorce. Some of the States allow divorces for conditions which seem in other States to be fantastical or absurd, as, for instance, "violent and ungovernable temper," "the vagrancy of the husband" (however caused) and "such other cause as may be deemed by a court sufficient, if satisfied that the couple can no longer live together." Necessarily, if a uniform divorce law is to be established by national authority, either the laws in the other States must be brought up to the New York standard or the divorce law in New York State must be brought to the standard of some of the extreme Western or Northwestern States. It is an essential characteristic of a uniform law that it must be uniform, and it cannot be uniform unless the same rule prevails everywhere, the same guiding principle of law for the granting or withholding of divorce.

IV. The present divorce laws of the States are the results of many years of legislation based upon a keen perception of the existing conditions and adapted to the requirements of each State separately. The judicial decisions in interpretations of divorce laws represent the practical knowledge and experience, culture, the erudition, the character analysis and sagacity of thousands of Judges, and to overturn these laws and the established decisions in support of them abruptly, taking divorce cases out of the jurisdiction of State courts and turning them summarily into the United States courts, which have, outside of the Territories, no present divorce jurisdiction, and practically no divorce lore, would be a very serious experiment, and one which would require, in addition, such radical changes in legislation as to utterly unsettle many established conditions. Not to enumerate all of these, it is necessary only to point out that the marriage laws of the several States, and particularly the prescribed ages of parental consent, would have to be altered. The provisions as to void or voidable marriages would have to be changed, and the penalties for the crime of bigamy, now separately punished in the several States according to the local laws of each, would have to be made a national matter and a standard penalty prescribed. If marriage laws, instead of being made, as is now the case, by the several States and enforced by the tribunals of these, were to be made by Congress, as it is proposed, their violation would become, not as is the case now, a violation of State but of Federal law, to be tried, and, on conviction, punished by the Federal courts. Such results could not be changed under uniform conditions without the total abolition, in fact, of the marriage laws in the forty-five States which have them, all the divorce laws in the forty-four States which have them, and all the penalties for the violation of marriage laws in every State.

So sweeping an alteration in national jurisprudence has never, perhaps, been heretofore proposed, and it is very doubtful if those who are agitating for such uniformity of legislation have not seriously or deeply considered just what it is that they are proposing and how it could be brought about. A uniform national divorce law, like the illusive principle of perpetual motion, is a very good thing—if attainable.

NEW YORK, Feb. 28. G. N.

Cabmen of London.

From the Westminster Gazette.

A smoking concert is to be given one night this week at a tavern in the West End for the benefit of a cab driver who has recently had the misfortune to lose his wife, and the invitation card, which has been widely distributed, contains the trade sobriquet of a large number of Jehus who will be present to support their friend. Among them are the following: Cold Blow Shelter, Midget Socks, St. Ann Scotty, Soap and Candles, Tom Streams, Under the Bed, Willing to Work and Won't, Old Lampy, Roll o' Carpet, Dick the Worm, Ginger Blade, Bobby Can't Sleep, Shapes, Happy Bowler, Cold Blow, Lungham Terrible, Gunpowder, Bricky, Old Bluey Young, Young Boney Shaw, Oiley, The Ferret, Music Master, Tatcho, Bunny, Old Damper, Coaly Joe, Bottles, Cleter Jack, Young Pickles, Sergt. Dabtoe, Rip, Dolly at R. P., Young Chang, Peppermint, Cold Blow Doctor, Happy Jack, Balmy Hunt, Tommy Truckles, Meaty, Dicky Work Lying-in, Bob Tooze, Elisha's Curley, Mad Scotty and Granny. The Chairman of the evening is known as Wild Charley.

EXPENDITURES OF THE STATE.

Evils Reported by the Joint Committee That Investigated the State Departments.

ALBANY, Feb. 28.—The joint sub-committee of the Senate Finance and the Assembly Ways and Means Committees appointed by the last Legislature to investigate the financial status of the State departments to-day submitted its report to the Legislature. Senator Higgins was Chairman of this sub-committee. He reports that about 10,000 persons were found in the employ of the State in its various departments and public institutions. The report says:

"For many years appropriations have been made to various departments, institutions and commissions in lump sums and could be extended for either salaries, clerk hire, labor, repairs, or other expenses, in the discretion of the departments, and the various salaries or wages paid for labor performed in each department is frequently entirely dependent upon the business ability, conservatism, generosity, favoritism or caprice of the heads of the departments. The result is that we find in one department a private secretary paid $2,700 a year, in another department $1,500 a year; in one department a confidential clerk paid $2,500 a year; in another $1,500 a year; in one department a male stenographer paid $900 a year, in another department a male stenographer paid $1,800 a year; in one department a female stenographer paid $400 a year, and in another department a female stenographer paid $1,400 a year; in one department a proofreader paid $45 a month, in another department a proofreader paid $125 a month; in one prison a teamster paid $50 a month and in another prison a teamster paid $75 a month."

The committee recommends the passage of a law limiting the number of employees and establishing rates of wages. The report continues:

"Your committee further finds that various departments are receiving moneys in the nature of fees for legitimate services performed, such as the Secretary of State's office, the Insurance Department, the Banking Department, the Attorney-General's Department, and others, in the case of the Secretary of State amounting to about $50,000 annually, and over which there is no audit by the Comptroller or other financial officer of the State. In some instances departments are permitted to expend moneys which they receive in this manner for such purposes and in such manner as the department head deems proper without control by the Legislature or an accounting at the Comptroller's office. The result is that the actual expenses of some of these departments are not published in the financial reports or known by the legislators making the appropriations for them. This system should be corrected; every dollar of money received by any department should be turned into the State Treasury, and no money paid except by regular appropriation of the Legislature, and an audit of all receipts and expenditures should be made by a financial officer of the State Government."

The committee says that no appropriation should hereafter be made available for the construction of buildings for institutions until after plans and specifications have been made and bids received, so that the contemplated work can be completed within the sum appropriated. It says:

"Your committee believes that it should be made a misdemeanor for any State officer to contract indebtedness on behalf of the State or to assume to bind the State in a sum in excess of money previously appropriated or otherwise lawfully available.

"It is desirable and we believe essential that the executive head, the Governor, should be able to obtain full and reliable information as to the financial condition in any or every department or institution of the State Government, as it is his duty to approve all appropriations made for their expenses. Under the present system he has no means of obtaining such information except through the department head, and if moneys are being wasted in any department through the employment of an excessive number of employees or otherwise, the department head is not apt to give him such information if he is aware of it, and thus he is often ignorant of the conditions until specially called to his attention."

Senator Higgins introduced two bills carrying out some of the recommendations of his report. One of them empowers the Governor to appoint and at pleasure remove a financial secretary at a salary of $4,000, who must be a certified public accountant. The financial secretary is authorized to investigate the accounts of any department spending State moneys. The second bill provides that no State department or employee shall contract indebtedness on behalf of the State in an amount in excess of the appropriation available for the purpose. It is also provided that moneys appropriated for a specific purpose shall not be expended for any other purpose. Another provision makes it necessary for State officials to turn over quarterly to the State Treasurer all fees received on behalf of the State.

LAW OF HORSE BITE.

If the Horse Is on the Sidewalk the Owner Is Liable Anyhow.

While Louis Stern of 128 Madison street was walking along the Bowery, near Houston street, last December, one of the two white horses attached to a brewery wagon of the Hoffman Brewing Company browsed on his coat sleeve and bit off a large piece, together with a bit of the skin of his left arm. He says that the horse had its feet on the sidewalk. He sued in the Fifth District Court for $25, the price of the coat, making no claim for his skin. Justice Goldfogle dismissed the case on the ground that he could not recover because he had not shown knowledge on the part of the owner of the horse that it was vicious.

The Appellate Term of the Supreme Court has overruled the lower court and directed a new trial. The Court says that, as the horse had its feet on the sidewalk, where it had no right to be, the defendant is liable, regardless of proof that the defendant knew his horse was vicious when it was left without an attendant.

The Court of Appeals.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Mr. Cruikshank's letter proposing that the Court of Appeals should be composed of twelve Judges, seven of whom should sit on six days of the week throughout the year, and that cases where three, or perhaps two, of the seven differ from their associates should be reheard before a full bench, suggests the most practical method of relieving the congestion of the Court of Appeals calendar without impairing the unity of the court of last resort.

The practical working of the Appellate Division in this department shows that an appellate court whose members alternate between sitting on the bench and writing opinions can perform all the work that is likely to come before it with unprecedented despatch, can do it well, and can at the same time preserve its uniformity of decision.

The system of having a full bench sit where there is strong dissent or a very important question involved came originally from the Federal and Massachusetts Supreme courts, and has been adopted in some of the States where the court of last resort sits in two divisions on unimportant cases, notably in Missouri and California. It has always worked well.

I differ from Mr. Cruikshank only on two unimportant details.

A vigorous enforcement of the present rule imposing 10 per cent. damages as a penalty for a frivolous appeal is better than an arbitrary allowance of 2 per cent. on all unsuccessful appellants. Probably one-third of the cases on the Court of Appeals calendar are frivolous and are taken for delay only. Every one of these that the court can locate should be penalized. But there are many cases of appeals from reversals, appeals where the Appellate Division divides or where the Court of Appeals will divide. Most of these will be affirmed by the Court of Appeals, but no appeal on which the Judges cannot agree should be penalized.

The present fee bill is reasonable if regarded from the American point of view of giving every man, rich or poor, his day in court unvexed by fees which only the affluent can afford to meet. The only exceptions to this rule that have been hitherto established are the granting of extra allowances on the trial of difficult and extraordinary cases and the imposing of a penalty on frivolous appeals. No scheme for increasing the costs in all kinds of appeals is likely to receive popular approval.

NEW YORK, Feb. 23. HENRY A. FORSTER.

The Police and Police Bill.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* We have something new confronting us. Superintendent Devery has summoned a few of the officers of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Organization before him and wanted to know what they intended to do in reference to the Police bill. He said it was necessary for us all to vote a unit to knock the bill out. That means $25 apiece for each officer. Our worthy Governor should be aware of this move and put a stop to it in time before the fund is raised.

NEW YORK, Feb. 27. PATROLMAN.

Woman's Suffrage Makes Definite Wholeness

From the Grand Junction Union Signal.

A woman may never have pined for citizenship, but once having held it, she knows she was not a full-grown woman before. An indescribable but definite wholeness comes into one's life.

MARY JEWETT TELFORD.

GRAND JUNCTION, Col.

Ambiguous.

From Brooklyn Life.

Miss Flirty—How do you like my new engagement ring?

Miss Cutting—It's a beauty, when does it come off?

POOL TURNS OUT A GERRY AGENT.

Magistrate Indignant at the Society's Abandonment of an Abduction Case.

John B. Hamilton, the commercial traveller of 255 West Forty-fifth street who was arrested a week ago on a charge of abducting Jessie Dorden, a schoolgirl, 15 years old, of 300 West Fifty-first street, was arraigned in the Yorkville Police Court yesterday for examination. The girl told of her relations with Hamilton while she was away from home. A doctor's certificate corroborated some of her statements. Jennie Hawkins, 17 years old, who lives in West Fifty-eighth street, said she introduced the Dorden girl to Hamilton and had also introduced other schoolgirls to him. Magistrate Pool then adjourned the case until March 7.

Agent Agnew of the Gerry society immediately afterward informed the Magistrate that he withdrew from the case and that the society would have nothing further to do with it.

"The court will try and get along without your society," Magistrate Pool replied.

"The girl has been cared for in our rooms," continued Agnew, "but Superintendent Jenkins instructed me to inform you that the society will not again receive her." He added that his society took this action because the Superintendent did not think Hamilton could be convicted of the charge.

"But the case is still pending in court. It is not disposed of yet," observed the Magistrate.

"That doesn't matter. We won't take the girl," answered the Gerry agent.

"If you abandon this girl I will not permit you or your society to come before me again," said the Magistrate warmly. "Is the Gerry society greater than the courts that it shall say whether or not a crime shall be prosecuted? Shall it insist that a girl who has been assaulted shall be turned out on the streets, so that friends of the prisoner may have a chance to influence her?"

Agnew made no reply. The Magistrate wanted to commit the girl to the Catholic Protectory as a witness until the case was finished, but found that he could not legally do so. He then again insisted that the Gerry agent care for the girl, but Agnew still refused.

"Then step down, sir, and never come before me again," said the Magistrate. "You must vacate that room and not occupy it again. That room belongs to the court."

Agnew got his coat and hat from the room set apart for the Gerry agents and then sat down in the courtroom.

"Leave this court, sir," ordered Magistrate Pool. "Your society has not heard the end of this matter. I will hold the society responsible for this girl, which it turns out from official guardianship before the case is ended."

The father of the Dorden girl was in court. Magistrate Pool asked him to make a complaint against Hamilton, as the Gerry society had withdrawn as complainant. Dorden refused. Hamilton himself by this time had already left the court under bail. The girl was allowed to go with her father.

WILL OF EDWARD H. R. LYMAN.

An Estate of $1,500,000 Divided—Many Bequests to Charities.

The will of Edward H. R. Lyman was filed for probate in the office of the Surrogate in Brooklyn yesterday. Mr. Lyman died at his home, 34 Remsen street, on Jan. 20. The estate is valued at $1,500,000. The testator leaves $200,000 with his horses and carriages to his widow, Catherine A. Lyman, and the Remsen street residence in lieu of dower. Each of his children, Annie J. L. White and Frank Lyman, who was formerly Deputy City Works Commissioner during Mayor Schieren's administration, receives $200,000. Susan Leslie and Catherine R. Belmont, sisters of the testator, receive $10,000 each. Mary Lyman, Hannah E. Brewer and Frances Brewer, his nieces, receive $5,000 each, and Ellen L. Mills and Rebecca A. Low are each to have $2,500. Mr. Lyman also made