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The Sun's Brief Against the Associated Press.

Since the first announcement that THE SUN had filed a complaint with the Attorney-General of the United States arraigning the Associated Press as a news monopoly and petitioning for abatement of the evil through action in the courts, widespread interest in the proceeding has been displayed by the public and innumerable requests have been made for copies of the full text of the brief drawn by Messrs. JAMES M. BECK and CLARENCE J. SHEARN, THE SUN'S counsel. It is not merely in newspaper circles that curiosity and sympathy have been manifested. From lawyers and from men in many classes of business have come expressions of the hope that a fuller view of the case might be given to the public than was afforded by the summary published at the time of the filing of the papers.

In response to this general demand we print in our news columns this morning the entire brief, considering that, as is argued in the document itself, the matter of freedom in the collection, distribution and publication of news is of the highest importance not merely to newspapers but to the entire public, who depend upon the free and impartial reporting of daily occurrences for the intelligent performance of the duties of citizenship.

An edition of the brief, together with the appended exhibits, is now in the press, and it will be ready for distribution in pamphlet form in the course of two or three days.

Unmasking the Owen Bill.

Senator OWEN'S bill to regulate the stock exchanges by an unhallowed abuse of Federal power over the mails has not fared very well at the hearings held by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, of which Mr. OWEN is chairman. As to the extent of its popular support a large and wholesome degree of doubt may be permitted. Witnesses for the bill have been wonderfully lacking, while an impressive body of testimony against it has been given by a large number of substantial and intelligent citizens.

Some of the most effective of them have been members of the Senate committee itself who, by their shrewd questions and blunt statements, have exposed the bill's defects. It was indeed precisely such interrogatory that tore the mask off the measure on Thursday and exposed it for what it is, a bill to coerce not the stock exchanges but the States.

The scheme to close the mails to the transmission of quotations made in established stock markets, unless those markets are conducted by incorporated exchanges, is now explained as a plan to bring the stock exchanges under regulation by the States. Possibly this explanation is a refuge resorted to on account of the countrywide protest against the erection of the Post Office Department into a bureau of oppression such as might be endured in Russia but could never be tolerated in America. Even so the retreat leaves the advocacy of the Owen bill in rather worse shape than before the explanation was made.

No amount of verbal juggling can alter the definite fact that even if the object of the bill is to bring about what is called the reform of the stock exchanges through State regulation its proponents aim to attain this object through subjecting a State to Federal compulsion to enact reformatory legislation by threatening to deprive any stock market maintained therein of mail and telegraph facilities. If this is what the Owen bill is driving at, its altogether autocratic and altogether undemocratic purpose suggests the existence of a political spirit at Washington which deserves the political rebuke from the people that it will undoubtedly receive when the proper time comes.

While the country has been travelling pretty far along the road of revolution, there is still a vast amount of popular veneration for the institutions of republican government. Reform of the stock exchanges has long been demanded and progress has been made in that direction, but the reduction of States to Federal provinces would be a high price to pay for what further stock exchange reforms may be necessary.

Nor would the status of the Owen bill be improved if it were altered to hit directly at corporations on the theory that the culpability of the stock exchanges for financial abuses has been less than that of corporate managements responsible for watering securities or publishing misleading or inadequate reports. To close the mails to corporations which did not comply with Federal standards of corporate behavior in order to coerce States into passing new corporation laws conforming to Federal prescription means Federal coercion of the States just the same.

Thanks are due to Senator NELSON of Minnesota for his part in disclosing just what is contemplated by the Owen bill. Senator NELSON is a good deal of a progressive and hails from a progressive community, but there are limits to progressiveness which are recognized by the sturdy Americanism that Senator NELSON exemplifies.

When Innocent Men and Women Are Locked Up.

That many of the older police stations in New York city are inadequately equipped for the detention of prisoners and the housing of the police whose headquarters they are is a notorious fact. It is again brought to the fore by the reports of the State Prison Commission's inspectors condemning a number of houses, and the new exposure of discreditable conditions, coming at a time when penal methods are attracting unusual interest, is likely to attract wide attention.

In fairness to the city it should be borne in mind that it has not been blind to the situation. No complaint is made against the modern stations, in which the proper facilities for handling prisoners decently are provided as a matter of course. Stations of this type are building in all parts of the city, and eventually the old and discreditable structures will be abandoned. This will take time, however, and a good many years must elapse before these relics of a less enlightened or less liberal day are all eliminated from all the boroughs.

As this delay is inevitable it might not be out of place for the city to adopt temporary expedients for the comfort and well being of station prisoners. It must be remembered that these persons are in many cases innocent of wrongdoing or are minor misdemeanants. In any event they are unconvicted. They certainly deserve clean and comfortable lodging and decent treatment from the authorities before conviction as well as after condemnation.

Senator Bacon.

Of the Senate of the Fifty-fourth Congress, the first in which AUGUSTUS OCTAVIUS BACON sat, how many of the Senators who welcomed him on his initial appearance still sit in the chamber just bereaved of his long, faithful, able service? If we count right, only seven: PERKINS of California, HENRY CABOT LODGE, KNUTE NELSON, JACOB H. GALLINGER, BENJAMIN RYAN TILLMAN, MARTIN of Virginia, WARREN of Wyoming.

Of the great or still unfaded names and undisputed or respectable talents of the Senate it is enough to mention of that dead JOHN MORGAN of Alabama, PLATT and HAWLEY of Connecticut, GORDON of Georgia, PALMER and CULLOM of Illinois, DAN VORHEES, WILLIAM B. ALLISON, HALE and FRYE of Maine, GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR, CUSHMAN K. DAVIS, GEORGE G. VEST; those two strong, salient, and, in their widely different ways, engaging characters JOHN P. JONES and Old BILL STEWART of Nevada; DAVID B. HILL, JOHN SHERMAN, MATTHEW S. QUAY, ISHAM G. HARRIS, another strange and forcible and accomplished person, whose evidently enormous age was a secret; JUSTIN MORRILL of Vermont, JOHN DANIEL, honey tongued orator, who looked like EDWIN BOOTH; STEPHEN B. ELKINS, WILLIAM F. VILAS and ROGER QUARLES MILLS.

Of Mr. BACON'S living colleagues now in the Senate it is enough to name GEORGE GRAY, WILLIAM E. CHANDLER, NELSON W. ALDRICH, HENRY M. TELLER and JAMES DONALD CAMERON.

Among such men and their peers in later Senates Mr. BACON sat a worthy associate. A brave soldier, a sound lawyer, a learned and an acute parliamentarian; a thorough student of many momentous questions that arose in his time and in foreign affairs, accurately informed, discreet and tactful; he was a Senator his State and country were proud of; he cherished and upheld and illustrated the dignified and noble traditions of the Senate; traditions that may be moribund, that may be of too thoughtful and independent a cast to suit the popular wax noses of the moment, but which have honorably served the welfare of the United States and the purposes of the Constitution.

King Gustav and His People.

The constitutional question that has arisen in Sweden is the more remarkable because of the strongly democratic instincts of the people. With the exception of that of Norway the court of Sweden is probably the least formal of any in Europe; yet there the accepted rule of conduct for a constitutional sovereign, that he shall speak on political questions only through his Ministers or as prompted by them, is sharply challenged. The difficulty, which has involved the resignation of the Staaff Cabinet, arose over King GUSTAV'S advocacy before 30,000 landowners and peasants of a considerable increase in the armaments of his kingdom. A Socialist demonstration followed protesting against any increase in armaments, and the King's action was the occasion of an acrimonious correspondence between himself and his Cabinet.

With the resignation of the latter the constitutional question becomes acute. Baron GERARD LUIS DE GEER has failed in his efforts to form a Cabinet, and it is doubtful if a new Liberal Ministry can be constructed. A Conservative Government would hardly last long, and so the constitutional question will probably be decided at a general election in the near future. Present indications are that King GUSTAV has the country with him in his departure from the forms of constitutional monarchy. The resignation of the Cabinet was immediately answered by a demonstration of university professors and students whom the King had no hesitation in addressing, and the armament increase has the powerful advocacy of SVEN HEDIN, whose influence in Sweden is immeasurably greater than that of any other single individual.

It will be interesting to see whether King GUSTAV has the personal strength and power of appeal to emulate his neighbor the Kaiser. The methods that he is adopting are different, for the Kaiser never even pretends to any doubt as to the divine right of kings, while King GUSTAV might almost have sat at the feet of Mr. LLOYD GEORGE. It is dangerous to allow a constitutional monarch to appeal to the people.

Congenial Spirits.

At a dinner given in his honor on Saturday night County Register JOHN J. HOPPER said that he was no longer useful in the Independence League and sought "congenial spirits who will help to make the Democratic party democratic." Mr. HOPPER would divide all mankind into two great subdivisions:

"I will say that I believe in a government by parties, and I also believe that naturally there are but two political parties—the aristocratic and the Democratic parties—those who believe in the few ruling and those who believe that all, men and women, should take part in governing the country, just as they do in bearing the burdens of the country."

If we read these novel and weighty lines correctly it would appear that "the aristocratic party" includes all Bourbon reactionaries, all Prohibitionists and the entire old guard of Armageddon regulars. That the Democrats alone believe "in bearing the burdens of the country" is measurably true, particularly such burdens as the Good Roads Pork Barrel, and that they let Uncle SAM carry the barrel only after it is empty is further proof of their humanitarianism.

That Mr. HOPPER will find congenial spirits in the Democratic party is certain by reason of the fact that he has discovered some truly paramount panaceas. Here is a paragraph brimful of them:

"Let us hope that when the union of all the real Democratic elements occurs they will not be afraid to proclaim the truth as they see it. Let them realize that the cure for the evils of Democracy is more democracy. Let them realize that our evils come from transgressing natural laws and are entirely man made. Let them demand that no matter how hoary a law is with age it must go if it is unjust."

Let them learn to sing with the cadence of the late Colonel ROBERT INGERSOLL one of his own great perorations: "I believe in the republicanism of the family, I believe in the democracy of the home, I believe in liberty, equality and love." If Democrats will but join Mr. HOPPER in his quest of the good and the true and the beautiful the Secretary of State will have no cause for calling editorial attention to Mr. ROGER SULLIVAN'S complete lack of any conception of the dignity of office, for according to the standards of Mr. HOPPER the Hon. ROGER SULLIVAN is not a Democrat, but an aristocrat. His spirit is not congenial.

Anyhow, Watch Your Step!

If the Interborough company, as it hopes, has found a device to bridge the yawning chasms between subway car doors and curved station platforms one of the constant perils of travel on its lines will be eliminated. Installation of the mechanism at Fourteenth street will begin to-day. If the operation of the contrivance under actual traffic conditions bears out the results of experimental tests the company announces that it will lose no time in putting in the equipment wherever it is needed.

The present generation of New Yorkers has been pretty well educated to "watch its step." If the subway were never overcrowded few persons would fall into the pits its builders conferred on the town. But the subway is always overcrowded, and even the most careful citizen finds it difficult to watch his step when he is being propelled into or out of a car by a mob of determined athletes. The ubiquitous hog does not make the situation easier. And if the slit skirt had not come to her rescue, how could woman have used the underground road after the adoption of the fashion now popular?

Meantime, in and out of the subway, it will do nobody any harm to watch his step.

The youth passed a ten dollar bill to the justice, who began to count out the change, the legal fee of a justice for marrying being $2.

"Oh, never mind that," airily broke in the young man. "I work for FORD."—*Despatch from Detroit.*

What a lesson in sociology have we here! And better still, what a subject for an idealistic painter: Thrift and Philanthropy clasped hand in hand, but Thrift is tossing away ten dollar bills with the off hand. A penny saved is a penny earned, but a ten dollar bill when you "work for FORD"? Why, don't mention it. Pooh, pooh! keep the change! Uplift begins at home.

Celebration of the semi-centennial of the death of STEPHEN FOSTER is certain to revive the discussion as to the character of his songs. That they are not really folk songs, though they have the characteristics of folk songs, has long been the opinion of authoritative writers on music. FOSTER invented his melodies and from this viewpoint they are the art songs of a composer who followed the idioms of a part of the population.

Yet many love to insist that "Old Black Joe," "Massa's in de Cold, Cold Ground" and other songs by the author of "The Old Kentucky Home" are folk songs because they represent the negro musical idioms.

The most important characteristic of FOSTER'S songs seems to many to be their strong national form. Not only are they American in their thematic material, but that their composer was a native of this country marks a distinguishing feature between them and the popular songs of the present time. Few of the men who are putting before the public the successful and ephemeral ditties of the day are American by birth, and indeed few of them have been here more than a year or more before they begin to compose the one kind of music which it is possible to make appealing to the American public to-day. There are of course incalculable artistic distances between the compositions of FOSTER and the so-called "rags" that are the single form in which the popular American composer of the day seeks to express his musical talents. It is another peculiarity of the songs of FOSTER that they were given to the world when songs for Americans were written by their compatriots. That is not true today; and it would be pleasant to believe that our national taste in music unalloyed is better represented by the negro melodies of FOSTER than by their modern substitutes.

Mr. BRYAN chose for his theme "The Writer With a Message," in contradistinction to the writer who writes for the money. The comparison he drew was that there was no comparison.—*News of the day.*

Likewise the citizens of Leesburg believe that the orator who talks (or to be more technical, lectures) for money is incomparable with a speaker with a message F. O. D. (free on delivery).

The inmates of the women's prison at Auburn underwent their first instruction in the tango and other popular dances on Saturday. Some of them were found to know nothing except the waltz and the twostep. It is gratifying to learn that the State does not intend to turn these unfortunates loose utterly unprepared for the battle of life.

OKLAHOMA MINSTRELS.

Grand Sweet Songs That Chant the Buffalo and Mountain Eyebrows.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I read with interest your ecstasies from time to time on those sweet singers who make musical the vales of Skowhegan and Podunk, yet always with a kind of pained astonishment that you take no note of our Oklahoma bards. You speak of Coogler and Elmore. Conceive my indignation that you do not mention Fry, Jacobs and others of this new and millennial Commonwealth, time's noblest offspring.

Is it loathsome envy that causes you to pass up such men? Coogler and Elmore! Go on with your base and perhaps venal praise; I scorn it. I shout pæans for Oklahoma. Hesperian bards, I celebrate you! Evohe! Yet perhaps I am unjust. You in the sordid East cannot know the appeal made to us in this great palpitating West by native bards singing local themes. How, for instance, could you understand the thrill of Fry's poem on the buffalo? You see before you the wind blown plains, the sandy, treeless Cimarron, the crawling spread of the unnumbered herd, the Indian on his glass eyed pinto, bow in hand. And then the surge and thunder of the hunt. In the background the smoky teepees, with dogs and pot bellied squaws. How lovingly the author treats his theme. Seeing all, slighting nothing, bringing out the smallest details in brief Homeric touches, as thus the Indian bow:

With this instrument in hand
He makes the buffalo stand
Beside the little brook
While off his hide he took.

But I cannot dwell upon Fry. I must hasten to a much greater. I have before me the latest volume of Francis Warren Jacobs. I would that I could give you some idea of these compositions, but I cannot; it is impossible. A few lines from "Irene" may suggest what I am unable to express:

I was standing in the sunlight
As he threw his evening fuse,
Cross the rolling, playing waters,
To the city, Santa Cruz.

At my feet the ocean thundered,
High voices rose here and there,
And the lips that love the mountains
Answered in the echo's blare.

Sun's fane fell and stars unnumbered,
O'er the city by the sea,
Hung their lamps to watch the slumber
Of the nodding pines and me.

Here I sat till midnight's order
Bade the water's ranks retreat.
Then I rose to seek the city,
And in dreams my thoughts complete.

All the night I walked in wonder,
Up and down the vales of strife,
Just as stars fell dim and dying,
And the day stood up in life.

While the mountains seemed as eyebrows
On the forehead of a dream——

No more, no more! Let me break off as this lovely image trembles in the consciousness. Pausing a moment I recall some of the admired things of verse: Wordsworth's "The swan on still Saint Mary's Lake," Keats's "Magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas," Shelley's "tender bluebells, at whose birth the sod scarce heaved," Shakespeare's "daffodils that come before the swallow dares and take the winds of March with beauty." I have thrilled over them. But what then? Is the canon closed? Certainly not. In fact, it is generally agreed that the defect of modern verse is its servility to outworn forms under which inspiration falters and dies. In this fresh and buoyant West, untouched by the blight of old things, men will arise to break the trammels which lie so heavy on the divine art. As Whitman says, "Produce great men, the rest follows."

MOPSUS.
DOBY WALLS, Okla., February 10.

A Sure Way to Get Rich Slowly.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A recent issue of THE SUN extracts from the Baltimore *American* an item to the effect that a man in Connecticut at no time receiving more than $12 a week had saved $60,000, through parsimony. A SUN correspondent, "N. N. G.," calculates that if the man's weekly expense was but 50 cents, one hundred and three and a third years would be required to accumulate the sum. Wrong.

The correspondent takes no cognizance of rapid arithmetical progression of principal and interest when compounding. Using rough figures, let us assume the saver to be in possession of $1,000 at twenty-five years of age. At the end of the first year thereafter he would be worth $1,550, computing interest at 5 per cent. At the end of the fifth year $4,093, tenth year $7,450, twentieth year $18,168, thirtieth year $35,871, thirty-ninth year $61,837. Original capital $1,000; savings for thirty-nine years at $500, $19,500; interest compounding at 5 per cent., $46,307. Man then sixty-four years of age, if he survived the deprivation of common comforts.

VERY EASY.
NEW YORK, February 15.

"Ruckus."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* An editorial article in THE SUN asks "Is There Any Such Word as 'Ruckus'?" and brings in its cousins "rumpus," "ruction" and so forth. I send you this extract from a story in the *Saturday Evening Post* of February 14:

"Anybody heard of any ruckus? It seems to me I done heard some talk in town about a feller being cut up or something."

SCRANTON, Pa., February 14. J. J. C.

A Variant.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have heard colored men in the South say "rookus."

LOUISIANA.
WASHINGTON, D. C., February 14.

A Phrygian Kicker.

Midas found all he touched turned to gold. "Why couldn't it have been radium?" he complained.

POLITICAL CONVENTIONS.

Mr. Lincoln's Opposition to Their Introduction Into Illinois.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The editorial article of February 12 entitled "The Alien Guest" says:

What welcome, what hospitality, what place or influence would there be for Abraham Lincoln in this country that worships him for the most part ignorantly? He was boomed adroitly in Illinois and finally nominated in the Chicago national convention of 1860 by "deals," promises, the cleverest manipulating. If he revisited the glimpses of the moon he would find Presidential primaries in the political incubators, State conventions and national conventions regarded as evils to be abolished and instruments of Satan.

The last sentence implies that Mr. Lincoln looked upon political conventions with favor. If the "Life of Abraham Lincoln" by Miss Ida M. Tarbell is correct upon this point your assumption is erroneous. This book states (Vol. 1, p. 128):

The absorbing topic of the winter (1835-36), however, and the one in which Lincoln was chiefly concerned, was the threatened naturalization of the convention system in Illinois. Up to this time candidates for office in the United States had generally nominated themselves as we have seen Lincoln doing. * * * Along with the Presidential convention came the machine, an organization of all those who belonged to a party, intended to secure unity of effort. * * * The Whigs, Lincoln among them, violently opposed the new scheme.

In March, 1832, Lincoln announced himself as a candidate for the General Assembly of Illinois. "The only preliminary expected of a candidate for the Legislature of Illinois at that date," says Miss Tarbell, "was an announcement stating his 'sentiments with regard to local affairs.'" Lincoln made this announcement by means of a circular composed of about two thousand words.

Speaking of the convention system, the book quoted says:

The efficacy of the new method was so apparent, however, that, let the Whigs preach as they would, it was rapidly adopted.

We have seen that the institution of political conventions did not have Mr. Lincoln's approval, but that this innovation was adopted against his protest.

Seeing what a potent source of the perpetuation of corrupt power these conventions have become since Lincoln's public career began, have we any warrant for believing that were he living now the position he took in 1835 would be altered?

ELMER H. YOUNGMAN.
NEW YORK, February 15.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

Some Excellent Schools That Are Supported by "Real Workers."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* William Gill in his recent letter to THE SUN illustrates afresh the truthfulness of the scriptural text that "a prophet is not without honor save in his own country." Writing from Dorchester, Mass., he says that he "has yet to find vocational training advocated by real workers in the trades and actual users of tools." If Mr. Gill will take a car and go down to 20 Parmenter street, Boston, only a very short distance from his home, he will find an institution, now about fourteen years old, called the School of Printing. It is one of the very best of the many trade schools in this country, and has at its head a man who has given vocational training an especial study, Samuel F. Hubbard. This school was established and has been carried on all these years by workers in the printing trade.

Here in New York we have the Hudson Guild, a comparatively new institution for the training of youth. This, too, has a printing school. It is not only indorsed by the workers at that trade but is supported by the joint contributions of the employers and the unions, "Big Six" contributing $2,000 toward its support for this current year and the employers a similar amount. This is a unique institution in that it finds both employer and trade unionist working harmoniously to further the development of skilled labor. It also gives the lie to the frequent assertion that unionists won't let the American boy learn a trade. They will, but they want him to learn it under proper supervision.

Indianapolis has a school of training in the same vocation, maintained by workers in that trade; so has Chicago in the Lakeside Press, while the shop schools of the General Electric Company's works at Lynn, Mass., and Schenectady, N. Y., are noted for their excellence. The New York Trade School is an old institution, founded under private auspices it is true, but with a splendid record for training young men in a diversity of trades.

I could enumerate many other excellent vocational schools, but the above should be sufficient to enlighten Mr. Gill and to convince him that vocational education has the support of "real workers in the trades."

JOHN F. MCCABE.
BROOKLYN, February 14.

THE REFORMER.

Somewhat Violent Wishes of a Friend of Dancing and Fun.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A reformer is one who, because he does not care for dancing or any of the other recreations most people enjoy, strives to prevent others from enjoying themselves as they see fit, and to ton it all credence is given to these spineless imbeciles and people really fear to do things they enjoy for fear of being censured.

What business is it of any one's if I want to dance or enjoy myself in any way I see fit? The reformer will say that he is looking out for my welfare, both physically and morally, but let him not worry and think of others as long as his own little narrow mind is at ease regarding his own salvation.

I sigh with Nero, "Oh, if these reformers had but one neck!" I could throttle them into perdition with one operation, this country would really be the land of the free.

M. R.
NEW YORK, February 14.

"Peter Wilkins."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Mrs. Inez Haynes Gillmore, writing of her book "Angel Island" in THE SUN, says: "When I came to write 'Angel Island' I borrowed a leaf from these two masters," Defoe and Swift. She omits to mention that she borrowed also from Robert Paltock, author of that curious book "The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins and the Flying Woman," published by Dodsley in 1750, and republished a number of times since then. It is found frequently in catalogues of dealers in old books. I have a copy myself.

Any one curious on the subject will find an account of it in any cyclopædia of English literature. The Dictionary of English Literature by W. Davenport Adams, published by Cassell and Company, has a full account of the book in the article "Peter Wilkins"; also Leigh Hunt in "The Seer."

ALTA.
CINCINNATI, Ohio, February 12.

Comrades.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have always supposed that cheese went all right with any sort of pie, but Deacon Todd of Middle Haddam tells me that the only pie that cheese ought to be eaten with is apple. Can that be correct?

PIE LOVER.
MIDDLETOWN, Conn., February 14.

The Mathematician.

From the Washington Star.

Father's looking very solemn.
Puts down figures in a column;
Adds 'em up and tries again
As he wears a look of pain.
Everybody stands and gazes,
While his language oft amazes,
As he sadly plods along,
Getting every answer wrong!

Hour by hour he keeps on trying,
All his brain and nerve applying
To the sums he has to do—
Tears 'em up and starts anew.
Is he worrying? Well, rather!
Do not bother dear old father,
Shut your ears and turn your backs.
Leave him to his income tax.

PANAMA CANAL TOLLS.

British Contention Against the Manner, Not the Fact, of Coastwise Exemption.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* About coastwise exemption there is at bottom no dispute between the Americans and the English, although at top the dispute is bitter. It may be that on both sides many talk too loud to hear themselves really think, let alone to be able really to hear what the other side is saying. The matter is in truth very simple.

The British complaint is put plainly enough in the British note of November, two years ago, as follows:

Unless the whole volume of shipping which passes through the canal, and which benefits all equally by its services, is taken into account, there are no means of determining whether the tolls chargeable upon a vessel represent that vessel's fair proportion of the current expenditure properly chargeable against the canal.

Their complaint becomes nil, if in our adding up of the gross receipts yearly as a basis for computing from time to time the proper toll stipulated for in the treaty, we indeed let "the whole volume of shipping which passes through the canal," including thus the coastwise tonnage, be "taken into account"; this for computation only and by no means for collection.

It is not hard to understand that the British do not care a stiver whether the American Government collects the coastwise toll, or does not collect it, or collects it and throws it into the ocean. All the British ask is that the toll taken from British vessels should be made no greater in consequence of any dispositions made by us in respect of coastwise tonnage. If the coastwise tonnage in transit goes into the computation of the just and equitable toll guaranteed by the treaty the actual passing of coastwise money into the hands of our Government is a matter of indifference to the British.

Lest for one reason or another the nature of their complaint should be mistaken, they state the nature of it repeatedly in two sentences which follow the paragraph above quoted from the November note. In those sentences it is not exemption from an actual payment of the toll to which they object, but exemption "in such a way that no receipts from such ships are taken into account." In that case they say there would be "no guarantee that the vessels upon which tolls are being levied are not being made to bear more than their fair share."

The next sentence after that makes "demand * * * that all vessels, * * * whatever their flag or their character, shall be taken into account."

So far, then, as concerns the British the trouble can be ended by merely amending the offensive provision through adding as follows in italics:

No tolls shall be levied upon vessels engaged in the coastwise trade of the United States *in the sense of their being actually collected; but the tonnage of all such vessels shall be measured and the tolls assessable thereon shall be taken into account as if they were received income of the canal in the same manner as though collected.*

There is no doubt that exemption is a subsidy, but the British expressly declare that they do not question our right to grant subsidies; they only say that we are debarred from granting a subsidy in such a way as to impose an unfair share of the burden, or create a discrimination, or otherwise prejudice British rights.

To ourselves, however, an amendment by itself would not be satisfactory. If the act makes no provision to protect us as well against those damnable frauds which some of our own undesirable citizens may attempt to practise upon the canal revenues, these revenues may suffer greatly. In case it is our meaning that genuine coastwise shipping shall be benefited and this only, then the act should contain definitions and prescribe strict limitations, particularly as to cargo; and those owners who by transshipment, &c., evade payment should get such fine and such imprisonment, as should also their agents and co-conspirators, that these offences would be very rare. British and other foreigners conspiring with our own citizens to defraud the canal revenue should be reached in punishment as far as possible, even if only by confiscation of the cargo. As for British ship owners suffering by unfair competition through coastwise exemption, there is something, not much, in this. Here the matter would lie between British ship owners and British cargo owners. British ship owners may suffer to some extent, but the British cargo owner gets a benefit. The reason why is, by deducting the tolls the United States denotes the toll money. "Subsidy" can be spelled out e-x-e-m-p-t-i-o-n in the primary schools of economics, but the boy deserves a flogging. There is not the slightest difference between a subsidy express and the tacit subsidy of exemption. A British cargo owner can get some or all of the benefit of the subsidy and thus a larger margin of profit. The skipper can indeed complain: his voyage is shortened by a transshipment. But the exporter can pay him higher, because the United States is indirectly paying the exporter a subsidy, even when he is British. I have said before and I say it again, that there is no opera bouffe so amusing as the politics of subsidies and exemptions.

Apparently it is because the British have not seen that it is quite as much for our own sakes, for the sake of our revenue, as for the sake of justice to them that we would certainly crush out fraud in respect to coastwise traffic, either in the vessel or in the cargo. If they see it now, or can be made to see it, the trouble is over; or if not, why should they not be content with a mere amendment, if they at the same time reserve an exception till they see how the amendment works in practice? This last indeed would benefit us, because the reservation would help to keep us on the lookout against evasions, all of which would hurt us more than they can hurt the British.

To such an ending of the dispute the pronouncement of the Baltimore convention in favor of coastwise exemption is least of all an obstacle. Every just person should, in interpreting and applying this "plank," treat it precisely as a just Judge treats in his judgment a contract of which the meaning is disputed between parties. Everything that is doubtful in it, or that bears two constructions, he will construe invariably toward the good, and if some provision might to another seem perhaps rather to intend injustice, he will make it mean what is just, if he can do this without violating the letter of the agreement. Is there one member of that convention ready now to stand up and declare openly that in voting this "plank" he interpreted it to mean that coastwise shipping, besides being exempted from actual payment, should be so huggermuggered in the computations that it would not be counted in the making up of the amount which ought to be assessed upon foreign vessels as their just share of the expense of the undertaking? There may be one or more such, but I think the majority of the members will declare that although the details of the mode and manner of the exemption had not yet been thoroughly thought out, the intent was simply to lift the burden from the American coastwise owner, without fraud upon the foreigners, to all of whom is guaranteed an equal treatment with ourselves. It would be a very bad thing, either if the party were disrupted by this issue, or if the unspeakable disgrace of seeming desirous to cheat the foreigners should be cast upon us by a failure to secure a repeal of this provision, when relief through a mere amendment such as is proposed above would have been procurable and would have been assented to by almost every one.

MARSTON NILES.
TOPSHAM, Me., February 14.

Something Light and Humorous.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* What should be done to the man who on a day when the thermometer is 18 degrees below zero stops you to say, "Rather chilly today, hey?"

NEMESIS.
UTICA, February 14.

A Speech From the Throne.

The King was in his counting house counting up his money.

"But I'll be hornswoggled if I can make out my income tax statement," he exclaimed.

BRITT FAVORS PUBLIC BUILDINGS FOR POLLS

Head of Election Board Wants Legislation Authorizing Change.

URGES STATE MEASURE

Suggests Use of Court Houses and Armories as Well as Schools.

J. G. Britt, president of the Board of Elections, issued a statement yesterday arguing for State legislation that would provide for the use of public buildings not only in this city but throughout the State for election purposes. He thinks that the return to the schoolhouse as the centre of political activity would be a splendid thing.

Mr. Britt is apparently angered by statements in newspapers to the effect that the Board of Education has sanctioned the use of public schools as polling places. He says that something more than mere sanction must be obtained: that legislation is necessary.

"We already have insisted that legislation is necessary," he says in his statement. "We never have been opposed to the use of public buildings and public schools as polling places, and let it be noted that the Board of Elections now takes initiative in that matter.

Wants Action by Legislature.

"Our position is just this: Before using any public building for a polling place we deem it only prudent to have the rights of this board definitely set forth by statute, so that we may not be merely occupying space on toleration and subject to caprice or notions of a department head or subordinate thereof. It seems to us that if the matter is worth going into at all the proper step would be to have the Legislature amend the law so as to give us the absolute right to take possession of space in public buildings for the proper discharge of our duties and also provide that any and all officials must aid this board in the matter of details.

"This would be simply in keeping with section 199 of the election law, which states in detail the manner in which the Police Commissioner must cooperate with this board in the performance of its duties. Another and rather serious question arises which it is well to consider. Section 177 of the election law requires that the public copy of registration shall be left in a prominent position in the place of registration from the first day of registration until election day and shall at all reasonable times be open to public inspection and for making copies thereof.

"Who is going to take care of the public copy? Will the Police Commissioner detail a policeman to safeguard the same, or will this duty devolve upon the janitor of the public building? The statute requires that this copy be accessible to voters at all reasonable times for the purpose of making copies thereof. The question is one which affects not merely the public school system but every other public building in this city.

Suggests Use of Court Houses.

"For instance: Why not use the court house in the Borough of Manhattan located in West Fifty-fourth street? It seems to me that there is plenty of good space there for a polling place. How about the court house in East Fifty-seventh street? How about the armories? I can continue to recite instances of many other buildings throughout the city.

"Speaking personally for myself, I hold that this is a question which goes beyond the confines of New York city: it is a large idea; we wish to be the pioneers in the movement, which should become statewide. I hope that this idea will be enacted into a general statewide amendment to the election law so that all the public buildings in the State of New York will be used where available as polling places. The idea is a good one.

"Time was when in the early days of this country, especially in the New England States, the schoolhouse was the centre of every public gathering and demonstration. The return to these early ideas, I have no doubt, will make for the quickening of local civic pride, and under the most favorable surroundings a more intelligent solution of the great public questions which the electorate is constantly called to pass upon."

PAGEANT ARTISTS MEET HERE.

Masters of Festivals Confer With Columbia Institute.

Pageant masters and artists from all parts of the country will be present next Saturday when the American Pageant Association begins a three day conference as the guests of the Columbia University Institute of Arts and Sciences. The Saturday and Monday sessions will be held at Havemeyer Hall, Columbia University, and that of Sunday at the Church of the Messiah, where T. Tertius Noble, choirmaster of York Minster, England, will play the triumph music from the Pageant of York, of which Louis N. Parker, the playwright, was master.

In connection with the conference there will be an exhibition of pageant material in the Avery library.

Among those who will take part in the conference are John W. Alexander, the painter; Percy MacKaye, who wrote "The Bird Masque Sanctuary"; Prof. George P. Baker of Harvard University, Thomas Wood Stevens, director of the new department of drama in the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburg; Dr. George E. Kunz, William Chauncy Langdon, whose pageants have made vivid the possibilities of our new country life; the Rev. Frederick Edwards, vicar of Grace Church, New York, who considers pageants and rituals essentials in church work; the Rev. John Haynes Holmes, at whose church the Sunday session will be held; Langdon, the Alaskan missionary, who will tell of a Christmas mystery performed by the Indians of Alaska; Farwell, the composer; Miss Mary Beegle, director of physical training, Barnard and of the summer school at Dartmouth College; Mrs. Lawrence Fleming Noyes, who danced the character of Justice in the suffrage pageant on the Treasury steps at Washington; John Collier of the People's Institute, Ellis P. Oberholtzer, the master of Philadelphia's two great pageants in 1912; William E. Bohn of the Ethical Culture School, and John P. Campbell, the Irish pageant.

MEMORIAL TO TITANIC'S DOCTOR

Fund Raised by Dr. O'Laughlin's Friends Goes to Hospital.

A memorial fund raised by friends of the late Dr. William Francis Norman O'Laughlin, surgeon of the Titanic, who perished with his ship, will be presented to-day to St. Vincent's Hospital.

Dr. O'Laughlin was a frequent visitor at the hospital, where emergency cases from most of the steamship lines are taken.

The fund will be used for remodelling and equipping the emergency department, where a tablet in memory of Dr. O'Laughlin will be placed.