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First Fruits of the New Tariff.

A Washington despatch in yesterday's SUN gave the official figures of four months of the Underwood tariff:

"The total value of all manufacturers' materials imported in the four months under the new law was \$300,000,000, as against \$347,000,000 in the same months under the Payne law, a reduction of 13 per cent.; manufacturers ready for consumption \$152,000,000, against \$143,000,000, an increase of about 6 per cent., and foodstuffs \$148,000,000, against \$142,000,000, an increase of 29 per cent."

Has the increased importation of foodstuffs reduced the cost of living to any extent? The local price of eggs has tumbled five cents a dozen. That seems to be all.

What shall be said of the decreased importation of raw material, of rubber and its substitutes, of pig tin, of hides and skins, of chemicals, silk, hemp, jute, even wool? The American sheep is no longer protected; the industries of Schedule K have been redressed; yet less wool came into the country than in the corresponding months when the Payne-Aldrich monster had not been slain.

It is still too early to judge the new tariff; everybody not a fanatic or an unscrupulous partisan hopes that the law will work well. Its beginnings, however, show less of revenue, decreased importations of raw and partly manufactured materials in many great industries, stimulated and enlarged importation of finished manufactures.

Our Great Warships and Others.

As our latest dreadnought, the New York, is about to run into blue water to have her speed trial she is hailed as the most powerful of the world's battleships. The fact of the matter is the Texas, already built, is a sister ship. They differ only in minor details. Of 27,000 tons displacement (full load displacement about 28,400 tons) the Texas and New York will carry main batteries of ten 14 inch guns and secondary batteries of twenty-one 5 inch guns. The Nevada and Oklahoma, which were laid down on October 26, 1912, and November 4, 1912, respectively, will have a slightly larger displacement but the same batteries. Considerably more formidable, because they will carry two more 14 inch guns, are, on paper, the Pennsylvania, now about 16 per cent. completed, and "39," which is about 4 per cent. completed. They will have a displacement of 31,400 tons, with the greater length and beam required by their larger batteries. When the Pennsylvania and "39" go into commission the United States will possess six great battleships armed with 14 inch guns, sixty-four in all.

While the Pennsylvania and "39" in displacement, length and thickness of armor will be truly leviathans and very powerful floating fortresses, it must be understood that other sea Powers are planning and building great capital ships worthy to be classed with our own. Japan began to construct the Fuso of 30,000 tons in March, 1912, and has since, if reports may be credited, laid down three other battleships of this type. They will carry main batteries of ten 14 inch guns, and their contract speed is 22.5 knots, more than a knot faster than that of the Pennsylvania and "39." The American ships, with two extra big guns, will be more powerful if a little slower. Japan is also building three Hiyel battle cruisers which will carry eight 14 inch guns. But warship construction in Japan proceeds sluggishly. Indeed, it may be assumed that long before her seven capital ships are completed both the Pennsylvania and "39" will be flying the American flag.

In three of the European navies the 15 inch gun for dreadnoughts is assumed. The British battleships Queen Elizabeth and Warspite of 27,500 tons displacement, both launched several months ago, will have eight of these tremendous guns in their main batteries; their sister ships, Barham and Royal Sovereign, were laid down early last year; and four other ships of the same armament must have been started by this time. The German battleships Ersatz Worth and T, whose displacement has not been revealed but will be not less than 28,000 tons, are to carry eight 15 inch guns. The Germans make great claims for this big gun of theirs. Italy must be reckoned with. She has planned four battleships of the Dandolo

class (28,000 tons), which are not only to be armed with eight 15 inch guns but are to have a speed of 25 knots, as compared with 21 knots for the Pennsylvania. The British 15 inch gun battleships are also to have unusual speed for capital ships, from twenty-five to twenty-seven knots. We are inclined to think that the specialists would regard the fast British battleships carrying 15 inch guns as more dangerous in the early stages of a fight and at long range than our own Pennsylvania. In Austria four battleships of 25,000 tons displacement, to have a speed of twenty-five knots and to carry ten 14 inch guns, have been authorized, and Russia has begun work on four fast battle cruisers of 23,000 tons which will be armed with nine 14 inch guns.

All the great sea Powers are bent on having guns of the largest calibre on their new warships, and while the United States can now be rated as second to England in the most formidable dreadnoughts built and building, there must be authorization of at least two Pennsylvania's a year if our periodical course of laying down the greatest warship in the world is to be really impressive.

The Red, White, Blue and Yesterday.

Tradition to the contrary notwithstanding, the weather of yesterday was not unusual. Fair skies, golden light and balmy breezes have oftener than not blessed St. Patrick's day in the course of the last twenty years. So the annual demonstration of fealty by his faithful sons has generally been a pleasant pageant and in no sense a penance. It is equally true, however, that when the bad days came they never dampened the enthusiasm of the good saint's devotees. For the faith that in them they have always been ready to brave the elements and indeed much worse.

Impressive and touching in its revelation of deep seated instincts of love and loyalty is this yearly parade of our fellow citizens of Irish birth and descent. There is nothing incompatible between passionate sincerity in the sentiments to which vent is given on St. Patrick's day and the most heartfelt fidelity to American citizenship.

It is sometimes said that our citizens of Irish race are too apt to consider the interests of the Old Country in their views and action upon American politics. Probably nothing is further from their conscious intention. The truth seems to be that the distrust and dislike of British ideals and British methods which they drink in with their mother's milk sometimes unconsciously color their opinions; and they carry, almost without knowing it, into American affairs the instinct of opposition which had its origin in Old World differences. Perhaps even Senator O'GORMAN isn't really conscious of the strength of this racial impulse.

Lights in Dark Places.

This town has among its ordinances an enactment requiring bicyclists to carry lights at night. Either the rule is ignored by the police or its enforcement falls into the category of things that aren't worth bothering about. Certainly it is not effective, and if its neglect does not swell the figures of the coroner's reports, it does contribute materially to the discomforts of the streets. That the bicycle "craze" is dead may be a fact, but there is an enormous number of wheelmen in the city, and all of them should do what only a few of them now think necessary: light up when sundown comes.

Against the new ordinance requiring all vehicles, motor drawn and horse drawn, to show red tail lights after dark no substantial argument can be advanced. Every motorist has had the experience of overtaking a buggy which gave no sign of its presence, and which, in spite of headlights and searchlights on the car, remained unseen, owing to some accident of shadow, until an accident was almost unavoidable. A red lamp affixed to the rear of the box would be visible far enough away to make such incidents impossible where the motor car was properly managed, as the great majority of them are.

General BINGHAM has said that brilliant illumination will do more to clean up a tough street than half a dozen policemen. Light is a good thing everywhere, and it is particularly needed on all vehicles, from bicycles to motor trucks, that use the public highways after dark.

The Monroe Disaster Inquiry.

The investigation of the Nantucket-Monroe collision on January 30, which resulted in the loss or sacrifice of forty-one lives, was so protracted and painstaking that the failure of the board of inspectors at Philadelphia to fix the responsibility will be a great disappointment. At a preliminary hearing in Norfolk charges against Captain OSBORN Beary of the Nantucket that he was negligent in not reducing the speed of his ship in the fog and in not ascertaining the proximity of other vessels by wireless were approved, and the report then made formed the basis of the elaborate inquiry at Philadelphia.

In the early stages of the main inquiry the evidence tended to show that only Captain Beary was at fault, and chiefly because he was proceeding at a high rate of speed in the surface fog; but as the inquiry drew to the end Captain EDWARD E. JOHNSON was under fire for giving a wrong whistle signal and handling his ship unskillfully when it was seen that a collision was inevitable; also for not having his crew under proper control after the accident occurred and doing all that should have been done under the circumstances as a commander to save life on the Monroe. The result is two reports: one by Captain R. A. SARGENT, inspector of hulls, exonerating Captain Beary and finding Captain JOHNSON incompetent, negligent and inattentive to duty; and the other report by Captain D. H. HOWLAND, inspector of boilers, holding Captain Beary responsible because, and

only because, he was not proceeding cautiously in thick weather.

Captain SARGENT'S report, it is satisfactory to know, admits that the commander of the Monroe was individually active and courageous in trying to save his passengers; the charge against him in this respect seems to be that he was not master of the situation and did not order things with foresight when the Monroe was found to be sinking. It has been the impression that the Monroe went down so quickly there was not want time for the most skillful captain to distinguish himself. If the Monroe had floated ten minutes longer every passenger and sailor would probably have been saved.

The evidence and reports will go to Captain SEZLEY, the supervising inspector at New York, for his judgment, and ultimately to Steamboat Inspector-General CHILES at Washington. We venture to say that it will be regarded as little short of scandalous if responsibility for the disaster is not unmistakably fixed. One captain must have been more at fault than the other, and aside from the question of seamanship it may be asked whether the construction of both the Monroe and the Nantucket was in keeping with reasonable requirements for the safety of passengers. Specialists have used some very plain language about the bulkhead design of the Monroe, and they have insisted that if her construction had been really modern there would have been practically no loss of life. The traveling public is entitled to know whether there is any foundation for this judgment. Captain SARGENT in his report deals with this phase of the disaster, and it should have the particular attention of his superiors.

The Cost of Provisional Salvation.

Should the Rev. BILLY SUNDAY be asked to come to this town to carry on a "campaign" in behalf of the Protestant churches? The Methodist preachers at their Monday meeting were "nearly unanimous," THE SUN tells us, in voting No. A Pittsburg divine told the brethren that BILLY'S answer to every criticism of him and his methods is "Go to hell!" a response smacking of the old Adam. To many of Mr. SUNDAY'S admirers this speech of Tartarus, if he uses it, is doubtless an irresistible charm. Copious slang is a recommendation; "scathing" language always rejoices the public; profanity in a pulpit's mouth should be irresistible. It might be described as taking the kingdom of heaven by violence of language.

According to Pittsburg's writer of Mr. SUNDAY, that summary theologian is arbitrary; tells the churches what they must do; how many of them must close temporarily so as not to compete with his appearances. These are minor matters. Even if Mr. SUNDAY has imported from the field of his earlier triumphs the ways of bossism, if he once is accepted, if his sincerity is granted and his vulgarities are forgiven and no undue "commercialism" clings to his performances, it is not for the churches to quarrel with his control. If they send for him they admit by implication that he can or may do what they can't do for the unconverted. It becomes their duty to yield to the will and energy of such a rough spoken but persuasive Orpheus of souls.

What is most curious in the Monday meeting syllabus of anti-Sundayism is the economic side of the Pittsburg manifestation: "It cost Pittsburg \$50,000 to hear Mr. SUNDAY, 3,107 converts were made, or about \$30 per convert. The preachers agreed that not more than twelve of those converts would remain faithful and that \$20,000 was a pretty high price to pay for the converts. The preachers said they could do much better themselves at much less cost."

It may be said that a soul is priceless, even a Pittsburg soul; but without irreverence it might be argued that if the figures given are correct the cost of the Sunday "conversions" is excessive. Outside of the financial exhibit, here is a perpetual knot of "revivals," whether in the backwoods of the cities. The overstimulation of the religious instinct, the communicative ardor or frenzy, the effect of "suggestion," the separation of religion from morality, the intoxication of crowds, the substitution of swift excitement for hard, painful, genuine growth in the knowledge of the Lord, the easy "conversions," the easier backslidings—all this is ancient ground. BILLY SUNDAY is merely an extreme case of a familiar type. As to his converts, as to those of less rude "revivalists," the question always remains of the permanency of conversions; but surely twelve souls—supposing the anti-Sunday soul to be correct—twelve souls for \$50,000 is a high price only in the eyes of the children of this world; and Pittsburg is only too well known.

Are the Public Schools Firetraps?

In the March number of Fire Prevention, the organ of the American Society for Fire Prevention, CHARLES G. ARMSTRONG, an engineer whose competency is vouched for by the fact that he has been the consulting engineer of the last three Governors of the State of New York, and for the Borough President's office in Manhattan while Mr. MCANENY was the incumbent, has the first of a series of articles in which the construction, equipment, and management of the public schools of this town are to be discussed under the disturbing title "Every Public School in New York City Called a Firetrap." Mr. ARMSTRONG does not devote his opening chapter to mere generalities. Instead he gives the names of school buildings, old and new, which he considers dangerous to their occupants, and photographs of the installations that he denounces as menacing the buildings and those who are obliged to use them.

Mr. ARMSTRONG points out that in the most modern of school rooms "we find wooden doors, wooden window sashes, wooden furniture, and in some cases wooden rails leading upstairs. The building is a fire enclosing non-burning shell, substantial in appearance from the outside and calculated to gain the confidence of the public and those who use the building. Inside it is filled with tinder, shelves, doors and windows of burnable material to such an extent that even if the walls were built of steel and a fire gained headway nothing would save the building or its occupants." Whether the elimination of such inflammable material altogether is possible may be a question. Certainly in quantity it should be reduced to a minimum. But in any event the possibility of a fire starting should be guarded against with the utmost vigilance, and Mr. ARMSTRONG declares that the Board of Education has not insisted on those ordinary precautions that even a layman can have no excuse for ignoring.

The American Society for Fire Prevention displays in the list of its officers the names of a number of respectable and responsible men. They are not to be accused of rashly indulging wild changes. Nor should Mr. ARMSTRONG'S allegations be unheard because he has chosen a sensational headline to attract attention. They deserve the attentive study of the Board of Education, for more than half a million children who are housed in the schools every day deserve the highest degree of care that can be expended on them.

Does Mayor MITCHELL expect the canal builder to boss the New York police force if the Hay bill authorizing the President to make him a special Major-General for life becomes a law? Truth is again stranger than fiction when the aeroplane is used on the Honan-Anhui border in China to discover the brigands of the notorious chieftain White Wolf and make them a target for an army of regulars.

FROM THE FIRING LINE.

Latest Reports from the Forces Engaged in Manila Bay!

BERLIN, March 17.—The German naval authorities have decided on a general forward movement all along the line to bring the Battle of Manila Bay to an immediate and victorious issue. As usual, their plans are kept secret, but your correspondent is able to furnish all the particulars of their contemplated action. One hundred thousand hardened stevedores and typewriters each equipped have been ordered to the front. They will go into action masked by ten thousand orators of proved valor and efficiency.

Supporting the stenographers and typewriters will be the heavy artillery, composed of the most modern type-setting machines available, manned by expert operators called from the reserve army especially trained for this service. These machines are of a new style, never heretofore invented, and are capable of setting double the number of ems that can be set by any machine now in use.

The naval authorities have ordered all paper factories in the empire to run thirty-six hours a day, their output to be delivered by special trains daily from the nearest dock yards. All toy factories have been closed, in order that their raw material may be made into wood pulp.

It is the confident belief of the highest naval officers of the empire that the Battle of Manila Bay will end in victory for the German arms inside of 11,000 volumes.

WASHINGTON, March 17.—Absolute secrecy surrounds the plans of the Navy Department for the elimination of the Battle of Manila Bay, but from a high officer having unique opportunities to learn the intentions of our gallant sea fighters, the information on which this despatch is based is gleaned. Your correspondent is not at liberty to disclose the identity of the gentleman from whom these facts were got, beyond saying that for many years he will be in contact for removing the waste paper from the department of files, and officially ranks next to the Hero of Manila Bay himself.

Somewhat irritated by the prolongation of the engagement, the Board of Strategy met at dinner on Friday night, and did not adjourn until the bar closed. As a war measure it was decided to shorten the day, and the law regulating the sale of ales, wines and liquors in the District of Columbia, a messenger was despatched to Kentucky to make inquiry as to the capacity of the distilleries in that State. Some embarrassment was caused by the attention of representatives from Pennsylvania and Illinois who demanded that liquors from their States be put on a par with those of the Kentucky product.

After a dispute which at times verged on the acrimonious, it was decided to requisition all alcoholic beverages for the navy, leaving non-alcoholic drinks to the Department of State. In view of the concern felt over the diminishing supply of print paper, it was decided to contract with Japan for 11,166,217 sheets of rice paper, to be delivered immediately, ostensibly for use as cigarette wrappers, but actually to be devoted to book making. Brigadier-General Charles E. Hughes opposed this subterfuge, on the ground that when paper was used in the process book making was illegal, but it was explained to him that the board had in view literature, not improving the breed, and General Hughes withdrew his objection.

It was pointed out that if rice paper was used in the manufacture of the American ammunition, the product would be much lighter than the enemy's. After full consideration, the weakness of our national forces was acknowledged, but held to be unadvisable as under existing circumstances could an under book be as heavy as a German book.

Beginning to-day the Government Printing Office force will be recruited up to its full strength. Four eight hour shifts will be put at work in order to expedite the work so that it may not interfere with the printing of pig does, which must be franked by the post office and put into circulation for the period for weighing the mails.

GENERAL HUERTA.

Will Not Mr. Wilson Reverse His Isolated Attitude of Non-Recognition?

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: The letter of "Junius" stated very clearly what seems to be the main reason for the isolation of Huerta by the present Administration toward Mexico, namely, the personal pride of the President. It would seem, however, that there is still hope for Huerta. The Board of Strategy has voted unanimously that all missiles projected at the enemy shall be bound in crushed "evant, inlaid and hand tooled, and shall be loaded with hand illuminated head and tail pieces and initials.

Nothing like the situation that now exists has ever occurred before. The Board of Strategy will fight it out in the firing line, it smashes every printing press in America.

How to Lick and Stick.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: When persons haven't sufficient gumption to stick a stamp on a letter, why will they advertise the fact? Every little while some one writes a letter and seals it with the poor quality of postage stamp glue, which, by the way, is neither maulage nor glue, but dextrine. I've seen them lick and lick change hands, get a fresh paper, and lick and stick more. Then they have everything and everybody except the one at fault. In the course of a long and misspent life I do not recall ever having a stamp fail to "stick" at first intention, nor an envelope flap fail to adhere freely and smoothly. As Kipling says, "Consider the gorgeous simplicity of it!"

In using paper, there must be a sufficiency of moisture in the air to soak it and completely dampen the paper. Then it will neither wrinkle nor curl. This condition can only be obtained with an average of stamps by sticking the faces of the stamp, the outer side of the envelope flap and just barely moistening the gum. Then they'll stick. Generalized, this means to wet the paper and not the gum, and to use a moist paper.

Now that I've written this I don't suppose it'll do any good. About the middle of April some one will write another lamentation on the "stick" and "paper" question. ANSONIA, Conn., March 16.

Intimate Memoranda of a Secretary of Chautauqua.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: It seems to me that the conspirators who have already "got" Secretary Bryan's name are playing a high and low game when they seek to stigmatize his name on the somewhat personal allegation that it has month disease.

THE OLD, OLD QUESTION.

Where is the Great Work of Women in Literature, Music and No. 7?

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: Are women really serious in their claim of their equality with and even superiority over men? The fact that, so far, from the ranks of the fair, no dramatist has yet appeared, including one to confidence that the assumption is made in all gravity; and yet, judging by their accomplishments in the past may I not with equal confidence inquire whether it be in the nature of women not to become great but even, beyond giving expression to doctrines of revolt, to accomplish anything by which the world may consider itself materially enriched.

Healthy and well brought up children were once their priceless gifts to the world; but seeing that women no longer take pride in performing the misdeeds of their nature, we must leave children out of the question. In literature, while many women are turning out "best sellers," is not the name of "Yea" will come to be remembered fifty years from now? And is not fiction, except when the work of a master mind, after all the lowest form of literature, calling merely for powers of observation rather than for imagination? Can the sisters of discontent claim even one really great poet, essayist, historian, dramatist or biographer?

In painting, with the exception of Rosa Bonheur, whose work, again certainly shows no imaginative genius, can women lay claim to one artist of worldwide reputation? If they ever produced a sculptor, a composer, even a truly illuminating interpreter of the compositions of men? That from many a woman's club where-in to-day's revolt is hatched, there will come forth a woman of letters, assuredly; but the profounder silence of thoughtful people can mean nothing else than the decisive "No" of agreement.

Women are continually asserting that heretofore men have so subjected them that they have never had an opportunity to accomplish, to prove what they are pleased to call their inherent ability. And yet women have been possibly as proud and prodigal with ink and paper, vindictive toward every known musical instrument, and pitiless with clay for ages. They have shared with male doctors the right to shorten our days; with male lawyers the privilege to send us to jail. They have not even produced a famous cook!

It is only of late, under the false impression that the world is waiting about in a day, that they have won some measure of success in formulating their theories of dissatisfaction; but when they claim equality with men, or, as I said before, superiority, they expect for one feeble it is time to bid them cultivate a sense of humor.

Were I of a harsher nature I might put down their delicate wrists and say: "Tooboo!"

HOWARD W. SUTHERLAND, DENVER, Col., March 13.

Physician's View of Their Superiority to Employers' Liability Acts.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: In Massachusetts as in New York evidently the change from an employers' liability to a workmen's compensation law contemplated for the first time the responsibility which legislation has imposed upon medical attention, hospital care and medicine.

Hitherto these were practically ignored and as a result it has been stated that next to the actual victims of industrial accidents themselves the greatest losers by the old method of settlement were the factors and the charitable medical institutions which were the recipients of the donations and the wholesale appropriation for their own benefit of the benevolence underlying the practice of medicine by the casualty and indemnity companies was cut off. The new law will reduce the duties by the State. In Massachusetts it is estimated that the benefit to the insured wage earners in that State will be \$2,000,000 in the first year.

During the discussion of this subject in this State it was shown that out of the \$2,000,000 a year paid by employers for accident insurance but \$1,500,000 was paid out in settlement or claims for injuries.

Inasmuch as these claims were received by the people in the last extremity of the law under which they had been styled in effect a reversal of form of barter, one-half of the amount actually received must be deducted for the assumed cost of the contingent fee ordinarily paid.

Based on these figures the new compensation law merely reverses the former status of the insurer and the insured. It is a reversal of the former responsibility for medical service as well as legal services and puts the obligation for the repair and restoration of a human being on the same basis as that of a piece of property. Last year the ambulance chaser and the 50 per cent. contingent fee.

JOHN P. DAVIN, M. D., NEW YORK, March 16.

The Minimum Weight of Taxable Specters.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: The editorial article in today's SUN in reference to the weight of inspectors of taxable specters, examination for which is now being advertised by the Civil Service Commission, has hit off the mark. It is unfortunate, however, that so learned a disquisition, written so feelingly, should be based on a misprint. Copy for the "minimum weight of taxable specters" in the form of a corrected proof, set up by me or your neighbors, and it explicitly states that the candidate should weigh not less than 148 pounds. Those who are not of this weight as "168 pounds" were not following copy.

The cleverly written editorial article in THE SUN is very gratifying to the Civil Service Commission. It shows that we are successful in making the average citizens of the commission conspicuous and readable.

Reform of Reform.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: It is hard enough to keep track of reform in its many meanings, but when the reformers themselves start in to reform reform we become dizzy. For some years past the reformers have mightily advocated the extension of the civil service, claiming that it makes for increased efficiency in the public service and protects men in their jobs against the vicissitudes of politics. Mayor Mitchell's back of a bill designed to deprive the largest collection of the city of its appeal to the courts. In this fashion only can the force be purged and purified, so urges the chief protagonist in the ranks of the qualified reformers.

To put the force at the mercy of some future political Police Commissioner would seriously attenuate the supposititious benefits of the civil service system; but reform in reform claims that it is only change or reversion to some previous state. Ordinary crime must stand confounded in the presence of superior leadership and integrity. ALBERT R. GALLATIN, NEW YORK, March 17.

Mr. Wilson on the Monroe Doctrine.

To the Editor of THE SUN.—Sir: If there is no doubt, as the President says, why any discussion? A. B. ACKERLY, YONKERS, March 17.

Pussy Willow.

When Boreas halts with his sigh, And April's a fortnight away, When sunshine bursts forth in the sky, If only to last for a day, "Pussy" returns to play its part. And vendors start with their hearts: "Who'll buy?" "Who'll buy?" A verbal cry, so clear and shrill: "Who'll buy? Who'll buy my Pussy Willow?" HARRY VAIL.

GWINNETT SIGNATURE AT \$2,800 A BARGAIN

Price Paid by Herbert L. Pratt Not Uncommon, Says W. R. Benjamin.

AUTOGRAPH A RARE ONE

Ex-Governor of Georgia Killed in Duel After Signing the Declaration.

When a despatch in THE SUN from Savannah, Ga., announced yesterday that the signature of Button Gwinnett, one of the three signers of the Declaration of Independence from Georgia, had been sold for \$2,800, many readers who are not collectors of autographs wondered at the price. But according to Walter B. Eastman, a dealer in autographs at 225 Fifth Avenue, and editor of the Collector, Herbert L. Pratt, the buyer of the Gwinnett signature, got a bargain. Mr. Benjamin explained that one of the prizes sought by autograph collectors is a complete collection of signers of the Declaration of Independence.

"There are fifty-six signers," he said, "and prices for their signatures run from \$2 up to any price you like. The rarest of all is the signature of Thomas Lynch, Jr., and second comes that of Button Gwinnett. "Gwinnett was an early Governor of Georgia. He signed the Declaration of Independence the year after he signed the Declaration, and his signature is very rare. He wrote a good hand and must have had occasion to sign many documents, but few have been preserved. The search for his signature has been extended, without result, to the place in England from which Gwinnett came.

Pratt's find which Gov. Gwinnett signed was sold in Philadelphia for \$4,000 not long ago, so you see the price paid for the Savannah signature is not high. The signature from the Philadelphia collector was sold for \$2,800 by James H. Manning, ex-Mayor of Albany. He is one of about thirty collectors who have complete sets of the signers of the Declaration. Mr. Manning needed the Declaration to complete his collection, hence the price.

"The trouble with such things," continued Mr. Benjamin, "is that a chap may walk into some dealer's office tomorrow with a signature worth \$2,000, and find it probable in this particular case, since so exhaustive a search has been made, but I recall how the signature of John Morton, another signer of the Declaration, was sold for \$1,000 and was paid over to the 100 of them turned up and the price dropped to \$500.

"And that's the interesting thing about this business, for \$200,000 worth of signatures will turn up a tremendous number here a few years ago and sold for a bundle of Colonial documents, some of which I found three signatures of John Jay.

"As to the way prices for signatures vary it may be illustrated by the fact that a George Walton signature, sold by Lyman Hall for \$20 and a Button Gwinnett signature, sold by the same dealer for \$100 for anything you like up to the limit of competing bidders' purses.

"The signature of Thomas Lynch, Jr., I am inclined to think, would sell for the first time at \$2,800. It is worth \$4,000 for a letter written by Lynch to Secretary of War, which is now in the Lenox Library.

METHODISTS MEET TO-DAY

Bishop L. B. Wilson of New York to Preside at 57th Newark Session.

Newark, N. J., March 17.—The fifty-seventh annual session of the Newark Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church will be held to-morrow in the Hotel Street M. E. Church, with Bishop L. B. Wilson of New York presiding. The session will be held in the afternoon and will continue until 9:30 o'clock to-morrow evening.

Successor to the Rev. Dr. Jessup Harbut, district superintendent for New York, will be selected. It is reported that the Rev. Dr. George G. Vogel, pastor of Centenary M. E. Church, will be elected by the Rev. Ralph B. Army of Middlebury, a successor to the Rev. Dr. Harbut. Dr. Harbut's resignation from the district is to be elected. It is reported that the Rev. Dr. Frank Hamilton, pastor of the First M. E. Church, will be elected by the conference. The conference practically began to-morrow with the examination of candidates for the ministry. The Rev. Dr. Franklin Hamilton, pastor of the American University, Washington, D. C., will lecture on "The Bible Bringer—A Love Translation" at 8 o'clock in the morning.

DEATH RATE AGAIN DECLINES

Only 15.93 Persons Died Out of 1,000 Population Last Week.

New York's death rate last week again last week, the rate being 15.93 deaths in 1,000 population, or 15.93 points lower than it was last week. The corresponding week in 1913, the rate was 17.75, which is 1.82 points higher than the rate for the equivalent week in 1912. The only diseases which showed an increase were organic heart disease and influenza. Tuberculosis showed a decrease in the number of persons as in the week before last.

PHILIPPS IN MAJOR'S PLACE

Takes Oath of Office as Third Assistant Secretary of State.

WASHINGTON, March 17.—William Phillips, former member of the State Department staff and the diplomatic corps, took the oath of office today as Third Assistant Secretary of State. Phillips is a member of the State Department staff and the diplomatic corps. He is a native of Massachusetts and was educated at the University and Harvard Law School. He entered the diplomatic service in 1890 and served in various capacities in the State Department and as assistant secretary of the State Department. He was appointed Third Assistant Secretary in 1913 and has since served there until his resignation in November, 1912.