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CHARITY AND JUSTICE.

President McKinley knows very well that his request for monetary help for the starving and naked Cubans, whose means of self-support have been swept away by the warlike conditions existing in that island—whether it be a state of war or not—will be heeded here by the people who have so often and so variously manifested their neighborly sympathy. But it is not the constant flow of charity in their direction that the Cubans need so much as help to achieve a position in which they can take care of themselves.

The financial and domestic ruin of that island, which has been the heroic method adopted by the Spanish military rulers to subdue insurrection, has produced an amount of individual suffering that is truly appalling. It is very well to reduce this as much and as quickly as possible, and to that end there will undoubtedly be a ready and bounteous contribution, but if President McKinley would simply carry out the promises of the platform upon which he was elected he would afford those struggling patriots substantial aid and sympathy that would place them beyond want.

It is rather late in the day that the Spanish military authorities acknowledge the need of outside help and express their willingness to let us feed the people they have made paupers. Humanity calls upon us to furnish immediate relief; justice demands such support as shall place the Cubans beyond the need of charity. President McKinley is pledged to work to restore peace to Cuba "and give independence to the island." His fulfillment of that promise has consisted in appealing for charity, first for starving Americans and then for starving Cubans. When is he going to do something toward ending the state of things by which the starvation is caused?

AN IMPRESSIVE REMINDER.

A modest little scheme of pension reform has been started in Indianapolis. It is said that the veterans there and in other cities are generally signing a petition advocating the plan of commutating all existing pensions into lump sums equivalent to the amount that would be received at the present rates in twenty years. "Those who are circulating the petition," we are told, "point out that one who draws \$5 a month would, under the new plan, receive at once \$1,440, enough to buy him a little home; also, that a year after the adoption of the new plan the Government could abolish the Pension Bureau and save the expense of supporting it in the years to come."

When it is remembered that the annual value of the present pension roll, exclusive of first payments, is about \$130,000,000, and hence that this project calls for the payment at one fell swoop of something like \$2,600,000,000, the first impression is rather staggering. That amount is about equal to the entire bonded debt of the United States at the close of the war, when our financial obligations seemed so crushing that most of our friends abroad thought we should be obliged to repudiate them. It is three times our present interest-bearing debt, two-thirds that of Great Britain and five times that of Germany.

But these comparisons merely serve to give us some idea of the actual weight of our present pension burdens, for it is an absolute fact that if the seemingly extravagant proposition of the Indiana veterans were adopted our financial strain would be sensibly relieved, at least for a time. If we borrowed the money for the proposed payments at 3 per cent, the interest would cost us \$78,000,000 a year. To obtain such an immense amount at once we should probably have to pay 4 per cent, which would bring the annual cost up to \$104,000,000. Even that falls so far short of the \$150,000,000 a year required by the pension list that the Dingley deficit would disappear. In the course of a few years the bonds could doubtless be refunded at 2½ per cent, which would bring the annual charges down to \$65,000,000. An expenditure of \$100,000,000 a year would pay this interest, and provide a sinking fund that would probably extinguish the whole debt as soon as the bulk of the pension roll would be disposed of under the present system.

The present pension payments of the United States are equivalent to the interest, at 3 per cent, on a debt of \$5,000,000,000, which is greater than any national debt in the world except that of France.

ANOTHER NEEDLESS TRAGEDY.

The casual crossing of two live electric wires ignited a flame which made a wreck of the Chicago Coliseum, the largest building in the world, in twenty minutes. The flames sped more swiftly than the feet of man, and almost before the adjacent fire machines could be trained upon it the massive structure, wherein the now historic national convention of 1896 was held, had collapsed in ruin. The giant arches tumbled inward sixteen minutes after the fatal collision of the wires, and the complete destruction of the mammoth building, the dispatches tell us, was wrought within four minutes more. Reading of this swift annihilation of a stately structure whose great roof stretched over eight acres of space, one feels relief when the number of fatalities is found to be but eight. The possibilities which this almost instant devastation of the flames suggests surpass in horror the tragedy of the Charity Bazaar fire in Paris. Only by the narrow margin of a chance was the Coliseum fire prevented from becoming a counterpart of the Paris horror in which so many notable people of France lost their lives.

The possibilities of disaster by fire were strikingly similar in both cases, except that they were greater in the case of the Coliseum because of its greater capacity. In Paris the huge building, with its doom hanging over it, was crowded with gay booths filled with light combustible materials on which flames hungrily feed. In Chicago the great hall which rang with the eloquence of Bryan's famous effort had been converted into a bazaar similar in character, and its lower floor and upper galleries were simply honeycombed with gay stalls such as fed the murderous fire in Paris. In Paris the flames encompassed the entire structure with incredible swiftness. The escape of the fleeing inmates was cut off at every turn by a wall of fire. Hemmed in, with every exit barred by a blazing Niagara, they perished. The onslaught of the flames

had been so sudden and their progress so swift that no expedient of firemen or others could rescue the imprisoned victims.

Over one hundred people lost their lives in this tragedy, and the lesson of it which was brought home to all the peoples of a horrified world was that foresight and the utilization of all the means of safety which modern times afford would have prevented the terrible catastrophe. This suggestion arises with multiplied force in Chicago, where the horror was repeated on a smaller scale, and where only the mercy of Providence forestalled a still greater calamity. As it was eight lost their lives, a little blaze starting from two live wires caused it all. With all the development of electrical science it seems strange that the lives of so many human beings should be imperiled by the neglect of so small a precaution as the protection of wires in the interior of buildings from the dangers of contact. It would be an easy thing to eliminate the possibility of such a catastrophe as that at Paris or as that at Chicago might have been by the application of some simple precautions. Eight lives were enough to sacrifice to negligence. Let us heed the lesson of Paris and Chicago.

THE MUGWUMP DEFINITION.

The Journal some time ago offered a prize of \$50 for the best definition of a Mugwump. It was inundated forthwith by communications of every description, many of them clever and many of them unconvincing. The reverse, describing the Mugwump's characteristics with such opulence of detail that among them all not the minutest feature can have escaped.

A large proportion of these efforts consisted of long and patiently elaborated essays, suitable for magazine articles, treating the Mugwump from every point of view and analyzing every aspect of his nature. The writers of such productions, interesting as they were, had evidently forgotten that what was asked for was not a dissertation, but a definition. Nor could mere abuse or panegyric answer the requirements. Something was wanted, brief, pointed, bright, and not so disguised by an animus on one side or the other that either the Mugwumps or their opponents would be unable to recognize in it the essential element of truth.

After careful consideration the Journal has decided that the requirements are most nearly met by Mr. Harrison W. Vickers, of Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland, who says:

A Mugwump is like a ferryboat—he wears out his life by crossing from one side to the other.

The only weak point about this suggestion is that it is in form a simile rather than a definition, but it is a definition in essence, and it hits off the distinctive Mugwump characteristic so happily that neither the friends nor the opponents of Mugwumps can deny its truthfulness. To say that a Mugwump is a conscienceless political traitor, as many of the contestants have done, is to miss the universal characteristics of the species, for Mugwumps are often honest and public-spirited; to say that he is a high-minded patriot, as many others do, is equally to confound general with particulars, for Mugwumps are frequently trust attorneys. Some quality that is common to all the class must be sought, and that quality is to be found in the restless vibration from side to side, and the inability to form any lasting political relationships which constitutes the common distinguishing characteristic of all Mugwumps, good and bad. Mr. Vickers has hit off this characteristic with what is much more than a superficial analogy, and the Journal therefore awards him the prize.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

The average New Yorker's ideal Christmas is a clear, cold day, with snow on the ground and ice over the lakes in the Park, and, of course, a good dinner and happiness at home. Yesterday the weather set up a fine standard which will cause the oldest New Yorker to waver in his loyalty to his ideal.

There was no snow, nor ice on the lake, but there was blue sky overhead and a delicious tingling air, succeeded by the balmy breath of the South. The weather was in Christmas mood; the blue skies and clear sunshine seemed in sympathy with the happy spirit of the yuletide, and the breezes which whistled in from the bay were tempered to the shorn condition of those of New York's poor who cannot clothe themselves against the blasts of extreme winter. By many overcoats were not regarded as a necessity, and to those who have not the comfortable clothing which insures warmth or the money to keep a fire glowing in the grate, Christmas, if it did not bring happiness, mitigated suffering.

Altogether it was a happy Christmas, weather-wise and otherwise. Fewer of New York's population were in actual want than a year ago. The clearness of the skies, the sweetness of the breezes and the kindness of fortune and friends, let it be hoped, conspired to make the day a happy one for rich and poor.

THE SCHOOL DISPUTE IN MANITOBA.

The encyclical on the Manitoba school question just issued by the Pope does not endorse the extreme views of the Quebec hierarchy on the one hand nor accept the Laurier compromise on the other. It advises Catholics to insist on their legal rights, but not to refuse any partial reparation within their reach. In the event of a failure to secure anything that they consider even partially satisfactory it urges them to provide for their own schools, and to adopt a programme of study harmonizing religion with literary and scientific progress.

Prior to the provincial act of 1890, the Roman Catholics and other religious denominations had their own separate schools supported by public funds. That act established a uniform system of public non-sectarian schools and prohibited the use of public funds for any other.

There was a protest and a resort to the courts, and the law was upheld, but the Supreme Court of the Dominion reversed the decision. An appeal to the Imperial Privy Council resulted in a declaration that the act of the province was constitutional, but the Dominion Government had power to invalidate it and to guard the rights of the minority as vested before 1890.

"The Governor-General in Council" at Ottawa exercised his authority to require the Manitoba Government to repeal the act of 1890 and restore the right to separate schools. This was resented at Winnipeg, and the Government flatly refused to comply.

The next step was to bring a bill in the Dominion

Parliament compelling action on the part of Manitoba, and it was upon this issue that the Conservative Government fell and Sir Wilfrid Laurier came into power. Such was the school question down to the beginning of 1896. Then came the settlement.

Sir McKenzie Bowell, a Protestant Englishman, had taken the stand for coercing the province. The new Premier, a French Catholic, offered the compromise that led to a settlement and brought governments of the Dominion and of the province into harmony. The school system remains intact, but certain hours are set apart for religious exercises conducted by such denominations as desire it, and where the Catholics are in a majority they may have teachers of their own faith, subject to the regulations and standard established by law. This is the settlement which brought a certain measure of political peace in Canada.

The complimentary reference to the Journal and its work in organizing the forthcoming Greater New York Carnival, published yesterday under the heading, "The Metropolitan Spirit," lost its effect through the fact that, by a composing-room accident, the credit was dropped out. The article was an extract from the New York Sun.

In addition to sending relief to the Klondike, the Administration is disposed to stop the rush in that direction by the liberation of a number of officers from the Civil Service fold.

The assets of Philadelphia's collapsed bank were ground up in a pulp mill, and a batch of worthless paper is about all the depositors have to show for their savings.

There are widows of the old school and widows for pension purposes only.

Up to the present time the dog-fighting in Senatorial circles at Washington is much more exciting than Spain-fighting.

The opponents of the underground rapid transit plan are quite confident that its defeat would leave the whole matter in the air, just where they desire it.

Hon. Lou Payne has resumed the pastime of Quigg-baiting and the commotion in Mr. Platt's nursery is becoming pronounced.

The appointment of a Rhode Island man to be Marshal for the District of Columbia places the home-rule plank of the St. Louis platform on the same line of prominence now being enjoyed by the Cuban plank of that document.

President McKinley has pardoned a batch of small offenders in order that his enemies cannot claim that all the Executive clemency is being extended to dishonest bank officials.

Notwithstanding the gloomy views of Mr. Comptroller Eckels the country is showing no disposition to invest in a tombstone for itself.

Party Government in a Republic. It has been held that a republic was only possible through a party government. History confirms the lesson our forefathers taught. The Electoral College was set up as a barrier to the rule of party and its claim to select a President written in the Constitution itself. But in practical politics this provision of the fundamental law was put aside and parties have made this Government what it was and is.—Florida Times-Union.

A Case for Second Thoughts. Perhaps, on second thought, those who are behind the Anti-Cartoon bill will conclude that it is a good measure not to introduce. The people, while strongly opposed to the license which masquerades as liberty, will not sanction an invasion of the legitimate freedom of the press.—Rochester Post-Express.

Rev. Mr. Putnam's Mistake. The rule that all money, no matter whence its source, is consecrated the moment it is put to a really beneficent use, is a good one for clergymen to follow. This rule does not sanction participation in illegitimate enterprises. It only decrees that when money comes honestly into the possession of a person or organization with religious, educational or eleemosynary purposes in view it is entirely proper to turn it to good use. The money is innocent, whatever its history.—Syracuse Herald.

New York Democrats Want Peace. Let us have peace! The Democratic prospect is bright enough to make peace worth something; it is not bright enough to withstand the dulling effect of a row among the leaders. It is not a difficult matter to throw victory to the enemy, and such a result the rank and file can stand if the leaders can.—Binghamton Leader.

Good Government Pointers from Tammany. Mayor-elect Van Wyck, of Greater New York, announces that no one can hold office under his Administration who is at the same time engaged in private business. Tammany may be a terrible ogre of corruption, but it can sometimes give good government pointers to the more upright municipalities.—Philadelphia Record.

The Journal Bogle Man Abroad. American sympathy for Cuba is not confined to newspaper articles. The enterprising New York Journal is reported to be organizing an armed expedition to the island which is to bring matters to a head. Mr. Carl Decker, the rescuer of Senorita Evangelina Cisneros from a Cuban prison, is to take charge of the force, and when a Yankee journalist undertakes a venture of this sort he will, in the interests of his paper alone, make things hum.—Notts (England) Express.

Our Government Safe. Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan is back from Europe and at his post again. It is gratifying to know that this guardian of our financial system and the source of inspiration of our Government policies is at least surrounded once more by American influences. It would be dangerous to allow J. Pierpont to linger too long in the vicinity of European courts—he might take a notion to establish another form of government in these his American possessions.—Houston Post.

Hardships of Brass Finishers. To the Editor of the Journal: Through your valuable paper I take this opportunity to voice the deplorable condition now existing in the brass-finishing trade. For the past ten years mechanics in this branch of trade have been compelled to work ten hours per day at the same rate of wages paid to common laborers. Our work is more confining than that of any other trade, and statistics go to prove that the average age of a brass finisher is either less than thirty-five years, or he is compelled to give up his trade owing to its being unhealthy. The foregoing grievances, coupled with the fact that it is extremely hard to secure permanent work at the business, are, I think, sufficient reasons to demand the attention of the Federation of Labor and the public in general, to see if measures could not be taken at least to alleviate, if not entirely to remedy, the growing evils in this trade. Fellow workmen's correspondence on this subject through the valuable agency of the Journal is solicited. BRASS FINISHERS.

Horses and Pavements. To the Editor of the Journal: Being much interested in horses, I take the liberty of addressing you a few lines on the subject of sanding the asphalt pavements recently laid in the city. I have seen and experienced the great injury done to horses during the very cold weather, especially when it snows and there is frost on the pavements, rendering it so slippery that it is almost impossible for them to retain their footing. I think this could be easily obviated by sanding the pavements in a methodical manner, and placing sand at points where it could be readily obtained by those requiring its use during the cold weather. JAMES CONNELL.

New York, Dec. 24.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO THE NATION'S NEW METROPOLIS.

Well-Known Persons Predict That the Greater New York Is Destined to Become the Most Powerful Mercantile Centre on the Earth.

New Yorkers most intimately allied in politics, in commerce and in art with the city's glories unite in appreciation of the popular sentiment which is to find expression in the Journal's celebration on January 1. All the interest, the pride and the ardent wishes of the patriotic may not be reproduced more impressively than in the following letters, which, resulting from varied methods of thought, from varied points of view, and from varied ideals, in a word, are as one in applause.

Characteristic of individualities so diverse that it would be impossible to group them together under any classification, they fall naturally under the uniting line of admiration for the great American city, enlarged, heightened, made able to govern itself alone if everything around it crumbled.

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW GREETES THE GREATER NEW YORK.

To the Editor of the Journal:



THE consolidation of the five boroughs into one great municipality is a civic event of unparalleled interest.

It is an event which should not pass unnoticed even by those who considered the consolidation fraught with grave dangers. As the new municipality is about to bud forth into a living reality, let us with unanimous voice give her hearty welcome into the sisterhood of cities.

All hail the Greater New York! May her progress ever be onward; may she constantly grow in every civic virtue, and may each recurring anniversary of her birth show that an all-wise Providence planned and directed the historic event we are about to witness.

On this anniversary of the new New York let us take no pessimistic view of her future. Rather let us each resolve that we shall work with patriotic fervor to make her best in everything that concerns her civic life. Her future rests with us, and it is for us to say whether her progress shall be onward, or whether she shall fall short of the sanguine expectations of those whose dearest ambitions will be realized when New York becomes the second city of the world.

I know of no more fitting way to greet the greater city than the elaborate festival planned by the Journal. Let us with song and music and booming of cannon and flashing of lights announce to all the world that there is born a new metropolis, destined to become the greatest city of the earth.

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON HAILS THE GREAT DAY.

To the Editor of the Journal:

WELCOME, Greater New York! May the coming year be one of happiness and prosperity to the inhabitants and the municipality! May our great city fulfill its destiny as the greatest metropolis of this vast country and the second largest in the world!



That we have reached this proud eminence should be a matter for rejoicing and renewed hopefulness among our citizens. It should spur us to efforts both in public and private life commensurate with the new dignity which has been acquired.

Yast responsibilities come with this consolidation and extension of municipal functions, but the very title, "Greater New York," should foster civic pride. In addition to the exchange of greetings between friends and the adoption of resolutions in private life should come this year a hope for the future prosperity of our great city and a resolve to live up to the high standard of citizenship implied by residence within our gates.

I have lived many years in New York and have seen most marvellous changes. I have seen the changes in the methods of transit and communication which have revolutionized not this city alone, but the civilized world.

We have not been without many and grievous faults, but I believe our citizens have always held within their hands the power to correct abuses, and the requirements of the greater city will bring with them the power to administer its affairs equitably.

Next to the joy of seeing women made actual citizens—and I have sometimes hoped to see even that miracle come to pass—I know of no greater occasion of pride than to have had the happiness of being one of those who welcome the advent of Greater New York.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

MAYOR STRONG'S HOPES FOR THE GREATER CITY.

To the Editor of the Journal:



MY wish is that the Greater New York will increase in population, in wealth, in commerce, in art and in science during the next fifty years as much as the old city has in the last half a century.

W. L. STRONG, Mayor.

BROKER CONNOR PREDICTS PROSPERITY.

To the Editor of the Journal:

WISH and believe that Greater New York will start in with a year of great prosperity, and I hope and pray that we may succeed in getting home rule for the city that we may be able to manage our own affairs and be free from the interference of country members of the Legislature, who know nothing of the requirements of a great city.



Undoubtedly Wall Street will have a good bull year in 1898 and will do its part toward promoting the prosperity of the country by showing its faith in the growth of the country and its industries.

W. E. CONNOR.

ACTOR NAT GOODWIN COMMENDS THE EVENT.

To the Editor of the Journal:



MAY all the actors play well their parts. I know of no better better sentiment for the New Year than this—whether it is made to apply to the actors who portray the pictured life, or those who play the parts assigned to them in life's drama.

The coming year is full of hope for us all. We all trust that the oft-mentioned "better times" may become a reality.

I commend the Journal's efforts to celebrate in a fitting manner the natal day of the Greater New York. What event in our history has greater title to a great fete?

NAT GOODWIN.