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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

Postmaster General Payne's laughter just now has that hollow and insincere sort of sound.

Ten years ago republican papers said wages were "going democratic." Are they now going Hannapatic?

"I can see no reason why I should resign," says Perry Heath. Have Mr. Roosevelt's chances, then, grown so small?

The Conrad-Bonaparte report seems to have pretty effectually cooled Postmaster General Payne's "hot air" blast.

Florida wants a ship canal, and it may be that a little secession might have profitable influence at Washington.

In the meantime Perry Heath clings to the Hanna life preserver and makes ugly faces in the direction of the White house.

Emperor William's voice may be weak, but his whispered remarks about Waterloo seem to have echoed throughout Great Britain.

Editor Charles Emory Smith is kept quite busy these days explaining the official record of ex-Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith.

The rumor that the Boers may make another effort may be an indication that the Boers have discovered an opportunity to sell a canal to us.

J. Pierpont Morgan is reported to have offered \$250,000 for the original manuscript of Milton's "Paradise Lost." Money may buy the manuscript.

Is there any moral difference between selling a postoffice appointment for money and trading it for active support in a campaign for re-election?

The "Iowa idea," according to Colonel "Lafe" Young, is to stand in with the gentleman who presides at the spigot of the g. o. p. campaign barrel.

It is quite a common thing for an accused person to demand a court of inquiry after all efforts to get free through political pull have failed.

The wrong is not so much towards Colombia as it is towards our national tradition and our national honor. This is the important fact to remember.

Mr. McKinley may have said that he hoped to be succeeded by Mark Hanna, but there is a very general suspicion that he did not make Perry Heath his confidant.

Louis F. Post, editor of the Chicago Public, calls attention to the fact that the young man who "carried a message to Garcia" received thanks, while the young man who perpetrated a forgery on Aginaldo was promoted to be a brigadier general.

Abdul Hamid's physicians have informed him that he can live only three years more, and those who have ultimatums to throw at him should lose no time.

"Colombia is the victim of her own folly," says the Sioux City Journal. Perhaps, but can the Journal make any defense of a strong man who takes advantage of a weak fool?

At this particular time of the year a large number of good resolutions look very much like this republic's reputation for disinterested friendship for South American republics.

The managers of Monte Carlo cleared \$7,000,000 last year, which is almost as much as Mr. Rockefeller can make in a week by hoisting the price of kerosene a half-cent a gallon.

In other words, while denying that he plated the shipbuilding gold brick, Mr. Schwab coyly admits that he did assist in palming it off on industrial "Reubens" at a fancy price.

When a public official is caught in questionable practices he always declares that he wants a speedy trial on the real issues and then generally asks for time and tries to get away on technicalities.

The real test of that Panama republic will come when an attempt is made to divide the bunch of swag the administration at Washington held up as the capital prize for successful secession.

It will be noticed by every shrewd observer that the g. o. p. managers never think of denouncing "graft" and "grafter" until exposure threatens to have a depressing effect upon g. o. p. chances.

The special Panama message would seem to indicate that the president's chief reliance in proving his case is to have a vast preponderance of testimony without much regard to the kind of testimony it may be.

The exploiters want it distinctly understood that the "stay put" policy applies only to the flag when connected with a chance for spoils, and not to wages. They reserve the right to haul down the wages whenever they see fit.

The administration declares that if there is war with Colombia it will be because Colombia strikes the first blow. By nagging and insult, by contempt and intrigue, the administration hopes to goad Colombia into striking the blow.

While shyly accepting the encomiums showered upon their patriotism, those Panama revolutionists who rose "as one man" are not neglecting to keep a sharp lookout for the arrival of that little consignment of ten million American dollars.

The tin plate trust has all the protection it asked for, but the tin plate trust's employes have been compelled to accept a 50 per cent reduction in wages. "Protection to American workingmen" is a great g. o. p. campaign cry but the trusts that furnish the campaign funds get all the wool.

Financiers dread the results that may follow the withdrawal of \$50,000,000 to pay for the Panama deal. This naturally leads to the inquiry: Is our financial system as stable as some financiers would have us believe if the withdrawal of \$50,000,000 is calculated to cause a money stringency?

If Mr. Roosevelt is so "sot" against a man like Heath being secretary of the republican national committee, why did he want Mr. Hanna to continue as chairman? It is not recorded that Heath ever bought a seat in the senate or spent a year away from home dodging service of a committee that had reported against him.

Those whose views concerning future punishment coincide with those of the late Colonel Ingersoll are earnestly asked to explain what fate should be meted out to those Philadelphia dealers who burned 4,000 Christmas trees in order to bull the price of the remaining stock. Before undertaking the explanation they should ask themselves if there were no poor families in Philadelphia to whom those trees could have been given without affecting the price of the remainder.

Regardless of party or creed Americans will extend their heartfelt sympathy to the venerable Senator Hoar because of the death of his wife. The Christmas festivities of 1903 contained no cheer for the Massachusetts statesman, for the companion of nearly fifty years was taken from him. Mrs. Hoar was not prominent in society circles, chiefly because she preferred devoting her energies and her talents in other directions. But she had a circle of friends who were devoted to her because of her womanly worth.

The Death of Mrs. Hoar.

Medical statistics often furnish better temperance lessons than those given by orators. These statistics show that 70 per cent of pneumonia cases, a disease unusually prevalent in many sections of the country at this time, are fatal where the sufferer is addicted to the use of alcoholic beverages. On the other hand, only 23 per cent of cases are fatal wherein the sufferer is not addicted to the use of liquor. These statistics are all the more emphatic when it is taken into consideration that the non-users include very young children who are treated with great difficulty.

Temperance Lesson in Figures.

The Sioux City Tribune strikes a clear note when it says that the trouble with the postoffice department is that "it is used too much to reward politicians who act as if they think they have already earned their salaries in the party service." The Tribune further says that "they wouldn't bother their heads with practical and economical business plans, and probably couldn't if they would." There is entirely too much truth in the Tribune's statement concerning the trouble with our postal department. It contains entirely too much political chicane and too little business method.

The Postal Department's Trouble.

The editor of McClure's Magazine seems to have grounds for a damage suit against the American Syren and Shipping. The Portrait Syren and Shipping declares that the now famous portrait of Rockefeller, printed in a recent issue of McClure's, is really the portrait of "Ormulu," a miserly character in a story published in Harper's Weekly more than forty years ago, and drawn by "Porte Crayon." But perhaps Syren and Shipping "speaks sarkastikle," as Artemus Ward would say. At any rate, the rest of that interesting publication's remarks anent Mr. Rockefeller have a deliciously sarcastic flavor.

The Portrait of the Oil Monarch.

The superstitiously inclined are pointing Mr. Roosevelt to the fact that the next national convention of the republican party will be its thirteenth. They add to this—to them—sinister fact the other fact that no vice president who succeeded through the death of his chief has ever been nominated and elected president to succeed himself. These superstitious people feel that this makes a combination that is sure to result disastrously to the house of Roosevelt. If they add to this combination the other and well attested fact that the people are growing rather weary of words not backed up by deeds, they will have a resultant combination which will indeed be hard to beat.

A Three Part Combination.

The last month of 1903 was heavily fraught with death through accidents. The deaths in railroad wrecks were unusually numerous, and one of these wrecks was fatal enough to be classed with the famous disaster at Ashtabula and the equally famous disaster at Chatsworth. The Ashtabula horror is especially well remembered because of the fact that in it the singing evangelist, P. P. Bliss, lost his life. The attempt of railroad officials to make it appear that the Baltimore & Ohio wreck, in which seventy people were killed, was due to causes that could not be foreseen and avoided does not appear to hold good. The stakes on a car of lumber were weak and gave way, spilling the lumber out upon the other track. Into this pile of lumber the ill-fated passenger train dashed. Somebody was responsible for allowing weak stakes to be used on that lumber car. Certainly this is something that could have been foreseen and avoided—the use of weak and insufficient stakes on a flat car piled high with lumber.

Somebody is Responsible.