

## THE ST. JOHN EVENING TIMES

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## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

In this land of plenty we read with a chilling like surprise that portions of Ireland are again threatened by famine. No doubt political agitators are making the most of the situation, but the distress either appears or promises to be very real. As it is expected, the Irish parliament has adopted a resolution condemning the Government for existing distress in Ireland, demanding that immediate steps be taken to relieve and also demanding that powers be given for the distribution of land to the poor districts.

The local government board had taken steps, before this meeting was held, to relieve tenants affected by the failure of the potato crop, and Sir A. P. Macdonnell, under secretary for Ireland, in a letter to the boards of guardians in the West of Ireland, expressing that should the relief of the existing distress there prove an excessive burden on the ratepayers, the Government will make a grant from the public funds for the purpose. A London cable of yesterday's date states:—With reference to the resolutions adopted at a meeting of the Irish Parliamentary party in Dublin on Dec. 16, calling upon the Government to extend aid and institute works to afford employment for those in the West of Ireland who have been rendered destitute by the failure of the potato crop, the Irish office here informs The Associated Press that while there has been a partial failure of the potato crop in Ireland, Government returns show that the distress, if it occurs, will not be acute before the end of January. Meanwhile the Government is taking steps to prevent a famine.

## MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

A London correspondent in a recent letter gave this entertaining picture of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain:—Mr. Chamberlain had a hearty welcome back to Birmingham, when he arrived on Wednesday at the dinner of first and second medical students of the new University of which he is the chancellor. The speech of the evening was made by Sir Frederick Trevelyan, the great surgeon, but Mr. Chamberlain contributed some remarks which will be of interest far beyond university circles, for they referred to his own methods of keeping up his strength, by means of his own thinness. While doctors tell us that a man is alive, Mr. Chamberlain coolly confesses that for over 20 years he has consumed very little of the forbidden things, ever since when he could get them, he has smoked when he had nothing else to do, and when he was busy, and returned liquor in moderation, and his digestion is as good as ever. He is, perhaps, the most youthful looking man of his years in the House of Commons, and he does not, as Mr. Gladstone did, live by rule, neither does he take open air exercise. Mr. Chamberlain owes as much to his digestion as to his genius for politics, for his great position in the strenuous arena of parliament.

## THE SHIP SUBSIDY BILL.

The question of building up the merchant marine of the United States is to be discussed at the present session of congress. A ship subsidy bill has been prepared by a joint committee, and if its recommendations are carried out a great stimulus will be given to American shipping interests. For several years there has been an agitation in favor of substantial assistance to American shipping interests. It has been pointed out, over and over again, that a very small portion of United States ships, and congress has been urged to provide a remedy. It has been a favorite argument with high protectionists that the republic should carry its own trade. There is, however, a strong objection to direct subsidies to steamship companies, and a scheme has been drafted which would not entail a direct charge on the treasury, the cost being met by an increased tonnage tax and higher port charges on foreign vessels. What is good for the American shipping interests will thus be had for those of other countries whose vessels are engaged in the carrying trade from United States ports. The main provisions of the proposed new bill are said to be as follows:—

First—Generous grants to vessels carrying the mails on proposed new postal routes.  
Second—A subvention with the object of creating a naval reserve force.  
Third—Liberal payments to vessels engaged in the foreign carrying trade.  
The bill provides for the establishment of a corps of sailors to be known as the naval reserve. It requires that a certain proportion of this corps shall be carried on certain vessels engaged in foreign trade. Every superior officer of this reserve shall be paid from \$60 to \$100 per year, minor officers from \$30 to \$60 per year, and seamen \$25 per year. These payments will be restricted to men shipping on vessels engaged in foreign trade. Bounties are proposed for steam and sailing vessels, as follows:—

Steam vessels, five cents per ton

per year and proportionately less according to shorter service.  
Sailing vessels, four cents per ton per year.  
The owners of these vessels must agree to sell them to the United States, when required for war, at a fair price; to carry the mails when called upon to do so, and on behalf of their crews are to be American citizens.  
The payments on account of the naval reserve and the ten new postal routes are to be met by diverting profits accruing from foreign mail carriage, which now amounts to about \$2,500,000.  
An interesting feature of the bill is that providing bounties for mail routes to China and Japan. The sum of \$500,000 a year will be paid to one going by Hawaii, and \$350,000 one going by a route direct from Pacific coast ports to China and Japan. These contracts will be let under the competitive plan.

Unlike the Hanna-Frye bill, no premium will be given for speed, the main idea being to favor cargo carriers. The expenditures for these subventions are to be met by increasing the tonnage tax and port charges on foreign ships. Eighty per cent of the revenue derived from this source is to be paid in rebates to the owners of American vessels. It is estimated that the tonnage tax will yield about \$8,000,000 a year. The proposed new port charges are only slightly higher than those of Great Britain, and lower than those of France and other maritime powers.

## NEVER WOULD BE MISSED.

The Moncton Times and Transcript, to the great amazement of their readers, have discovered that this set forth by the Times—

It is not every day that the Times can agree with The Transcript, but it heartily endorses its argument that it would be well to abandon the practice of speech-making at the nomination of candidates. In fact, The Times has already urged that such proceedings be abandoned. There may have been, in fact, a period in our history when the nomination day speechmaking was necessary, but it is not necessary now. It is not every day that the Times can agree with The Transcript, but it heartily endorses its argument that it would be well to abandon the practice of speech-making at the nomination of candidates. In fact, The Times has already urged that such proceedings be abandoned. There may have been, in fact, a period in our history when the nomination day speechmaking was necessary, but it is not necessary now. It is not every day that the Times can agree with The Transcript, but it heartily endorses its argument that it would be well to abandon the practice of speech-making at the nomination of candidates. In fact, The Times has already urged that such proceedings be abandoned. There may have been, in fact, a period in our history when the nomination day speechmaking was necessary, but it is not necessary now.

So far as St. John is concerned, the nomination day speeches, unless the parties engage a theatre or rink, have to be made to so small a crowd that but for the newspaper reports they might as well not be made at all. It is not a bad idea to bring the opposing candidates face to face during a campaign, but that could better be done in some other way than by a custom which compels the electors to be packed like sardines into a stuffy and ill-ventilated court-room, to listen to four or five hours of more or less pointless oratory. The Times and the Transcript are right. Nomination day speeches are of no more effect than the speeches of other days.

Several of the larger savings banks in New York City have announced that their rate of interest on deposits will be increased from 3 1/2 to 4 per cent. of January, and Bradstreet's observes that if all the savings banks do the same, the result will be of some importance, in view of the fact that the deposits in these institutions in greater New York amount to \$800,000,000.

A liquor dealer declares that the license law is not enforced. The prohibitionists declare that the statement is an argument in favor of the prohibitory law, which they believe could be better enforced than the license law. It is an interesting situation.

Confidence in the money market and in the country's financial standing, says the Montreal Witness, was better displayed than during the past few weeks when so many securities have been offered to the investing public.

In Montreal the board of assessors has recommended a tax on all large boarding houses. If anything escapes in that town it will not be the fault of those who make suggestions.

The Times today presents itself in a new dress of plainer type than heretofore, as another instalment of the improvements which will from time to time be made in this paper.

Marcus Antonius had just finished his address to the Romans.

"Your speech was all to the good," replied the Romans.

"That wasn't it a little over imaginative?" replied the Romans.

"No," replied Marcus. "I said I would

## LAST NIGHT IN THE THEATRES.

## The Dailey Company's New Man Scores at the Opera House—At the York Theatre.

There was a double reason for the interest displayed in the production of Joaquin Miller's five act western drama "The Danites" by the Dailey Stock Company in the Opera House last evening. There was a certain curiosity to see what the Daileys would make out of the play that has contributed largely to the fame of their histrionic leader, and E. M. Holland to say nothing of others who have found in the well known characters of Sandy, the parson, or the judge, an opportunity to add to their histrionic repertoire. There was an equal curiosity to see Mr. Booth, the Daileys' new leading man for it was a foregone conclusion that the role of Sandy would be entrusted to his hands. It was, and in it Mr. Booth made a most effective debut. He is an actor happily endowed with a more than ordinarily pleasing stage presence, a full, rounded, well modulated voice, a considerable talent of expression in features and tone, and most important of all he is not stiff.

The audience last night was prepared to make every allowance for Mr. Booth's inexperience, but he was not a stranger company, in a strange role, for it requires more than a few rehearsals to make an actor feel at home with new companions in supporting parts. Consequently they were prepared to deal generously with him but he did not require their generosity. He came prepared to make good, and he did, for better treatment of a character has seldom been given at the opera house stage than the part of Sandy, the moralist, whom in a department where, hitherto, he has displayed an intensity of dramatic power that merited the very hearty reception it got. Mr. Booth's future work with the Dailey Company will be watched with interest. From present indications it would appear that he is a very decided acquisition to their ranks and his advent has materially strengthened them in a department where, hitherto, they were woefully weak.

"The Danites" is a western piece the most essential feature of which is its distinctive atmosphere. Joaquin Miller never touched pen to paper without producing something that breathed an individuality of its own. "The Danites" is no exception. Its action is in the mountains of California, its characters are many, everyone of them and it has a wholesome, healthy, and refreshing quality. And the atmosphere is there—that indelible something that is hardly tangible yet contrains us to listen. This time the Daileys have yet made and that they did not fail in giving them ample credit.

Although Mr. Booth had the centre of the stage most of the time and the majority of the opportunities yet the other members of the company merited the appreciation of the audience. Mr. Mullany was especially happy as the judge with a confidence for Mr. Barringer played the parson with the same careful attention and ability that has marked all his work while Mr. Robinson was excellent as Tim.

Of the ladies Miss Ray and Miss Carr fairly divided the honors. Miss Ray's part called for the heavier emotional work and she did it well, but Miss Carr invested her role with a winsome sweetness which the audience was slow to note. Miss Hartley and Miss Blake had character parts that gave them fair opportunities.

The play was well staged and presented and although it does not call for elaborate scenery yet each scene was set in excellent taste. Altogether the performance was a most meritorious one and should do good business during its continuance. It will be again produced tonight and tomorrow evening and at Wednesday's matinee.

## The Myrtle Harder Co.

The Myrtle-Harder Company opened their second week's engagement at the York Theatre last night, with a four act play, entitled "The Tide of Fortune." There was a large audience present and they fully enjoyed the production. The play deals first with rural life in the middle west and afterwards shifts to Washington. The different parts were well sustained, but the favorites of the evening were Emma Myrtle, de Mairandy, and W. A. Harder as Tommy Chumpty, "the

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