

*The Wasp*  
May 29, 1886

**[Editorial]**

The action of the transcontinental railroads in putting down the passenger rate so low as to lure many thousands of Eastern people to California, and then putting it up so high that they could not get back, is worthy of the most grateful commendation, justly entitling the managers to honorary membership in the Immigration Society. The people whom this clever device has enabled us to corner on this western shore will be a valuable addition to our laboring class; for although many of them, doubtless, are ornaments to commerce and the professions in their own country, they will all have to go to work now. Their presence here, just as the fruit season is opening and the demand for white labor is of clamorous urgency under the gentle ministrations of the boycott, is singularly opportune. Possibly their first service in the orchards and fields will be performed with a certain hang-dog reluctance and sullen sense of injury, but as soon as they rise to the conception of the dignity of labor they will cease repining and try to get into harmony with the spirit of the situation. Most of them are physically sane—boned and sinewed like the sturdy ox, and visibly fitted for the ranch—a little undernourished, perhaps, and soft-handed, but susceptible to amendment: they are distinctly superior to Chinamen and will acquit themselves at their tasks in a manner to do honor to the old Puritan stock. Eventually they will acquire sufficient intelligence to supersede in the shoe shops and cigar mills the students and traders who come in under the provisions of the restriction act. At present the “Eastern visitor” can be most profitably and economically operated as a field hand.

When Mr. Hearst “rose in his place” and earnestly but ceremoniously addressed the presiding officer as “Senator,” the painful tension of the nation’s nerves was relaxed and a great radiating wave of relief traveled over the land: it had been feared that he would strive to engage that awful dignitary’s eye by accosting him as “Johnny.” Mr. Sherman superciliously withheld his permissive regard, but the country is far too well satisfied with our “great commoner’s” manner of addressing the Chair to care particularly what he had to say. It was not regular, but, like poetry, according to Milton’s definition, it was “simple, sensuous and passionate.”

As evidence of the remarkable military activity of the Gen. Miles regime in Arizona, it is stated that down about Nogales “one cannot go twenty miles in any direction without running across a detachment of soldiers.” Our natural elation, though, is somewhat tempered by the circumstance that all these detachments habitually go a hundred miles in all directions without running across any Indians.

By the death of Grandpa Folsom the mother of Frankie comes into the snug sum of fifty thousand dollars, while Frankie herself inherits nothing but the grandpaternal blessing. We suppose there can be no further doubt as to which of these ladies is the choice of Buffalo Stephen.

It is with no small gratification that we recall this journal's comments upon Mr. Hubbard, the American Minister to Japan, when he was in San Francisco on his way to his post of duty. Our remarks, as we have the happiness to remember them, were distinctly disrespectful and inhospitable. We were unwilling to accord to him the possession of any qualities or acquirements fitting him for the station in life to which it had pleased Providence and Mr. Cleveland to call him; on the contrary, we deprecated the imperfect evidences of his ability, the faulty scope of his knowledge and the disagreeably Texan character of his manners. His declaration that all he knew about Japan was derived from the writings of General Grant impressed us with a sense of the man's candor, but did not encourage a hope of his good service. His address to the Chamber of Commerce, advising the erection of cotton and woolen mills in all our valleys, appeared to us then, as it does now, like the random and reasonless maundering of a commercial idiot speaking from a wide inexperience. These views of Mr. Hubbard we set forth with such asperity and acerbity as we deemed the occasion to demand. Time has paid us the customary compliment of vindicating the justice of our views, confirming our apprehensions and exalting our horn generally. It is reported on good authority from Tokyo that Minister Hubbard is addicted to the undiplomatic habit of receiving visitors in his shirt-sleeves, discusses his private affairs in a loud voice, ignores the decent and orderly observances of the Legation, and acts, generally, in the manner of a free and independent American in a "far countree"—an American, that is to say, who is free from the tyranny of good breeding and independent of the central authority of common sense. In short, Mr. Hubbard has shown himself to be "one of our most remarkable men, sir," and a true child o' nater. And we told you so.

In these May days we are well stricken with young woman and the prevalence of young man is disastrous. These gentle creatures are graduating with deadly effect at all the seats of learning, from the Caramel Seminary to the John Smith University of Milpitas. It is astonishing how much they know!—the manifestation whereof is by means of essay. Miss Sweetie Gumchu having prospered in mathematics, imparts a sense of her acquirements by reading a paper on "Grecian Art"—a subject not hitherto altogether neglected by previous investigators, of the adult male sort, nor by foregoing Sweeties. Facile in French grammar and unable to pronounce a word of French, Miss Hoodlumetta Bangs is admirably fitted to discuss with lucidity and point "The Influence of the Great Pyramid on Human Character." Messrs. Gummy Sopht and Downy Sloe (of the Saucelito Young Gentlemen's Pantological Institute) are imported into San Francisco to discharge their minds of "Science versus Religion" and "Social Quaternions," respectively—the former thinker being singularly proficient in penmanship, the latter exulting in high percentages of department. All these essays, being duly approved by critical audiences composed of mothers and sisters of both sexes, are printed in the daily newspapers at twenty cents a line and their authors pass the next five years in unbusheling their light and all the rest of their lives in trying to extinguish it. Obviously the entire essay cannot, in every instance, be printed—a fortunate circumstance for the author, for the random elisions and regardless garbling of the newspaper man (uncertain in the soul of him what it is all about) result in a distinct improvement in matter and manner and somewhat mitigate the after-torments of retrospection. On the whole, the annual "graduating exercise" must be deemed sensibly inferior to a circus in interest, and in point of instruction hardly better than the weird, wild ululation of an undomesticated idiot saluting the rising sun from a dawn-gilded hill. If we were dictator we would exterminate the graduating young man and cherish the graduating young woman with diligence and assiduity, with a view to her ultimate reclamation.

The “rousing reception” accorded to Senator Logan at Providence, Rhode Island, and the enthusiasm of his audience were amply justified by the lofty character of the sentiments he expressed. The only one of these which was telegraphed all over the continent was this: “An honest laboring man only wants an honest day’s pay for his labor, and he ought to have it.” If all Senator Logan’s remarks equaled this in originality, brilliancy and wisdom (and they commonly do) it is hardly too much to say that the people “roused” by his reception were overpaid for the violence done to their apathy; and it is clearly within the limiting lines of truth to add that Senator Logan’s words are always worth their weight in gold.

The Sunday *Examiner* has for three weeks been spotted like a leopard with portraits of “our handsome and representative men.” They are mostly representative.

Our estimable contemporary, the Oakland *Times*, has changed hands, and the new editor signaled his advent by an article on the Panama canal, neatly rounded off with a statement that he was bewildered. “An open confession is good for the soul,” brother, though it does not at all help the understanding; but why a man should write on a subject which bewilders him when it is so easy not to is a thing in the contemplation of which, with a view to its exposition, we are afflicted with a remediless intellectual confusion.

Looking across the line, the Grecian said:  
“This border I will stain a Turkey red.”  
The Moslem smiled securely and -replied:  
“No Greek has ever for his country dyed.”  
While thus each hero guarded his frontier,  
The Powers stole all the country in his rear.

Senator Hearst is engaging a good deal of attention—ours included. His latest utterance is a lament that he is cursed with fatal wealth: he wants a modest competency and a chicken ranch. He can give his millions away if he does not want them—nobody is holding him. But he’d better eschew the plan of promoting the delusive chicken, and go in for a hog ranch instead. Then if, all too late, he should mourn his departed wealth he could console himself with the reflection that all was not lost: there would remain to him the society of the hogs.

Mrs. Kerrigan, the woman who took a razor and shaved her rival not wisely but into too many fragments, has been declared sane, and must endure prosecution. We cherish a fond desire for her conviction; not because she cut her customer—that is a misfortune to which any barber is liable—but because, observing the mishap, she omitted the professional ceremony of applying concentrated thunder and lightning and boring it in with a twisted towel. A decent conformity to professional tradition should be compelled by law.

Von Ranke, the great historian, is working away with good results after he has turned ninety years. *Bulletin, May 22.*

Berlin, May 23.— Professor Leopold von Ranke, who has been seriously ill for some time, died today. *Bulletin, May 23.*

Old age and illness he alike defied—  
One word of praise from Bartlett and he died.

The politicians may advantageously begin making up the small parcels known as their minds, or this Irrigation matter will catch them without any “life-long convictions,” and overcome them like a cloudburst. If they are going to get upon both sides of the question now is the time for the trimmer to straddle it, while it is little, and let it grow up between him. We think ourselves justified in calling on Mr. Estee to take his stand with one foot upon the river and the other on dry land and show his admirers (of whom we are one and himself makes three) how the thing can be done. It is not important whether he first mounts the water or the shore—pending the leap of the political cat any attitude will do, provided it be taken in haste and amended at leisure: the main tiling (for our instruction) is to be at last on both sides. Indisputably the recent convention—itsself a result of a tolerably well-defined popular feeling—has given a quickening twist to the tail of public opinion and set that creature’s nose in a direction in which the Riparianese do not desire that it should go. But public opinion is (with one exception) deceitful above all things and desperately fickle—as could be feelingly attested by Messrs. McGlashan and Ravelin; and only the hardiest and most intrepid “architect of his own political fortunes” will at this early date lay, upon the facts already uncovered, a permanent substructure of belief. Rightly reliant on a legal advantage having in it no element of equity, the river-tribes have not yet presented their case on its merits: possibly they may have that to say which will put a different face upon the matter, bearing little family resemblance to the visage in present apparition. This is counsel for the timorous, the sluggish, the thrifty and the mugwump: for ourselves, we have no hesitancy in embracing the Irrigationist faith — subject to private interpretation and possible apostasy—and in the capacity of malleus hereticorum we nourish a hope of performing acceptable service, fitly rewarded with an approving conscience and a fair share of the public printing.

Certain residents of the City of the Lost Angels want a Curfew Act so bad they can’t stand still. The proposition is to rake the town with a fine-tooth comb every evening at nine o’the clock, and take in all young people who are found making night hideous by spooning across the garden gates. It would be a cruel measure and do much to retard the growth of the town by natural increase of population. If it is desired that a Los Angeles girl should marry, nothing could be more unwise than any law discriminating against her in the matter of facilities for courting. Absolute free trade in that regard is her only hope.

For some weeks past the beautiful suburb of Oakland has suffered from visitations of the noctivagant burglar who comes like a shadow, so departs. His incursions have affected the villagers with no small alarm for the security of their household goods and gods; but so far the burglar has treated them with marked generosity and the consideration that is due to the helpless and unprotected. To the police in particular he has been compassionately forbearing, ransacking their china-closets and dormitories with an amiable unselfishness worthy of all praise—though some individual officers of the detective branch have been deprived of their nightshirts, and one was prematurely awakened by needless violence in removing it. These various abuses of hospitality have met with severe condemnation by the press and are not in accord with popular feeling, but the Chief of Police, whose long residence in Oakland gives him an unusually clear insight into suburban character, does not hope for any concerted action by the inhabitants until the burglar shall incautiously have roused public opinion against him by invading the house of some citizen whom the community holds in high esteem. Amongst the residences recently entered was that of ex-Governor Perkins.

What ! Peter Robertson, is it for you

To blubber o'er Max Taubles for he's dead?  
By Heaven ! my hearty, if you only knew  
How better is a grave-worm in the head  
Than brains like yours— how far more decent too  
A tomb in far Corea than a bed  
Where Peter lies with Peter, you would covet  
His happier state and, dying, learn to love it.

In the recesses of the silent tomb  
No "Undertones" of yours disturb the peace ;  
Your mental bag-pipe, droning like the gloom  
Of Hades audible, perforce must cease  
From troubling further; and that crack o' doom,  
Your mouth, shaped like a long bow, shall release  
In vain such shafts of wit as it can utter —  
The ear of death can't even hear them flutter.

The Sunday *Chronicle*, with one full yard  
Of your inditing, never comes, I'll swear,  
Where Taubles is—your namesake is on guard  
To see that nothing evil enters there.  
No doubt you think the prohibition hard,  
But there's another place, remember, where  
There's a warm reading-room for your admirers,  
Including forkers, fuelers and firers.

This is not exactly the place for theological disputation (so we never permit any talking back when we lay down the law and lay out the prophets) but we don't agree with the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie that the reason Christ made no mistakes was that he had the Bible to guide him. We do not, that is to say, believe that the difference between Christ and (to take an extreme example) Deacon Fitch is altogether one of studious habits and understanding of Scripture. It is all very well and safe for the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie to say such things to those "bald-headed snipes of the valley" of tears, the members of the Young Men's Christian Association, but we have youth and controversial vigor, and no "crested jayhawk of the mountain" of Zion shall impose his facile platitudes on us unchallenged. No glittering aphorism which ignores the difference in native intelligence and morality between the Son of Man and the partner of Loring Pickering will find acceptance at this office while we run it.

We observe that an effort is making to obtain "Executive clemency" for that injured innocent, Mr. John S. Gray, sometime Secretary of the Board of Harbor Commissioners, on the ground, apparently, that imprisonment is disagreeable to him. It is stated, too, that among those urging this consideration upon the gubernatorial understanding are the District Attorney who prosecuted this eminent fastidious, the jurors who convicted and the Judge who sentenced. It is impossible to say what influence such people have upon such a Governor, but we are very sure they should be forbidden by law to make such recommendations, for they bring the law into contempt and derision. Did the District Attorney prosecute, the jury convict and the Judge sentence Mr. Gray for fun? The time for them to sport their hearts in the matter was when the case was in their hands: the District Attorney could easily have manifested his willingness for a light sentence to be passed; so could the jury; and the Judge could easily have passed one. Their intrusion into the Executive ear at this time is impertinent and

affronting. They know no more about the matter than a hundred others, and by their acts under oath they stand committed against what they now urge. Of all persons in the world they are the only fourteen who have actually no moral right to recommend a pardon. We speak of the Gray case rather than another only because it is better known; many others would equally well illustrate an illogical and impudent custom which should be forbidden to exist—that of law officers accidentally discharging their duty and then, with consciences bruised by the recoil, salving the sores by asking somebody to undo their own work.

Whatever may be the legitimate objects of the Knights of Labor, as understood by Mr. Powderly, they can hardly hope for general approval when they assume a censorship over this great country's concert music. Eight of them went into a well-known concert hall in New York, a few evenings since, and demanded that their preference for certain airs not on the program be taken into account as a controlling factor in the performance. If arbitration was offered by the management it must have been refused, for a disturbance ensued in which the violoncello was "killed" and the engineer of the piano-forte driven from the lever of the throttle valve. The boycotters were finally clubbed into submission and traffic was resumed. It is to be hoped we shall not have to chronicle any more such deplorable incidents of the great struggle between labor and music. Their interests are really identical.

By vigorous prosecution of Messrs. Creighton, Doane and Northey, jury-repairers, District Attorney Wilson can do more to purge himself of the suspicion put upon him by the recent grand jury than he can by any formal denial of that body's damaging intimations of his official unworth. He ought to accept this tramp triumvirate as a timely mercy and a means of salvation. He is Isaac under Abraham Public's uplifted knife, and lo! here are three tangled rams providentially disclosed, just aching for the sacrificial stroke. In common gratitude he can do no less than get off the altar and help the old man cut their throats.

The Northern Pacific Railroad Company has not been exactly arrested and thrown into jail, but a committee of the House of Representatives has sternly agreed to report favorably a resolution instructing the Secretary of the Interior to ask it whether it has arranged its stopping places and the running of its trains so as to benefit certain towns in which the directors of the company are interested to the injury of certain other towns in which they have only a languid and unlively concern. It is a railroad company, therefore it has indubitably done that tiring. Nevertheless, Congress should think twice-and-a-half before assuming the heavy responsibility of causing that significant question to be propounded, for if the terrified directors, not "pausing for a reply," should take to their heels and, endeavoring to outrun their feet, fall down and break the necks of them, the honorable members might be indicted for murder.

"Who was Mullan to divide with?" asks the *Examiner*. We shall not attempt to answer: we hold no parley with an unprogressive journal which hasn't heard about the objective case.

(Source: *Archive.org*, <https://archive.org/stream/waspjanjune188616unse#page/n342/mode/1up>)