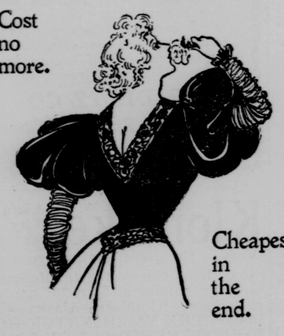
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President McKinley's Splendid Conduct in the Case of the Destruction of the Maine—An Eye on the "Grapes."

Few men occupying the position of President McKinley at this critical time would be able to withstand the temptation to do a little spread eagle posing by catering, in talk, at least, to the unmistakable fighting sentiment of the country. Whether he has been tempted to do so, I cannot say, but that he has not done so is known to all the world, and it reflects great credit upon him as a man and as an official and has, beyond a doubt increased the respect felt for the U. S. by all civilized nations. Not a line officially indicating what the verdict of the naval court of inquiry will be has been received by either the President or Secretary Long, but that very fact has tended to convince the public that the investigintion has already shown the court that the explosion, which wrecked the Maine was not accidental and that it did not occur inside the vessel; whether it has convinced the President and Cabinet, their active preparations for war show better than anything said for publication by any of them.

Preparations are for the purpose of putting the country in a condition to hold Spain to a strict accountabilty, if the verdict of the court shall be that the Maine was blown up from the outside, as nearly everybody now expects that it will be Holding Spain responsible is likely to cause war, and although not one warlike word has been uttered, either by the President or by any member of his cabinet, this country is quite well prepared for war.

Our Navy is equal to that of Spain in guns and armament, and as superior to it in fighting qualities as an American is to a Spaniard; and the following remarks made by a War Department official will give some idea of our coast defenses: 'From Portland Me., to the southernmost point on the Atlantic coast, big guns and mortar batteries have been planted, and, in case of war, an invading force could not land on Uncle Sam's soil, without suffering severely. The Pacific coast has not been neglected by any means, and a hostile fleet seeking an entrance to a harbor anywhere along that coast line, would find violent opposition. One good result of the present critical times, if it only amounts to a scare, is that there will be less opposition to appropriation for coast defenses and for needs of the army and navy.

Justice Harlan, of the U. S. Supreme Court made the following reference to the loss of the Maine, in a lecture to the law students of Columbian University: "It is idle for any man to say he knows how that calamity occurred, and any man belittles his nature and lowers himself in the estimation of his fellowmen when he expresses the anxiety that it will turn out that it was not an accident, but that it was treachery rather than an accident. Brave, generous men do not want to think so badly of their fellowmen. We don't want to believe that that was an act of treachery and duplicity; we hope it will turn out otherwise. And we ought all to have this feeling that if it turnout to be accidental, we should rejoice; if it turns out not to be accidental, we will not hear any more of North, South, East or West, no more of republicans, democrats or populists. We will hear only of Americans."

The President and the Secretary of the Navy believe that it would be both fitting and patiotic for Congress to authorize the building of a new warship, to be as good as it can be made, to be named Maine, but they also regard as wise the opinion of the men in Congress who have studied the subject, that it will be best to wait until full particulars of the loss of the Maine can be carefully studied before deciding whether it would be advisable to build any more vessels of the battleship type.

Representative Pearson, of N. C., indignantly resents the imputation, made in some quarters, that the fight made by the republicans of the house to secure modification of the civil service law and rules, in which he has been conspicious among the leaders, is a sham, and says he intends if within his power, and he thinks it is, to see that every member of the House is put on record on this question before the close of the present session. There is reason for the belief that President McKinley would have issued an order materially modifying the civil service rules before this, had not his attention been so fully taken up with matters following upon the DeLome letter and the destruction of the Maine.

The failure to secure unanimous consent for the house to take up the bill, already passed by the Senate, providing for the enlistment of two additionaly regiments of artillery, in order that the government might properly man the batteries of heavy guns which have been planted in connection with out seacoast defenses, owing to democratic objections, speaks much louder to observant persons than do the war whoops which certain democrats have recently been indulging in. This temporary delay will not effect the bill, which will be passed this week, but it should serve as a pointer for all intelligent persons.

BETTER THAN EVER.

Next Week's Attractions at the Academy of Music.

Messrs. Nixon and Zimmerman are giving Baltimore the greatest line of attractions this season that the Monumental City has ever enjoyed. One feast of music, mirth and drama doth tread upon another's heels, so fast they follow, has been the pleasant state of affairs at the beautiful Academy of Music this season. All of the big New York successes with the original casts have been brought to Baltimore by Nixon and Zimmerman, and their enterprise has been rewarded with a succession of crowded houses.

The next great novelty at the popular Academy will be E. E. Rice's latest and most succesful frisky English musical comedy, "The French Maid," which has just closed a run of 175 nights at the Herald Square Theatre, New York. "The French Maid" will open at the Maryland Academy of Music, Monday, March 7th, for six nights with matinees on Wednesday and Saturday. A good Orchestra chair may now be reserved at $1.00 while other reserved seats in desirable locations can be had at 50 and 75 cents. Gallery admission 25 cents.

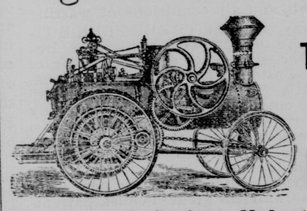
"The French Maid" has a reputation for fascinating frolics, a brightly told story and charmingly catchy music.

"The French Maid" is adored by nearly everybody in the cast from an Oriental Prince to a waiter at the hotel and a gendarme, and the rivalries, jealousies and complications caused by this natty and naive little beauty form the centre of all breezy fun. Suzette, the French Maid, has an appointment to meet half a dozen men at a masked ball, and as they disguise themselves as one another, it can be readily understood that complication follows complication with rapidity. The libretto by Basil Hood and the music by Walter Slaughter, and the scenes are laid in the courtyard of the hotel Anglais, Boulogne, and the gardens of the Casino, Boulogne, the piece being in two acts. The piece is full of capital humor, delightful music, taking songs, and lively choruses. The chief ballet features are the Bon Bon Ballet, the Frolique Franchise and the Carnival Promenade Ballet. In these the great Australian dancer, Saharet will appear in her marvellous acrobatic dances. This wonderful dancer is quite a unique attraction in the dancing line as she is most agile and lithesome and absolutely unexcelled as a high kicker and an extraordinary acrobat and contortionist as well. Manager Price has cast the French Maid with his usual excellent judgment, and the complete New York cast, company and superb scenic and costume production from the Herald Square Theatre, will be seen here. Dainty and dashing Olive Redpath will be seen as Suzette, the French Maid, and Miss Lucille Flay, a most beautiful girl, will be seen here for the first time. Other well-known favorites include handsome Yolande Wallace, Eva Davenport, Charles A. Bigelow, Hallyn Mostyn, Henry Norman, George Honey and the popular baritone, William Armstrong.

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All Persons indebted to me for taxes for 1896 are hereby warned that if the same are not paid during February 1898. I shall proceed to collect according to law. without further notice, which will impose additional cost. I cannot allow my bond to suffer on account of this neglect. JOHN L. FISHER, Collector Fourth Dist