

came to nothing, and the result will probably be a rate war, out of which the scalpers and the public will get the benefit and the railroads will exhaust their energies in cutting each other's throats. That is the difference between California and Utah so far.

As to the "scalping" business, the *Chronicle* makes the assertion that already one Chicago ticket-scalper has in his possession 1000 tickets to Denver, all of them purporting to be return portions of round-trip tickets from that place, and that there is no telling how many more such tickets are ready to be put on sale on May 1st or sooner. The fact that one road has made such a deal is enough to upset any inter-railroad agreement and to convert each company into a free lance, fighting for its own hand.

This prospective war is not to be regretted from the standpoint of those who want to go to the World's Fair, for it is quite likely that as soon as the war opens fairly rates will come down with a rush. It only shows that the eagerness of railroad corporations to grab it all may sometimes defeat its own purpose, and that in the attempt to gather wool the grasping railroad companies may come home shorn. Perhaps it may eventually come to that here, but it doesn't look like it now.

Had the overland roads agreed on a reasonable reduction, says the *Chronicle*, the scalpers' occupation would have been gone and the railroads would have filled their coffers, since hauling 10,000 people at \$70 for the round trip would manifestly be better than hauling 5000 at \$110 for the round trip. Now it would seem that the money-grasping notions of the railroad companies, based on the theory of all the traffic will bear, are destined to come to naught, and that contention and discord will take the place of agreement and harmony. "It seems a pity that this should be so, for the railroad companies, if they would be decent and reasonable, would be fairly entitled to share in the prosperity which the present year promises to the United States."

It takes corporations a long time apparently to learn that correct principles are apt to result more profitably in the end than the other kind are. It seems like a piece of fatuity for which there is no sufficient reason for the roads to grasp all which the circumstances of a case will present when the managers must know that it will soon end and there will be a reaction unfavorable to them. Fifty dollars for the round trip from Salt Lake City to the World's Fair would cause twice as many people to go as will do so at a \$70 rate, and the feeling toward the roads which they would thereafter experience would be much more pleasant in addition.

SCOFFING AT SACRED THINGS.

The New York *Post-Express*, whose editor is, we believe, a Free Thinker (meaning in many cases one who makes free to do other people's thinking for them), ridicules the suggestion of the efficacy of prayer and places it among the superstitious inclinations of the day. A contemporary having noted a pleasing incident in connection with the nomi-

nation and election of Grover Cleveland, the paper first named wants to know why the other should talk of witchcraft as though it were a thing of the past; as though a belief in or failure to oppose the practice of supplication and invocation caused such believer to regard witchcraft and witches as being features of present as well as of past life!

The story referred to is from the *Baltimore Sun*. It says mention has many times been made of the fact that Mr. Cleveland regards himself as a man of destiny, and thinks he may be pardoned if indulging in such a belief. One day recently a lady from a distant state called at the White House. She had no appointment with the President and it was long past the hour for the reception of general callers. She was one of those possessing that indispensable quality of personal magnetism, which at the same time charms and compels. She said to the attendants in a quiet but peaceful manner, "Take my card to the President and he will see me." There was nothing to be done but comply with her request, and almost instantly word came back from the President for her to be admitted. She had never seen the President, but she was a believer in his destiny and a firm believer in the efficacy of prayer. Months before the meeting of the Chicago convention she had written to Mr. Cleveland that it was his destiny to be nominated, and she was making it the subject of daily prayer. After his nomination she wrote to him she was praying for his election, and God would surely respond favorably. After the election she again wrote him, and sent him a little medal of religious device, asking him always to carry it with him. After the first greetings between the two were over the President drew from his pocket his wallet, and opening it, showed her the little trinket she had sent him, and which he had carried always since the day it had reached him. When she left she said: "Mr. President, I shall pray for your administration to be a credit to yourself and a glory to the country; and as my prayers have been answered, so shall this be answered."

This little incident, certainly unobjectionable enough viewed from any standpoint, is pounced upon with a tone amounting almost to wrath. It is pronounced an exhibition of superstition under a "thin disguise of prayer and piety. President, editor and the woman with faith in the little trinket with the religious device are, more or less, believers in "witchcraft." If this is not a *non sequitur* of the most strained character it bears every resemblance to it.

We are not prepared to uphold the idea, as some profess to do, that all prayers, proper or improper are heard or that all that are heard are answered; on the contrary, our belief is the other way. But the disposition on the part of a considerable proportion of the secular press and a great number of our population to claim that calling on the common Father for aid and guidance amounts to nothing more than heathenish superstition cannot be too sternly frowned down and condemned, and all people of spiritual tendencies and religious disposition should do their part in preventing the spread of the evil. It is a

form of infidelity much more debasing to the soul than is the doctrine of the agnostic which, while it does not lead to reverence and piety, at least does not put forth the absolute claim that there is no throne of Grace to supplicate and no hereafter to encounter. It is worse because it substitutes ridicule for disbelieving opposition, and seeks to cast reproach upon the Christian because he *does* believe and *does* practice in accordance with his faith that is in him.

THE ARMY IN SELF-DENIAL.

Iconoclastic as it is in some of its methods, and disposed to radically modify where it follows others, the Salvation Army has not gotten so far away from the established churches that it undertakes to dispense altogether with Lent, so far as the term refers to self-denial and abundant prayer. Instead of forty days, however, the Army confines its abstinence to one week; and this, in its fourth annual observance, is now in progress, having begun on the 22nd and expecting to terminate on the 29th inst.

The sacrifices which are made on these occasions by some of the members of the organization are real and great. It is understood generally that contributions to the fund of the Army will be vastly increased; that in case of fasting the cost of the food that would otherwise be consumed is remitted to headquarters; that the proceeds of the sale of any article of luxury or finery that may be dispensed with shall likewise be remitted; in a word that any saving in expenses or any generosity called forth by the occasion shall go to swell the financial resources of the organization. The editor of the *War Cry*, the official organ of the Army, announced in the last number to hand that his bill of fare for the week would be as follows:

Sunday—Bread and Praties.
Monday—Potatoes and Bread.
Tuesday—Bread and Potatoes.
Wednesday—*Pommes de terre et du pain*.
Thursday—The Staff of Life and Murphies.
Friday—Bread and Spuds.
Saturday—Spuds and Bread.

This, too, in all earnestness, and with the evident expectation that the example of self-denial, whether followed in the matter of food or something else, would be of efficacy wherever the *War Cry* should circulate.

The local branch or division of the Army appears to be making no long-faced display of its observance of the occasion, but it may be all the more sincere in it for that very reason. On general principles fasting, when undertaken for proper purposes and with proper motives, is a good thing; and prayer that is real and heartfelt is always to be commended. The Salvation Army in this observance is entitled to at least the respect of every person, religiously inclined or not, who is fair enough to measure others by their motives and sincerity and not by what scoffers may say about them.

ON ONE point the oldest and youngest inhabitant are perfectly agreed: "there never was such a spring." Even the famous season of '63 pales in its insignificance.