

THE AMERICAN FERTILIZER

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO PHOSPHATE MINING, FERTILIZER MANUFACTURING AND AUXILIARY BRANCHES.

1019-1021 Market Street.

P. O. Box 1556.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Jan. 14, 1898.

The S. S. Mc Clure Co.,

141-55 E. 25th St., New York.

Gentlemen:-

In reply to yours of the 11th inst.,-which has been delayed owing to my absence from the city, - it will require considerable investigation to get at the real facts in any of the cases mentioned, or similar cases, but there are always men who make a specialty of looking up the details of these points, through, generally, having a family connection concerned in the matter itself. For example, the hanging of Midshipman Spencer at the time when I think his father was Secretary of State, may be easily traced back. The Report of the Navy Department will give the official details, also a list of the officers on the ship. It should not be very difficult to find some of these officers, or the Captain's clerk to-day, from whom the backbone of an article could be gotten. I understand that every member of the Slidell-Mackenzie family met with a violent death. I know that Capt. Mackenzie who was directly in command, and on whose authority Midshipman Spencer was hung, was killed by being thrown from a horse somewhere on the Palisades.

As you are perhaps aware, the story of prominent events usually given to the public is more a mask than an actual statement of the facts. It has been my good fortune to have known a number of navy officers who were connected with prominent events in the last twenty years. For example, I have heard the true story, at a private house, of the retreat up the Lena Delta, and of the ill-fated Jeanette expedition. From pretty much the same sources, I learned also the true facts of the battle between the "Monitor" and the "Merrimac," and the credit which Lieut. Green should have gotten, but could not have gotten except at the expense of Admiral Worden. There is also a little inside history of Captain Mahan's celebrated book on the influence of sea power on history, but these things are hardly proper subject matter for a magazine article at this date; I simply quote them to show that in most cases the most important and interesting facts in prominent events do not reach the public. It is always possible to trace an army or navy officer back from almost any period through the Departments in Washington, where through pensions, or other means, the addresses of some members of the family may always be obtained. For political events it is a difficult matter, but even for this, I should think that any well founded newspaper office could supply the required information. Take, for instance, the Martin-Kotza affair which occurred in Smyrna. This could easily be traced for details by using the letter-book of the "St. Louis," which must be on file at Washington, and following out Capt. Ingraham's after career.. At the breaking out of the war he

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S. S. Mc Clure Co., No. 2.

resigned and went South. I happen to know, quite by accident, a gentleman who was a sailor on an American merchant vessel lying in the harbor of Smyrna at the time the incident occurred.. The details of Gen. Canby can of course, be gotten at easily by referring to the War Department records and getting the names of the officers concerned therein. Some of these officers would surely know men who were privates, but who are now successful, to some extent, in civil life, and who would furnish information which coupled with the official report and the final history of Captain Jack of the Modocs, would, if taken altogether, make a very interesting paper. It seems to me that it is a very easy matter to get at the details of any particular event; all that it would require would be careful investigation of the official records, and then a search among more prominent people by correspondence.

Please pardon so long a letter. I shall be very glad to see Mc Clure's take up this line of work. In my judgment, the younger generation want to know something of our past history, and the fact that this history is not creditable in many cases had best be shown clearly. In my judgment, the tenor of the best sentiment in the U.S. to-day is against high-flown statements and Old Gloryism. You will notice this, I think, in the decadence of oratory at business and social meetings. I know, as no doubt you do, many people who will refuse to listen to an address that is not simply stated, briefly, concisely, and without flowers or figures of speech.

Yours very truly,

D. Peacock

Edw.