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## TOPICS OF THE DAY.

### THE ATTACK ON COMMISSIONER EVANS.

IT is a noticeable fact in the fight that Gen. Daniel E. Sickles is making for the removal of Pension Commissioner H. Clay Evans that the newspapers of the country are standing by the commissioner pretty solidly. The *New York Tribune* (Rep.), *Sun* (Rep.) and *Mail and Express* (Rep.), the *Philadelphia Ledger* (Rep.), the *Rochester Post Express* (Rep.), the *Minneapolis*



GEN. DANIEL E. SICKLES.

*Journal* (Rep.), and many other Republican papers the country over express the belief that Mr. Evans has administered the pension office in a honest and creditable manner, and should be retained. "Nobody doubts," says the *New York Times* (Ind.), "that he is an honest, efficient, and fair-minded commissioner of pensions, and that the attacks upon him are made precisely for that reason."

The *New York Commercial Advertiser* (Rep.), too, calls him "thoroughly efficient, entirely just, and exceptionally upright," and declares that "to remove him in obedience to clamors like those made by General Sickles and Tanner would be an act so unjustifiable that we do not believe for a moment

the President will consent to it." The *Baltimore News* says: "Notice should be served on pension grabbers that they are degrading the pension system at their peril, and that unless they join in a honest effort to purify it the whole system may be radically changed. If the attack upon Mr. Evans by General Sickles helps to open the eyes of the public to the scandalous pension conditions, it will have served a useful purpose, but hardly the purpose its author intended it should promote." The *Chicago Tribune* (Rep.) remarks that "it is to be hoped that the President will be as little moved by these latest attacks on the commissioner as he has been by previous ones, and will keep him where he is"; and the semi-official *Philadelphia Press* (Rep.) observes: "The general, no doubt meaning well, has got himself into a



COMMISSIONER H. CLAY EVANS.

hole, without any apparent reason, from which it will be difficult for him to emerge. His complaint against Mr. Evans, that of closely investigating claims, is childish. Mr. Evans would be derelict in the performance of his sworn duty if he did not do that very thing, and every honest applicant should welcome such inquiry." "In sober truth," concludes the *Brooklyn Standard-Union* (Rep.), "Pensions Commissioner Evans is the honest veteran's best friend, and he should be sustained by both President and people."

General Sickles, whom the *Springfield Republican* (Ind.) refers to as "doubtless the most distinguished Civil War soldier now alive, except possibly Generals Schofield and Howard," is a member of the pension committee of the national Grand Army organization, and he complains that Mr. Evans administers the pension office in an unsympathetic spirit. He says:

"Commissioner Evans has, unfortunately, so administered the duties of his office as to create a general impression among those who have occasion to transact business with it that he is not fair; that he is too technical in the construction of the statutes; that he is unreasonable and over-fastidious in his demands for testimony; that he treats every applicant for a pension with suspicion; that he affords no facilities to soldiers or to soldiers' widows to overcome technical requirements; that he maintains a large corps of spies, who go about the country to see if they can't find excuses to reduce allowances to pensioners or to stop them altogether, and that the espionage exercised over the widows of veterans is most offensive and unwarranted.

"For these and other reasons the people whose names are inscribed on the pension rolls—and there are nearly a million of

them—remonstrate against the reappointment of Commissioner Evans."

His belief in Mr. Evans's incompetency became so strong some time ago that when the Republican National Committee asked him to take the stump for McKinley last fall he declined to do so, it is said, until Senator Scott, of West Virginia, of the national committee of the Republican Party, promised that Evans should be removed. At this point another interesting controversy arises. General Sickles, in an interview published in the *New York Herald* on Thursday of last week, is quoted as follows: "President McKinley told me in March, that he would remove Mr. Evans, and told me the name of the man he had selected to succeed him, a General So-and-So, who is a thoroughly capable man, and would be most acceptable to the Grand Army. I am not at liberty to say who he was." The Washington correspondents say that the friends of the President refuse to credit this assertion; and as the general's statement is so positive, the retention or release of the commissioner will soon settle the controversy on this point.

The commissioner has had little to say in reply to the General's charges, but he has brought out two letters which General Sickles wrote to him in 1899, the first saying that "your office seems to me worthy of the highest commendation, and, above all, from the veteran soldiers," and the second referring to the "admirable administration" of his office, adding: "I have written an earnest letter to the President, in which I have expressed the utmost confidence in you and the same measure of contempt for your critics." The commissioner remarks that the office force and policy of administration are the same now that they were in 1899, and says that "surely there is no lack of generosity on the part of the Administration when it distributes \$140,000,000 per annum."

A Grand Army view of Mr. Evans may be seen in the following comment from *The National Tribune* (Washington):

"Every year he has gone to Congress and asked for a great deal more money than he has intended to spend. Then all the soldier-hating papers have set up a great cry about the 'en-

ormous expense of the pension roll more than a third of a century after the war.' Then from week to week he has filed their columns with 'stories of frauds he has discovered, of vicious schemers he has balked, the rare luck of the country in having a man of his altogether unprecedented shrewdness and honesty, and then makes a showing of several millions which he has rescued from the clutches of harpies.

"So the poor veterans and their widows catch it both ways. They are blamed for an amount of money which is never intended to be given them, and are jeered at because they are disappointed in getting any part of it.

"While getting bigger appropriations than ever, he is paring down the poor little allowances of veterans and their widows until the average pension under the act of June 27, 1890, is only \$108.28, where it was \$121.51 under Raum, eleven years ago, and eight out of every nine on the whole roll get but \$3 a week or less.

"This is the kind of a politician who makes game of the veterans and their widows in their old age."

### THE DAYTON STRIKE.

THE reports in regard to the labor troubles in the National Cash Register works at Dayton, Ohio, have been at the same time so few and so varied that it is not easy to arrive at a comprehensive idea of the situation. A few points, however, seem clear. The company has not only provided its employees with attractive surroundings in the factory and at home, and provided free lectures, entertainments, excursions, religious opportunities, etc., but has recognized the labor-unions, and treated with them as such on all occasions. The concessions to the unions, indeed, have sometimes gone so far as to be almost ridiculous. On one occasion, for instance, it was made a matter of complaint that the women who washed the factory towels did not belong to any union, so the company allowed the men to supply the towels themselves; at another time it was discovered that the springs on a certain door were made by non-union labor, so the company took the springs off and let the men do the work of the springs; again, a union insisted that two men, whom the company did not want, be kept on the pay-roll, so they were supported in idleness three months, until the union permitted the company to drop them. The company officials say that twenty-five unions are represented in the factory, and that a large part

of the time of the management is occupied in listening to their demands.

On the men's side the principal complaint seems to lie against one McTaggart, foreman of one of the departments, who is said to be a systematic "labor-crusher." His attempt to oust, on the plea of a reduction of the force, several men who had been active in labor matters, and the demand of the union that they be taken back, is said to be the immediate cause of the present strike. The strike includes only the foundry and polishing room; the closing of the rest of the factory on May 3 was due to the fact, so the company announced, that the strike in the foundry



POOR OLD JOHN BULL.

He is glad to hear the American hay crop is good.

—The New York Journal.



JOHN BULL: "Hold tight, Wilfred, there might be a kidnaper around here."

—The St. Louis Republic.

### SNAP-SHOTS OF JOHN BULL AND UNCLE SAM.