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Spawls from the Keystone.

The defunct city bank of Scranton is only able to pay 10 per cent. on its deposits. Seven new building associations have recently been organized in Reading. The Trade and Labor Council of Reading has denounced the employment of foreign labor on city work. John Scoffer, an aged miner living at Crystal Ridge, Luzerne county, committed suicide Sunday by hanging. Sportsmen say there will be more pheasants this fall in the woods near Meadville than for several years. Quails are also showing up. The body of John Lavin, 30 years old, who committed suicide, was found Monday in the Schuylkill, a short distance above West Manayunk. English capitalists were in South Bethlehem this week considering the purchase of the Areher gas fuel furnaces manufactured there. Henry Bereh, a wood chopper, took refuge under an oak tree at Teaslow during a storm on Wednesday and was struck by lightning and killed. Wilkesbarre homes are alive with fleas and many dogs were unjustly put out of doors before it was found that they were not responsible for the epidemic. Mrs. Clara Louisa Kohl, wife of Franklin Kohl, of Reading, committed suicide by hanging on Saturday because she couldn't stand the toothache any longer. The Travel and Mortar, a new journal devoted to masons and plasterers, will appear in Pittsburgh next month. It will be the only journal of the kind in the country. About 100 of the descendants of John and William Pritchard, who emigrated from Wales to this country in 1828, had a reunion recently at Danseytown, Yuma county. Detective Somers, of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, arrived at Easton the other day with Job Babcock, a defaulting agent of the company, who was captured at Teaslow, W. T. A farmer of West Bradford, Chester county, has been attending the West Chester market for the past twenty-five years, and has not lost during that time \$200 in bad debts. A widower residing in Sayre, Bradford county, who offered his hand to his cook a few days since, was answered with the query: "How many afternoons out can I have in a week?" The little child of Thomas McCartney, of Farmington, Fayette county, was fatally scalded a few days since by drinking water from a tin-cup which the father was using for shaving purposes. While workmen were engaged at Doylestown on Thursday in tearing down the old Conrad Hahl bakery, on Main street, a can containing a sum in gold and silver was found by John Goodfick. C. S. Rush, a storekeeper of Lower Sacoan Lehigh county, found the following White Cap placard on his door: "If you sell any more bad watermelons here you must leave the place in ten days." Master Ellis Thomas, who had a finger bit off by a hyena in a circus at Bethlehem several days ago, bore the injury bravely. The first thing he said was: My finger is gone—where's my hat. A pla which a 4-year-old child of Herman Hagerman, of South Bethlehem, swallowed on Wednesday evening, stuck in its throat, and the little one was almost strangled before a surgeon removed it. Henry Steele, of near Granville, Mifflin county, entered a closet, and without inspecting the seat, which was occupied by a copperhead snake, was bitten by the reptile. Whisky and medical science restored him. It cost Mr. and Mrs. Davis, of Upper Saucon, Lehigh county, \$2, a quart of brandy and a quart of blackberry wine to get rid of a "bull head" which was giving them a "calumny-pling" in honor of their honeymoon. A peculiar blight to pear trees is noticed about Wilkesbarre which seems to battle the owners. A worm which resembles a snail appears following each rain storm, and as high as a hundred have been found on one tree. An ex-letter-carrier of Pittsburg intends to bring suit for wages for overwork since September last, when the eight-hour law went into effect. He says he frequently worked eleven hours a day. Postmaster Larkin calls it hair-splitting. A hound owned by David L. Jones, the Minersville coal operator, found a beautiful fawn in a neighboring thicket a few days since, and gave chase along the mountain. Later in the day he came back badly cut up, bleeding and without his game. Hungry dogs hunt the market-houses in Bethlehem. A lady placed her basket on the floor momentarily to make other purchases. An instant later a two-pound chicken was missing, and a large dog was seen flying up the street with the chicken in his mouth. On Saturday at Mount Union Bert Harris saw his cat trying to seize some prey at a large knot hole in the barn floor. Getting his fishing line he baited it with a plump toad and dropped it into the hole. There was a rattle, then a pull, and he landed a house snake three feet long. Some weeks ago a patient recalled Wilkesbarre from Washington to be treated for an affection of the eyes, and Dr. Lammann, whom he consulted, told him his sight could never be restored. The patient was made sick by discouragement, and a couple of evenings ago he died of grief. Mrs. Elizabeth Honder, of Reading, has just received a pension of \$20 a month and \$800 arrears for the loss of her son, Captain Jacob Honder, of Company H, Eighty-eighth Pennsylvania Volunteers, and Mrs. Daniel Rothenberger has received \$12 per month and \$2800 arrears for the death of her husband. The Presbyterian denomination takes special interest in the celebration of the 163d anniversary of the colonial log college at Hartsburg, Pa., the predecessor of Princeton, which takes place on September 5. The log college was a hut built by Rev. William Tennent, in which to educate his four sons for the ministry. Mrs. Benjamin Shipley was picking huckleberries at Uniontown a few mornings since. She had gum boots on, and there was a hole in one of them, through which her great toe partly protruded. A snake observing this snuck his fangs in it. A young lady friend bravely sucked the venom from the wound, and whisky completed the cure. A citizen of Londonderry township, Lebanon county, will never be able to tell how he voted on the amendment. He had been undecided, and had taken all the tickets offered him, for and against. When he went to the polls he had not yet decided what to do, so he reached in his pocket, grasped a ticket, and, without looking whether it was for or against Prohibition, he voted it.

Ink Slings.
—What chance can JAKE KILBRAIN expect to have in a set-to with the Mississippi court that knocked out the great JOHN L?
—It isn't likely that the Republican orators this fall will indulge in as lofty flights of eloquence about the benefits of the tariff to the laboring man as they did last year.
—It is the general opinion of Republican politicians that there is no elixir equal to boodle for infusing life into a political party.
—By his frequent absence from Washington the President is teaching the people how easily the governmental machinery can be run without his supervision.
—Mississippi justice may have scored a great triumph, but, all the same, JOHN L. is about to start out on the most profitable sparring tour that ever put shekels into his pocket.
—As a means of spoliation it is hard to tell whether a war tariff that taxes the necessities, or a sneaking increase in the valuation of farm property for tax purposes, is the most oppressive.
—If Judges FURST and RHOADS should conspire to allow whisky shops to be set up at every cross road in the county, Judge RILEY, who would be only one against two, would be unable to prevent it.
—The Eiffel tower was struck by lightning the other day. This may have been in compliment to EDISON, the great electrician, who visited the tower a short time before the lightning paid its respects to the lofty structure.
—The increased valuation of farm property as an underhanded means of raising county revenue without the appearance of increasing the millage, is as big a fraud on the farmers as the sugar, salt and binder-twine monopolies.
—The determination of the Rhode Island authorities to stop Sunday baseball playing will not put the players to much inconvenience, as it will be so easy for them to step over into an adjoining state and go on with the game.
—Those who have set afoot the report that the South Fork Fishing Club intend to rebuild their dam at Johnstown attribute to the members of that association more affrontery than nature is in the habit of supplying to human beings.
—It is said that the mills of the Gods grind slowly, but we doubt whether they grind more severely than the "mills" which HENDERSON and DECKER have in an indirect way set to grinding taxes out of real estate owners by increased valuation.
—Judging from the manner in which Mr. HARRISON is jaunting around the country, it is obviously his intention to have all the fun that can be got out of the Presidential office. As a gad-about the present incumbent is eclipsing GRANT'S record.
—The Alabama colored editor who has been expatriated with "gibbous glee" on a war of races and the extermination of the whites, may have been anticipating the enjoyment of the rights which the Republicans are going to secure for the southern darkies.
—Five murderers hang to-day in New York city. The poor wretch who has been sentenced to suffer death by the electrical process, and who, it is said, would sooner be hung, would no doubt rather be one of this greswome picnic party than to await the untried horrors of execution by electricity.
—The Knights of Labor shouldn't want to saddle the failure of labor legislation on the three poor devils who were set to watch the "model" Legislature last winter. Much of the responsibility rests with Speaker BOYER, and, as the Republican candidate for State Treasurer, the Knights can have a whack at him at the next election.
—The management of the Johnstown relief fund is not one of the financial achievements of this State administration to which Governor BEAVER'S friends can point with pride. As the millions contributed for relief dwindle away, the Johnstown people fail to see their condition improved proportionately to the expenditure of the money.
—It may be believed that old BISMARCK indulges in a smile when contemplating the activity of our State Department in protecting a German monopoly in Behring Sea, the Alaska Fur Seal Company being composed chiefly of Germans. In this matter BLAINE is making as bad a break in statesmanship as he made in his guano exploit.
—The "grand old party" is prolific in the production of "models." In addition to the "model" legislature, it has produced especially for this county the "model" pair of commissioners who believe they have discovered a way of increasing the taxes of the farmers without the latter knowing it. They propose to do it by the hocus pocus process of increased valuation.

Fooling with Nature's Forces.

The causes that are operating to produce the remarkable meteorological condition that has existed during the past summer are a puzzle to the public mind and not satisfactorily explained by the scientists who have given it their attention. The year has been marked by extraordinary atmospheric disturbances, attended with storms and floods of unusual violence and destructiveness. The records of the weather can not show in any period of equal length a similar precipitation of water with the same disastrous results. Every section of the country has witnessed and suffered from these demonstrations of the elements, nor have they been confined to the western hemisphere, although it has been the scene of their greatest energy.
Has anything been offered in satisfactory explanation of this meteorological disorder? Can it be explained by the sun-spot theory? Can the icebergs be logged in as a plausible solution of this weather problem? Can any of the influences which in time past have been made to do duty as weather disturbers be held accountable for the extraordinary conditions that render the present season exceptional? It doesn't appear to us that any of these causes fit the case.
It may not have occurred to others, but it seems to us that the elements are in this disordered state because we are meddling so freely and recklessly with electricity, and that if we go on meddling with it at the rate we have been doing for the past decade there is no telling what kind of elemental ruction we shall raise. What is electricity? That is something that no fellow, however philosophic, has been able to find out. We know that it is an all pervading principle, but have not yet learned what function it performs in the economy of nature. Yet in our ignorance we are taking liberties with this subtle principle by a utilization which may amount to a disturbance or perversion of its natural function. If this should be so you can bet that it will recalcitrate with terrific force. It may be doing that very thing this summer.
With the thousands of miles of telegraph wires every year extending their reach; with telephone lines in every town, and electric railroads, and dynamos everywhere feeding innumerable electric lights, who can tell but that this unlimited subjection of nature's electric supply to man's use may not be disturbing an equilibrium that cannot be disturbed without in time producing disastrous results? Or this utilization may involve consumption. We may be actually using up the supply of an element that is essential to the proper regulation of the machinery of nature. No one can positively say that this is not so, for no one knows what sort of substance or element electricity is. The cause of all the elemental disturbance from which we have suffered this summer may in its inception reach as far back as the time when BEN FRANKLIN got to fooling with the lightning through the medium of his historic kite.
There is reason to apprehend that man's progressive smartness is going to get him into a terrible scrape one of these years. He will go on sticking his nose into the secrets of nature and fooling with its incomprehensible forces until some fine morning the family to which he belongs shall find their habitat caving in like the staves of a dried-out tub, or else sailing skyward like the fragments of an exploded bombshell. There are philosophers who entertain a reasonable doubt about the safety of pumping the petroleum and tapping the natural gas out of the 'owels of the earth. They believe that nature put these substances down under the surface to serve as a support for the superincumbent earth-crust and that their removal will eventually be followed by a disastrous cave-in. We observe that some of the English papers are beginning to show symptoms of uneasiness about the reckless manner in which the Americans are carrying on this dangerous business. Some of them fear that the crust may collapse on account of the removal of the internal oil deposits, while others apprehend that through Yankee carelessness the subterranean gas may become ignited

A Shameless Proposition to Disregard the Constitution.

HENRY C. BOYER, the Republican candidate for State Treasurer, nominally by the grace of MAR QUAY, has given indisputable evidence in the matter of the vacancies in the House, that he is merely a party tool. Four seats in the House of Representatives are vacant by reason of death and resignation. The constitution directs that the Speaker "shall issue a writ of election to fill such vacancy for the remainder of the term." The duty of Speaker BOYER in the premises is plain. There can not be the slightest reason or excuse for a man of ordinary sense to misunderstand it. He must, if he wishes to comply with the law, issue writs for the filling of such vacancies at the next election after they shall have occurred. What other election could the constitution have in contemplation? If such filling shall be deferred until the regular election of Representatives the vacancies will have ceased to exist by the expiration of the term of the Legislature in which they occurred. QUAY'S man BOYER knows this and fully understands what the constitution requires in such cases; yet he seeks to obtain from the Attorney General a quibble behind which he may shirk the performance of his duty for the sake of party advantage. Writing to that official for an opinion that may serve this purpose, after stating the constitutional requirement in cases of this kind he exposes his motive by such a shameless proposition as this: "I am admonished that the filling of these vacancies this year may be embarrassing to some of our friends, and I submit the question to you for suggestion as to the possibility of postponing these elections in such districts 'as are involved in political complications.'"
Was there ever a violation of a plain constitutional duty more shamelessly proposed? It will "embarrass" some of his Republican friends to have this requirement of the constitution carried out and therefore he wants a decision of the Attorney General under which it may be plausibly disregarded.
But this is in keeping with the general policy of the Republicans in their treatment of the State constitution. It would have "embarrassed" the railroad companies and other corporations to have had the provisions of the constitution restraining corporate abuses carried out, and therefore Republican legislatures and executives have failed to furnish laws for their enforcement. BOYER wants the constitution to be treated for the benefit of his political friends in the same way in which his party has habitually treated it for the benefit of the corporations. Is such a man fit to occupy a position of public trust?

The Revolutionary Politicians.

In speaking of the conciliatory manner in which England now treats her colonial dependencies, the Philadelphia Times remarks that "if George III had been as wise in his generation as Queen VICTORIA'S Ministers are making her, this mighty empire of the West would still be an English dependency and England would be 'home.'"
We can't believe this. Nothing that the English government could have done to retain the allegiance of the American colonies would, in our opinion, have preserved their connection with the British empire for any considerable length of time beyond the early years of the nineteenth century. The severance took place not so much because the oppression of the British government was intolerable, as for the reason that the colonies had grown too big to be content to remain dependencies.
The ambitious colonial politicians saw a larger field for their ambition under an independent government than under conditions that required political honors and preferments to come from the crown. That the colonies were full of the material for first-class politicians was abundantly evidenced by the splendid abilities which in the formation of the American government were displayed by the ADAMSSES, the JEFFERSONS, the JAYS, the RUTLEDGES, the HAMILTONS, the FRANKLINS and men of like character whose political talents shed a lustre upon the formative period of this nation such as the world had never seen before.
It is too much to believe that men of such minds and aspirations were not influenced by a contemplation of the unbounded political possibilities which a separate nationality, embracing unlimited territory, held out to them. The politicians of that period were unquestionably at the bottom of the revolution. The arbitrary conduct of King GEORGE furnished their opportunity. But even if GEORGE had behaved differently a separation would have come later on.
We have reason to be thankful that there were men in the colonies whose political aspirations were hampered by the regulations of the mother country, and in whose ambition originated that wonderful piece of political machinery known as the government of the United States. It is a pity though that it is not now being run by more capable hands.

Whose Fault Was It?

The Knights of Labor of this State expected certain legislation at the last session of the Legislature that would be beneficial to the interests of labor, and appointed a committee whose duty it was to see that such interests should be attended to. It is a well known fact that nothing was done for the laboring people. A number of measures were offered which if they had been given the form of enactments would have been to their advantage, but not one of them was enacted. All of them were allowed to die unmentioned in the womb of the "model" Legislature.
The committee that had been appointed by the Knights to act as guardians of the legislative welfare of the workmen didn't appear to be equal to the duty imposed upon them. By some it is said that they were entirely incompetent, while others believe that it was not difficult to induce them to go back on the interests they were selected to guard and promote. One of them was the brother of the chairman of the Republican State Central Committee, another was a Harrisburger who has since been taken care of by being appointed to a clerkship in the postal service, and the third was an understrapper of that fraudulent labor champion, ex-Congressman BURM, of Schuylkill county. It must be admitted that if the labor people expected any good to result to their cause in the way of legislation they made a great mistake in committing it to such a trio.
It now appears that the Knights of Labor are demanding that the committee shall make a report of the manner in which they performed their stewardship. But why try to impose responsibility upon these insignificant fellows who no doubt for a consideration were easily induced to betray their trust? The Legislature was alone responsible for the failure of every measure that was offered in behalf of the working people. If the members of that "model" body would have had the slightest interest in those who live by the labor of their hands it would not have been necessary to have a committee loafing around the Capitol all winter to see that the fair thing was done for the labor interests. A very large number—probably a majority—of these clamoring Knights assisted in electing that Legislature, and in all probability they will be ready to help elect another one of the same kind next year.
—The common sense voters of the county are laughing at the foolish charge of the Republican that Mr. RILEY, the Democratic nominee for Associate Judge, is a whisky man who "would advocate the granting of licenses by the Court without any effort to reduce or limit the number." This, it says, would undo all the good work that has been done and would place whisky shops in every part of the country, "as only he and one other member of the Court would be necessary to effect such a result." Which other member does the Republican believe would be likely to enter into such a terrible conspiracy with Judge RILEY? Is it suspicious of FURST or of RHOADS? Nobody can believe that the new Democratic Judge would try to inveigle either of his Republican judicial brothers into so bad a business as setting up whisky shops in all parts of the county. We are surprised that our neighbor is afraid that one or the other of them might be induced to go in for free whisky.

The Contest in Virginia.

The Democrats of Virginia, fully understanding the desperate determination of the administration to carry their State by such appliances as MAHONE, QUAY and CLARKSON can bring to bear upon the election, have closed up their ranks and present a solid front to the enemy who will leave no expedient untried to prostitute the Old Dominion to the purposes of the corrupt politics which inspire their efforts. To strengthen MAHONE in his fight the official plunder which the administration has to dispense in the State is placed entirely under his control, and QUAY'S assistance is to be given to supply what the little rebel may not know about running a boodle campaign. The negroes are kept well in hand with the expectation that this mass of ignorance may be supplemented by such white votes as may be influenced by the mercenary considerations which a corrupt management may bring to bear upon the issue.
The Democracy of the Old Dominion are prepared for the contest. They know full well that the triumph of a character like MAHONE would mean the subjection of their State to the supremacy of the negroes controlled by a gang of unscrupulous political adventurers of a whiter color. They have acted with wisdom in their convention, have nominated one of the best and most popular citizens of the State as their candidate for Governor; have healed up all differences in their ranks and will move on to complete a victory as was gained some weeks ago by their Kentucky brethren. It may be accepted as a certainty that the old State will not be handed over to the control of ignorant negroes, mercenary white scallawags and time-serving ex-rebels.
—BENJAMIN HARRISON would not have refused to kiss that Portland baby a year ago when every vote was of importance.

The Tariff Elixir.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, despite its name, is a rank Republican sheet, which may account for the folly of its remark that there has never yet been discovered "an elixir which beats the Republican process of protection for making the people comfortable and happy."
Possibly to the influence of this elixir are to be attributed the comfort and happiness which the miners of Illinois and Indiana are now reveling in. It most have been squirted, Brown-Sequard fashion, into the coke workers of Western Pennsylvania who with reduced wages are in the enjoyment of a perfect elysium of comfort and happiness. The wool workers, thrown out of employment by the closing of woolen factories, must have had a squirt of it. The Tioga county miners, who during the present summer have been living on greens and blackberries, may attribute their comfortable and happy situation to the dose of the protection elixir that has been administered to them, and the strikes, lock-outs and wage reductions that are occurring all over the country may be considered phases of the comfort and happiness produced by this elixir which the Republican party with its big tariff syringe has been injecting into every department of industry. Notwithstanding the vaunting of the empirics who administer it, it is found that, like the Brown-Sequard h umbug, it infuses injurious bacteria into the systems of its victims.

—For all the news read the WATCHMAN.