

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, JANUARY 9, 1895.

THE SCRANTON OF TODAY.

Come and inspect our city. Elevation above the tide, 740 feet. Extremely healthy. Estimated population, 1894, 103,000. Registered voters, 20,500. Value of school property, \$750,000. Number of school children, 12,000. Average amount of bank deposits, \$10,000,000. It's the metropolis of northeastern Pennsylvania. Can produce electric power cheaper than Niagara. No better point in the United States at which to establish new industries.

The prompt endorsement by the West Side board of trade last night of the Tribune's recent suggestion that a postal sub-station be established in Hyde Park is indicative of the board's alertness. Such a sub-station is undoubtedly needed; and with the board actively moving for it, one may soon be established.

Manual Training in Public Schools.

A question of live interest to Scrantonians has just been discussed in detail by the school board of Wilkes-Barre; and that board, by a vote of 2 to 2, has decided to introduce manual training in the public schools, at a primary cost of \$20,000 and a yearly maintenance cost of \$5,000. This action was taken after members of the board had visited and studied the operation of the various industrial schools of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. The arguments presented by the four members who signed the majority report traverse familiar grounds. It will better bring out the subject to consider the objections urged by Dr. Weaver and Mr. Smyth, the dissenting members. Dr. Weaver was very favorably impressed with the workings of the Sayre Industrial school in Philadelphia but found that the cost was \$10 per month per pupil while Wilkes-Barre's very efficient high school, with all its departments, including the business department, type writing and stenography, costs only \$2.50 per month per pupil. He doubted the practicality of industrial training from a utilitarian standpoint unless conducted in a separate and thorough school, the cost of which would render inexpedient its maintenance by public taxation. He favored leaving the problem to private philanthropy, so long as the public school funds were already insufficient to meet the growing demands for primary and intermediate mental instruction. He would, however, favor teaching the girls how to cook and sew, and believed that elementary lessons in mechanical and free hand drawing and in certain other forms of primary industrial training could be established expediently. In these arguments Mr. Smyth concurred, and presented further ones showing the urgent need of amplifying the present public school facilities before undertaking an innovation which at best would be very much like a leap in the dark.

The foregoing is a hastily prepared abstract from a newspaper report which was itself merely synoptical. A perusal of the two reports in full would doubtless make clearer the sense of each. Our purpose in alluding to the subject is to call attention to the general principle—so often forgotten in these days of diversifying school activities—that the public schools should be of that character which remain elementary in character, and confine their work to those broad elements of a general education which form the ground-work of all true instruction. We hold, with Dr. Weaver, that the state has the right to tax the many in order that the few—necessarily the few—may receive free tuition in the higher departments of educational work. Private enterprise or private generosity, or both, ought to be sufficient to meet these loftier requirements. To meet them at the expense of any one of the elementary requirements would be like building a lofty structure upon a foundation of sand.

Unsatisfactory Paving.

Alderman Madden, of Chicago, as the chairman of a special paving committee, recently made an exhaustive study of the streets of European and American cities. His principal conclusions are embodied in the following short excerpt from his long report: The result of the experience of all the cities of this country is more than three kinds of paving material have answered all conditions and all requirements for street pavements. These are bricks, granite blocks and asphalt. Granite pavement has proved in all instances to be the very best for the heavy traffic of central business streets. Asphalt pavements are growing in favor. Their advantages are smoothness, slight resistance to traction, comparative noiselessness and facility of repair. A properly constructed and carefully maintained asphalt pavement will wear for fifteen or twenty years without resurfacing. Brick pavements have been laid in several cities with more or less success. If bricks are properly made, are of a uniform quality and laid on a good foundation, they make a pleasant and lasting pavement on streets where there is but little traffic. Wood block pavement has been an utter failure in America. Telford pavement, which has been laid in St. Louis and other small cities, as originally constructed, is unfit for streets of heavy traffic. It is scarcely necessary to discuss macadam. It has been abandoned everywhere, even in villages. Its disadvantages are that it is dusty in dry weather, muddy in wet weather, and that cleaning it means

carting away a considerable portion of the pavement. Scranton has, at one time or another, tried pretty nearly every one of the foregoing kinds of paving, except possibly granite block, and it isn't stretching the truth very far to say that none has been satisfactory in all respects. This is due to a combination of circumstances, including careless laying, indifferent materials and the too frequent tearing up of our streets. There is also said by experts to be a peculiar difficulty in paving the streets of a city that is undermined, although we have never been able to understand why. But the chief reason for the unsatisfactory condition of local pavements no doubt has been the lack of expert supervision. A city as large as Scranton ought to have, in addition to the present efficient city engineer who does his work admirably so far as he goes, a thoroughly equipped superintendent of public works, with jurisdiction sufficient to give effect to any suggestions or recommendations that he might make. With such an office occupied by the right kind of official, the streets of Scranton would, we dare say, soon show a distinct improvement.

Plan of Forest Protection.

As has heretofore been explained in these columns, one of the forest bills which the legislature will be asked to pass provides for the establishment of three separate forest reservations within certain counties named, each of which shall contain no less than 40,000 acres of land in a continuous area. It also provides that at least half of the lands chosen for these reservations shall have a minimum altitude of eight hundred feet above sea-level, and that all of the land shall be of a character better suited to the growth of trees than to mining or agriculture. The forest commission is to select these lands, and is authorized to purchase them at prices not exceeding two dollars an acre where this can be directly accomplished, and where this is not possible full power is given to condemn such lands as reservations for the use and behoof of the commonwealth, subject to such conditions as the legally constituted authorities may impose. It is further provided that the state geological survey shall examine the land so acquired and make a report, with accompanying maps and illustrations, upon their value as watersheds and reservoirs; and that the state board of health, the state board of agriculture and the fisheries commission shall each report every year upon the uses and value of these reservations in relation to the several subjects within their jurisdiction.

Protection for Fish and Game.

Among leading sportsmen the conclusion is dawning that if the fish in our streams and the game in our forests are to be saved from utter extinction, there will need to be radical amendment of the fish and game protection laws of this state. Those laws at this time, interpreted liberally in view of oft-demonstrated facts, mean simply that conscientious sportsmen must observe certain restrictions in order that unprincipled men may get in ahead of them and fill their baskets and game bags by illegal devices. Convictions are so rare as to exert little deterrent influence, and the one practical effect of the present system is to set up a discrimination against law-abiding anglers and hunters.

Among such circumstances it is only natural that leading sportsmen's associations throughout the commonwealth should be moving for a more equitable deal.

The Philadelphia Fish and Game association, it is announced, will present a bill prohibiting the use of nets for any purpose whatsoever, and requiring the liberation of bass and wall-eyed salmon under eight inches in length and trout under six inches. A feature of this bill will be that its penalties will be made mandatory, leaving to petty magistrates no discretion in the levying of fines. The Berks County Fish Protective association, while favoring the Philadelphia association's measure so far as it goes, will proceed to a more radical position by asking the legislature to extend the close season for bass until June 21 and for catfish and sunfish until July 21. Similar efforts will be put forth in the interest of game and the legislature will be solicited to provide by appropriation for the employment of special officers to patrol the streams and forests in search of poachers.

The question from one viewpoint is one which bristles with difficulties. It would be materially simplified if the supervision of the state, as is contemplated in the bill which the Forestry commission has prepared for this legislature, were extended over large state park reservations in the heart of the virgin woodland territories in the eastern, northern and western sections of the commonwealth. A proper enforcement of the fish and game laws in these state reservations would provide the nucleus for similar enforcement elsewhere, as well as preserve a considerable percentage of the fish and game now illegally sacrificed by unscrupulous anglers and hunters. The present legislature will, however, approach this problem in the light of much past experience and with the aid of eminent counsel. It will doubtless reach a basis of legislation ungrafting distinct improvements upon the present laws which only nominally govern the capture of fish and game.

Chief Judge Sterrett's decision in the Lawrence county case where voters had pasted blank slips on their ballots, adding new names and also covering up the old headings, is sensible. He holds that no addition to an official ballot is permissible except such ones as may be needed to designate the voter's desire to cast his ballot for persons not named on the official ballot, and that such additions must be inserted in the blank spaces assigned thereto in the right hand column of the ballot. There is ample room for fraud under the most rigid interpretation of the present ballot law, without opening any new loopholes to crookedness.

Play Fair.

We sympathize with the people of Hazleton and vicinity, who want and are entitled to a new county. It is because of that sympathy, in fact, that we wish to remind them not to overdo the matter of advance promises. In the Plain-Speaker, for instance, we notice the following assertions in conspicuous large type: With a new county, the numberless murders and other offenses against the law will be avenged, every violator of the rights of the country will be speedily brought to justice and punished. It will serve as a check to evildoers, and make our community safer and freer from crime, and lessen the stigma that is now cast upon lower Luzerne because of her unpunished criminals, although forsooth it is no fault of hers or her people, but of the state itself, which denies to her the right to grant to every other locality in its boundary—a speedy trial in a court of justice, without the attendant costs that make such trial here now a positive burden and hindrance to the punishment of crime. There is, in all candor, a good deal of truth in this argument; but is it altogether true? Will a new county, of itself, cause crime to become infrequent and bring every violator of law to speedy justice? It would be a pleasant thing to believe—this happy assertion of new-born solitude for the rights and majesty of the law. But is it sincere? Are the people included within the area of the contemplated new county

ready to back it up, with work as well as words, and right hearty work at that?

If yes, well and good; and may God speed them! But if no, would it not be wise to blow a lowlier blast?

The party circle for straight voting, under the present ballot law, is not, perhaps, so great a nuisance as is the provision which legalizes the pernicious activity of the professional "helper"; but it is a detail that often gives rise to confusion, and could well be spared. This legislature will not achieve a complete performance of its obvious duty until it brings ballot reform down to an impregnable basis.

Cumbrous Legal Forms.

Philadelphia Record: "The Bar Association of Pittsburg, at its meeting on Saturday next, will discuss Judge Arnold's change of practice bill, which will shortly be offered in the legislature. Judge Arnold's contention that legal forms are unreasonably cumbrous has found verification in the experience of all who touch litigation from any side, either as litigants or as practitioners; and such a reform as that proposed by the bill in question is demanded alike by the interests of justice, of common sense and of economy."

Is He a Traitor to Scranton?

From the Wilkes-Barre Leader. Bernard Megargee, of Scranton, was among the West Market street promenaders this morning. "Strange," he said, "that so much difference can exist in two cities only twenty miles apart, as are Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. Different class of people down here. More genteel, considerate and brainy. Not so much self horn blowing as in Scranton. But you get there just the same. It isn't the runner who strikes a rapid gate at the start, that wins the race by any means, and I notice now that Wilkes-Barre which once gave evidence of being distanced is now forging ahead of Scranton." Megargee didn't mean a word of it. He and his brainy brother are interested in a paper concern and he wanted to dispose of his goods, that's all.

A MODERN MAIDEN.

She read Sanscrit And knew Panerit; Ancient Persian Was diversion; But she used to think that Matne Was a river in Lorraine; That the Mississippi ran Through Vermont and Yucatan, And that Christopher Columbus was the king of Michigan. All foreign nationalities And realms and principalities, With no trace of indelicacy, She could name with great precision; But she used to think Nebraska Was a river in Alaska, And she searched for Philadelphia on a map of Madagascar. —Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

I find that on an average a school book which is sold for 25 cents costs the trust 3 cents, and that a book of the price which is 50 cents costs about 8 cents. My idea, continued Mr. Lytle, is that there should be a commission appointed. It could be composed of leading educators of the state, who, I believe, would be willing to serve without salary. This commission could either prepare a series of text books or adopt one which should appear to be best in a competitive examination. In the latter case the copyright should be purchased outright, and the state should print the books and furnish them to the various districts at cost. It is getting too late in the day for education to pay an enormous tribute to any combination."

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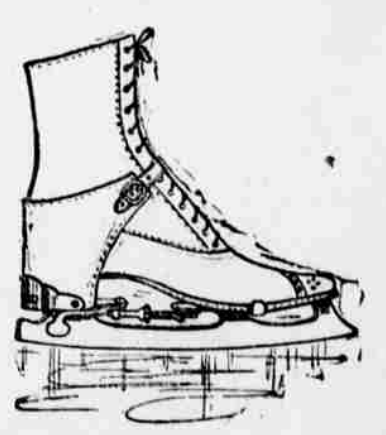
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