

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, JANUARY 17, 1895.

THE SCRANTON OF TODAY.

Come and inspect our city. Elevation above the tide, 710 feet. Extremely healthy. Estimated population, 1894, 163,000. Registered voters, 23,500. 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. See how we grow: Population in 1860, 9,233. Population in 1870, 25,000. Population in 1880, 55,500. Population in 1890, 75,215. Population in 1891 (estimated), 100,000. And the end is not yet.

The problem of Republican government, difficult anywhere, is especially difficult in a warm climate. Still, we predict that republicanism in France will survive Casimir-Perier's defeat.

For Good Local Government.

A moment's thought, if applied by each citizen to the problem of good government in this city, ought to establish the truth of the assertion that the beginning-point of reform is in the selection of representative citizens as councilmen. While under the municipal act of 1889 it is true that the power entrusted to the executive branch of the municipal government is very considerable, more nearly realizing, than in any other system with which we are familiar, the much-mooted idea of "one-man power." It yet remains true that all legislation, both financial, police and miscellaneous, must, under that act, originate in councils, which is in such matters practically supreme. The reflective man does not need to be told what this fact means, in daily application. When the imparts from a foreign land or buys liquor and tobacco he experiences contact with legislation enacted at Washington. When he sues or is sued in the county courts, he realizes the significance of the legislative work performed at Harrisburg. These occasions, with most men, are either few or unimportant. But as a citizen of Scranton, concerned as a property-owner in the municipal expenditures which are recouped by direct taxation levied on his possessions, there is not an hour in the year that he is not in some way reminded of the importance and the necessity of wise, economical and business-like legislation in the two council chambers at Washington avenue and Mulberry street. The travel on our streets, the sewers that drain our homes, the men who guard our property against burglary or fire, every detail in the long list of conveniences which differentiate metropolitan Scranton from the unincorporated collection of country homes known as the "cross roads village" reflect at some point the good or ill work performed by those who transact the local legislation originating in councils.

Some facts embodied in the last city handbook with reference to the government of Scranton during the year ended March 31, 1894, will help to bring about a proper realization of the importance and the needs of our municipal legislative branch. In that year 23 sets of viewers awarded damages against the city, amounting to \$20,000. The collections of the law departments, in that year, were \$28,000. On an assessed valuation of \$19,000,000 the city had a net indebtedness of \$385,100. For paving and grading of streets, \$35,066.66 was expended; while to keep in order the city's 140 miles of streets only \$14,000 was appropriated. Every one of these items is traceable, at some point, to councils. The legislation governing the handling of this money is the work of councils, and of councils alone. But there are other facts. Although we have 140 miles of streets within the city limits, the total mileage of sewers laid in the city is only 35. Last year \$64,600 was expended on this important factor in the city's sanitary condition, yet easily one-half of the inhabited portion of the city is yet unprovided for. An item of \$42,995.76, charged against the police department, represents the total of expenses which must first receive approval by council; and the same is true of the \$4,758.44 charged against the mayor's department, the \$8,062.57 against the department of the treasurer, the \$5,539.67 against that of the controller, the \$3,102.12 against that of the solicitor, the \$10,251.77 against that of the city clerk, the \$1,575 against that of the building inspector, the \$9,547.81 against that of the assessors, the \$32,163.34 against the fire department, the \$12,321.53 against the board of health, the \$1,514.18 against the park commissioners, the \$9,500 against the public library, the \$88,818.67 against the general city account and the \$3,188.07 of deficiencies arising in that year. We have here a total expenditure of \$340,249.94 which passes in one year through the two branches of our city legislature and which must, in the final analysis, be paid in some manner or another by the citizens and property owners of Scranton. If every voter in this city knew and realized that city governments cost \$3.50 per capita, or nearly \$17.50 for each head of a household, would he, by an indifferent ballot cast at the party caucus or at the polls, de-

gate the power of expending this money to unfit men?

This, then, is the question that presses home in this time of ward caucuses and coming spring elections. The citizenship of Scranton, for a number of years, has, we fear, not realized the full meaning of its duty in this direction. The men whom it places in councils are its direct agents and attorneys. Those men serve without salary in positions that govern the annual disbursement of nearly half a million dollars. They have no one to watch them. Their power, so far as it goes, is sovereign and beyond appeal. A mistake by them is paid, not out of the pockets of those who make it, but out of the public treasury, out of the pockets of the home-owners and land-owners of Scranton. A breach of faith by them, a deal or a "divvy," should any occur, would cost not the lobbyist nor the giver of the bribe, but the municipality which is forced to pay an exorbitant price for an inferior supply. Indeed, we can think of no better illustration of the importance of this trust than to liken it to that of the confidential clerk or the bookkeeper who, with full and free access to the cash box and the check book, may, if not capable and honest, bring ruin and shame to an honorable and once-remunerative business. We submit that for such a trust the best men in each ward are none too good. The position of councilman requires not honesty simply, but hard, cool, practical judgment and ripe business experience as well. The man who cannot manage his own business is a poor fellow to expect to manage the business of the fourth largest city in Pennsylvania. We are glad to see the citizens of the Seventeenth ward again alive to the need of capable representation in councils; and we trust that their example will stimulate similar action in the other wards that choose agents next month.

A prize song competition of unusual interest is announced by a number of alumni of the University of Pennsylvania. For the best college song, the words and music of which are both original, \$25 will be paid. For the best original song of words to fit the Russian National hymn, \$15 will be paid; while a \$10 prize will reward the author of the best set of words commemorative of Pennsylvania's progress in athletics. These offers are restricted to those who have attended or now attend the University of Pennsylvania, and they are designed to stimulate a feeling of comradeship among that institution's alumni. One of these prizes at least ought to come to Scranton.

Death of John B. Smith.

Dunmore borough, immediately, and this entire community sustain loss, and much loss, in the death of John B. Smith. A pioneer in the development of the upper anthracite fields, he lived to see wildernesses conquered, villages expand into live and many-trafficked cities, and the agencies of civilization evolved to a high approximation to perfection. In all of these battles of development he was a generous and a powerful factor. He was not, like some men, dwarfed to the routine of his first occupation; although conservative and assiduous in the direction of business duties, he grew many-sidedly and was, up to the moment of his last illness, in cordial touch with the best and bravest agencies of his day. Mr. Smith was a man who had little leisure for shams and mere conventionalities. Self-made, he invariably estimated others at their intrinsic, not at their extrinsic, value. This habit, growing with the passing years, gave him among strangers a reputation for brusqueness that did injustice to the real man. Beneath his rugged exterior lay warm sympathies and a kindly and generous disposition. The deeds of charity and benevolence publicly attributed to Mr. Smith were not few nor unimportant; but they were only a fraction of his total contributions to human relief and to the agencies which make for human advancement. In the death of such a man, in the twilight of a long, honorable and successful career, this community loses a valued citizen but gains an instructive and an inspiring memory.

The dissimilarity between the case of President Casimir Perier and President Cleveland is marked. President Perier endeavored to please everybody and failed. President Cleveland tried to please nobody and, according to all returns, has succeeded beyond his wildest expectations.

The Duties of the Mayoralty.

The letter of Charles F. Warwick, accepting the nomination of the Republican party for mayor of Philadelphia, is a document of almost unsurpassed literary merit. Entirely apart from any of the unfortunate circumstances attending that nomination, this letter would seem to denote a perception of the duties and responsibilities of the executive headship of the third largest American city of which any man and any party might be proud. We need offer no excuse for reproducing so much of that letter as is general in its scope and applicability: If elected to this office by the suffrages of my fellow citizens I will know no master save duty, and regard no constraint but the whole people. I will not be under the influence or control of any power, political, personal or corporate, that might intrude upon the conscientious and faithful discharge of my duty. Good government in municipal affairs involves the protection of person and property by an effective police force, and in order to promote their efficiency it is my purpose to keep the members in this bureau absolutely free from politics. And it is also my intention to see that all the provisions of the city charter with respect to all the other employees of the city participating in politics shall be enforced in spirit and in letter. It is my purpose to foster and aid the business and commercial interests of the city in every way in my power; to promote the health and comfort of the inhabitants; secure a plentiful supply of pure water and good gas, well paved and well cleaned streets, and an improved water front to facilitate commerce with our port. The funds of the city shall be carefully guarded from spoliation and extravagance. The people are entitled, in the expenditure of the public funds, to the best return in skill, competence and value that it is possible to procure, and to secure this end all contracts shall be awarded without favor or partiality. The streets of the city belong to the public and no franchise or license to use them by individuals or corporations beyond the common public use for which they were created shall be permitted without a full and fair compensation to the city and the public; absolute impartiality and the public good shall be the ultimate and sole criterion in determining all questions of the

grant of corporate privileges. Vice and crime are at all times and at all hazards to be repressed, and the highest standard of this community preserved so far as it lies in the power of the executive to enforce obedience to law. It is my purpose to discharge the duties of the office of mayor with zeal for the public good; nevertheless, perfect candor requires me to say that however earnest, faithful and untiring I may be, I shall be his efforts for municipal economy and progress will necessarily be of imperfect effect unless seconded by a like spirit on the part of the council of the city. Municipal government, to be effective, must come from co-operation of the law-making and law-executing powers. That man is blind indeed who does not discern that the people of this city are demanding that their municipal affairs shall be conducted on strict and honest business principles. If elected to the office for which you name me, it shall be my earnest purpose to comply with this just demand.

The citizen who shall attentively read the foregoing will have no difficulty in applying its teachings to Scranton.

The Pittsburg Commercial Gazette states a solid and irrefutable fact when it remarks that "Senator Quay is the right man at the front. Certain Republican journals which should know better seize every opportunity to join the Democratic organs in abuse or in bald misrepresentation of him. And yet, when the Republican party needs to be pulled out of a hole in congress or elsewhere one of the first men appealed to for action or advice is this same Senator Quay." In recognition of which it may be stated that never before has he been so deservedly popular with the masses of the party in this commonwealth as he is today, the hostile effort of enemies notwithstanding.

Warwick versus Pattison.

The selection of ex-Governor Pattison as the Democratic candidate for mayor of Philadelphia reduces the fight in that city to a clear contest between the two political parties. Side issues will be ignored in the light of the menacing presence in this struggle of a figure head of William F. Harris; and hundreds of Republicans, while indignant at the conditions attending Mr. Warwick's nomination, will support their party nominee in preference to transferring the political control of the city government, with all its enormous influence, to Harris's dangerous hands. This is the logic of the situation. We believe Mr. Warwick will be weaker than his party, for reasons not necessarily reflecting upon himself; but he can scarcely be so weak as to endanger the continued supremacy of the Republican party in a city which last fall cast, by itself, nearly 90,000 Republican plurality. The menace of Harrisism will save the day.

The suggestion of President Dickinson, of the State Board of charities, that the legislature pass an act requiring all county jails to be governed by inspectors appointed by the courts and commissioners is so thoroughly in accord with common sense that it ought not to be overlooked by this session. The present jail system is good in spots; but generally speaking it is a notorious disgrace.

It is stated that Bill Cook waived the formalities of law when captured in Kansas, the other day, and acknowledged his identity and accompanied his captors back to Oklahoma. Bill has waived the formalities of the law so long in his brilliant career, that it is presumed he did not consider it necessary to stand on ceremony at this late hour.

It is a singular coincidence that America consumed 150,000 bushels of olives last year and nearly one-half of the quinine output of the world.

LEGISLATIVE TOPICS.

Pass a Fender Law. Carbonide Herald: "The trolley is here, and it has come to stay, and while we admit its many advantages and superior merits, as compared with old time methods of travel, no effort should be spared to reduce the possibility of risk to the lowest minimum for public safety. The state legislature now being in session the time is opportune for some of our representatives to introduce a bill making it imperative that all street car companies doing business in this state to provide safety fenders on all cars in operation on the several systems. Many lives have been lost in the past, a large percentage of which might no doubt have been saved with such safeguards as are herein suggested. The longer such a measure is not off the more numerous will be the accidents and consequent loss of life."

Publicity as a Safeguard.

Pittsburg Dispatch: "A rigid investigation should be instituted into the details of the operations of the new book law which are now being reported by official reports. If any evils exist their official publication will in itself go far toward correction. Then the law could be so amended as to require the school authorities to report to the state department of instruction the names and prices of the books purchased. These reports need not necessarily be printed, but their publication might furnish an obstacle. The mere fact that the figures were on file at Harrisburg, and accessible, would provide a salutary check. In matters of this kind there is no surer safeguard of public interests than publicity."

The License Court Bill.

Concerning the Hackney license court bill the Pittsburg Commercial-Gazette says: "The provision that half of the board shall be composed of Republicans and half of Democrats is not so much an element of weakness, there ought to be nothing political in the regulation of the liquor traffic, and to start with an acknowledgment of the equal claims of the two great parties to say who shall and who shall not deal out intoxicants in the several counties in the state is tantamount to saying that the privileges to sell should be distributed with some reference to the politics of the applicants or of the relative strength of the two parties in a given district." It might be replied to this that there is already a good deal of politics in the Brooks law, as commonly enforced.

For a Department of Charities.

After contemplating that two-thirds of the state is not represented on the state board of charities, the Pittsburg Times adds: "A bill has been introduced into the legislature for the abolition of the board and the creation of a department of charities. This would, of course, contemplate that the work be done by salaried officials absolutely under the control of the state and who would devote all their time to the work. This might perhaps cost a little more than the present system, but the results would certainly be better. The members of the present board simply devote such time as they can spare from their regular business to the performance of their duties, and are not, therefore, of the same knowledge of the requirements of the work as would men whose regular business it was to expend all their time and attention upon it. Experience has time and again demonstrated that the work of commissions of private citizens is not as efficient as that done by trained and responsible officials. It is my purpose to continue to pay nearly \$1,000,000 a year

for charitable purposes it will certainly be true economy to devote a few thousands more to insure that this enormous sum is most properly and effectively used.

Changes in Legal Procedure.

The Bar association of Allegheny county has decided to oppose the bills relative to changes in legal procedure in the courts of this commonwealth, proposed to be presented to the present legislature at an early date by Judge Michael Arnold, of Philadelphia. Judge Arnold has formulated a dozen acts relating to reducing half a dozen legal procedures to one simple class, which will be presented to the present legislature. The acts prescribe the form and regulate the course of civil procedure and pleading in the courts of the commonwealth. The first act is the important one, as it provides for the union of law and equity in one form of action. Judge Arnold's bill contemplates that there shall be no distinction between equity and the law, abolishing a periodical return day, and providing that all actions shall be brought by statement filed, going away with special pleading. The Allegheny Bar association is of the opinion that Judge Arnold's propositions, while right in tenor, are too radical.

Capital Punishment is Going.

Williamsport Times: "In England in the time of George III, there were 100 capital offenses, now reduced to two—treason and murder. In Holland, capital punishment was abolished in 1870; in Portugal and in Roumania, in 1864. In Switzerland, it was abolished in sixteen cantons. In Austria, Germany and in Sweden, capital punishment is rare. Under the federal laws of our own country there are still nine capital offenses—treason, murder, arson, rape, piracy, robbery of mails with jeopardy to lives of persons in charge, rescue of a convict going to execution, burning of a vessel of war, and destruction of a private vessel. In Maine it was abolished in 1874; also in Iowa, but the latter state was afterwards revived. It was abolished in New York, but in New York it was restored in 1888 and execution employed. In Iowa and New York, however, capital punishment would have remained abolished had a sufficiently severe penalty been provided as a substitute."

Wants a Department of Mining.

Hanston Sentinel: "A state department of mining could be made of the most practical value to the employers and to the workers. It could carry on the work of the geological survey—the value of which is now apparent to every mine owner. It could suggest laws and measures that would ensure greater economy in working and check in a measure the awful loss of human life that is going on daily. It would be the starting point of a system of mine inspection. It might, perhaps, be a medium for settling many of the difficulties between labor and capital. As it stands now the most important state industry is slighted."

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LOT 3—Moss and other fine Silk Neck Trimmings that were sold us to 75c. per yard, your choice now, 5c.
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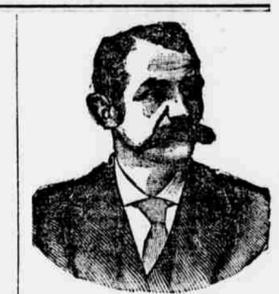
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