The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, MARCH 30, 1895.

THE SCRANTON OF TODAY.

Come and inspect our city.
Elevation above the tide, 740 feet.
Extremely healthy.
Estimated population, 1895, 102,000.
Registered voters, 20,589.
Value of school property, $900,000.
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	9,223
Population in 1870	35,092
Population in 1880	45,850
Population in 1890	75,215
Population in 1894 (estimated)	102,000

And the end is not yet.

A war between England and France would be an international calamity; but it would only be history worked over, with the result uncertain.

Hurry Along Those Fenders.

Something near a year ago a letter was read in councils from the then general manager of the Scranton Traction company assuring the city that within a reasonable time the cars operated by that corporation would be equipped with safety fenders which would greatly diminish if not wholly remove the liability to accidents incident to the running of these vehicles at a high rate of speed through our busy streets. In the course of time, there was a change of management in the Traction company; but it involved no release from the obligations of this official promise. Why have not those promised fenders put in an appearance?

It was true, a year ago, that a satisfactory type of safety fender had not been in use a sufficient time to demonstrate its merits. But this excuse is no longer admissible, since in at least a dozen of our leading cities car fenders are in daily operation, with results generally agreeable to their purchasers and to the public. The number of successful types of fenders has doubled and trebled within the past year; and their cost has declined to within reasonable limits. Why are the street cars of Scranton not equipped with these efficient savers of life and limb?

Beginning next Monday, the city will have a new organization of its councils. It will be the duty of the new assemblies to pass, during the ensuing year, upon a number of measures affecting the Traction company and its interests. We suggest that the best thing it could do, as an official starter in this direction, would be to adopt an ordinance requiring every street car in the city to be equipped with safety fenders inside of thirty days, under penalty of a fine for each car of $10 per day, for every day over that period during which life and limb shall be jeoparded by the absence of fenders.

Let us see if a promise by the Scranton Traction company means anything.

It is exceedingly strange that any senator of Pennsylvania should ridicule a sincere attempt, however faulty, to secure honest elections.

For Fewer Elections.

Reforms move slowly, even when unopposed. They are especially slow when their progress is sought in the form of constitutional amendments. The proposition of Representative Nickell, of Philadelphia, to do away with spring elections, and to give one autumn election to local purposes, the alternate one being reserved for state or national purposes, is obviously sensible, economical and progressive. But it cannot be carried into effect without an amendment to the state's organic law, and this takes not only time but strong popular incentive. As yet, the latter is absent from Mr. Nickell's cause. Since the adoption of the present constitution in 1873 only two amendments have succeeded in reaching a vote by the people; and both of these fell under heavy majorities.

Nevertheless, the arguments on the side of the Nickell amendment are strong ones. Colonel Hall well summarizes the more important of them when he writes to the Pittsburg Times that the proposed change, in addition to keeping local elections separate from state and national ones, would also meet the sentiment "which maintains that we have too many elections, taking up too much of the people's time in attending primaries and polls, especially in February, when the weather is usually inclement and disagreeable. Another argument in its favor, and a strong one, is the great saving in public expenditures that would be effected. The number of polling places in the state runs up to the thousands. Five election officers, paid from $1.50 to $5 per day, the laws varying on this point, draw twice a year a large amount of money from the local treasuries, and to this must be added the mileage of those who take the returns to the county seats. Then the Baker ballot law, which places upon the local treasuries the expense of printing and delivering the immense numbers of blanket ballots, official and specimen, and the cards of instruction, has added greatly to this amount. An examination of the money thus spent at the elections last fall and this spring in the several counties of the state would establish the fact that to hold but one election a year would lead to a great saving to taxpayers. The recent election of mayor and councils in the city of Philadelphia cost nearly $50,000."

At last reports, the Nickell resolution was struggling to get a perferred place on the house calendar. It will, no doubt, fail to pass this house, for the two-fold reason that it is an innovation of some magnitude carrying with it no fat offices; and also that it is a step in the direction of electoral reform. The latter reason alone would defeat it, if the fate of earlier measures having this purpose in view be any criterion. But Mr. Nickell need not feel discouraged on this account. The sentiment for a simplification of our electoral system will survive the rebuffs administered to it by the present general assembly, and perhaps endure until many of the now-triumphant legislative opponents of ballot reform will have ceased to be factors of moment in Pennsylvania's politics.

The mikado, while willing to negotiate peace, is evidently of the opinion that a few licks for China in the meantime will possess ameliorative virtues.

Divided Responsibility.

The Chicago Herald interview with Judge Lambert Tree concerning certain features wherein American diplomacy is under disadvantages by reason of the divided responsibilities incident to our concentric scheme of federal and state governments, to which we yesterday gave place, is thus supplemented by that paper's intelligent Washington correspondent, Walter Wellman: "It is unfortunate," he writes, "that the idea has spread through the world that the United States government is not punctilious in meeting its international obligations, both through lack of good faith and on account of her clumsy system of divided responsibility. Great Britain and her Canadian dominions bitterly complain because congress failed to carry out the arrangement made by the executive in settlement of the Bering Sea claims. Accustomed as they are to having the contracts or arrangements of the foreign office promptly ratified by parliament, the Britishers can see nothing but repudiations in the failure of the American congress to make the appropriation asked for by the administration in this case. At the same time Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Belgium and Denmark are protesting against what they claim to be a violation of our treaty obligations in the matter of tariff duties. If current gossip is to be trusted at least one of these powers, Germany, has threatened to withdraw from diplomatic intercourse with this government unless the alleged wrong be quickly righted. Probably this is an exaggeration of the intentions of the Berlin government, but it is enough to call attention in a most striking way to the danger which menaces the republic of loss of the respect and confidence of other nations.

"The riots in New Orleans have raised anew the old question of responsibility of this government for wrongs committed upon aliens within the borders of a state. So far as our domestic arrangements are concerned it is quite clear that it is not the duty of the federal government to maintain order within a state and to be responsible for injuries inflicted upon citizens of other countries. But this is not satisfactory to foreign governments. They cannot understand the complications of our system and even if they do understand them have no recourse except to look to the central authority at Washington for assurances, guarantees, protection and reparation.

"Such instances as the lynching of Chinamen in Wyoming and the killing of Italians and the shooting of British subjects in New Orleans have served to bring forcibly to the attention of American statesmen the question whether or not the time has arrived to institute some reforms or changes in our system that will remove the obstacles to direct and simple responsibility and negotiation on the part of the Washington authorities. It is no doubt true, as foreign ministers at this capital freely say in private conversation, that the attitude in which the United States are frequently found in reference to foreign governments makes this country an object of ridicule and contempt in other lands. We are in danger of being placed by civilized nations in somewhat the same category as that now occupied by the Chinese, who in case of injury to aliens attempt to put the responsibility therefor upon some provincial government with which no foreign nation has intercourse and which the agents of a foreign government could not reach if they tried. Just as the Chicago riots and the use of government troops to suppress them marked a certain step in the direction of centralization of authority, so it is believed these frequently recurring instances of injury to foreign subjects must lead to some unobjectionable extension of federal power and responsibility within the borders of states. It is by many considered a reproach upon our institutions that when wrong is done to the citizen of a foreign country and his government asks the state department for an explanation the executive must answer the state of Louisiana, or wherever the wrong was done, is responsible, not the United States."

The probability is that before we are many centuries older, we shall have, as a nation, to overhaul our mode of government in this respect, and put ourselves in shape to face the growing responsibilities of a first-class power, with expanding interests in all parts of the globe.

It is quite likely, as asserted in a current dispatch, that the Spanish officials do not relish the tone of the leading American newspapers toward the Cuban rebellion. They would like that tone even less if they knew how thoroughly Spain's insolent treatment of the Cuban people is understood and resented in this country. Those officials would do the American people a favor if they would kindly afford this government a decent pretext for kicking Spanish authority out of Cuba.

Captain John C. Delaney, who yesterday assumed the position of Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds, is fortunate both in the stanch friends that he has won and in the kind of enemies he has made. Of the two classes, we are not sure which does him the most credit.

Representative Littley's proposed amendment to the Brooks high license bill is obviously too prolix and cumbersome. The shortest, plainest and simplest way to change the present law is to make the state a direct partner in the saloon business, and give it, say, 10 per cent. of the gross receipts.

FOR PURE ELECTIONS.

Below will be found an extended summary of the pure elections bill soon to be introduced at Harrisburg by the Pennsylvania Civil Service Reform association, which, as we recently explained, follows the lines of the law now in successful operation in Missouri: The act first defines the crime of bribery, and provides as punishment an imprisonment of not less than two years nor more than five years and a fine of $500 and costs. The treating by a candidate for the purpose of influencing votes is declared to be bribery, and a fine of $25 for each offense is imposed. An innovation, intended to put an end to the expenditure of money for other than legitimate campaign funds is introduced in section 7 as follows: "Every person who shall be a candidate before any caucus or convention, or at any primary election, or at any election for any state, county, city, township, district or municipal office, or for senator or representative in the legislature of this commonwealth, or congress of the United States, shall, within thirty days after the election held to fill such office or place, make out and file with the officer empowered by law to issue the certificate of election to such office or place, and a duplicate thereof with the recorder of deeds for the county in which such candidate resides, a statement in writing which statement and duplicate shall be subscribed and sworn to by such candidate before an officer authorized to administer oaths, setting forth in detail all sums of money contributed, disbursed, expended or promised by him, and to the best of his knowledge and belief, by any other person or persons in his behalf, wholly or in part, in endeavoring to secure or in any way in connection with his nomination or election to such office or place, or in connection with the election or any other persons at said election, and showing the dates when, and the persons to whom, and the purposes for which all such sums were paid, expended, or promised. Such statements shall also set forth that the same is as full and explicit as affiant is able to make it. No officer authorized by law to issue commissions or certificates of election to any such person until such statement shall have been so made, verified and filed by such persons with said officer." Failure to comply with this provision is punishable by a fine not exceeding $1,000, and no person shall enter on the duties of an elective office until section 7 shall have been complied with.

The bill then proceeds to declare that at any time during the term of office of any public officer elected in this state, any citizen "may present an application in writing, and verified by his affidavit, to the attorney general, setting forth one or more charges of bribery against such public officer, and further setting forth that the applicant desires said attorney general to bring an action to have such public office declared vacant on account of said violation of the laws concerning elections. Such application shall be accompanied by a bond to the commonwealth in the penalty of $1,000." It is then provided that it "shall be the duty of the attorney general, within ten days after the receipt of such application and bond, to begin an action against such public officer, or to instruct the prosecuting attorney of the county in which such public officer resides, to bring such action within ten days after such notice, to have said office declared vacant, and for such other or further relief appropriate in an action against the usurper of any office or franchise." It is also provided that should the attorney general fail, it shall be lawful for the applicant to bring such action. Such an action shall have preference on the docket of any court in the state, over all other civil actions. If the charges are sustained, the defendant shall be ousted and excluded from the office, and the plaintiff, who is the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes, shall be awarded the office unless some similar charge can be proven against him. In that case the office shall be filled by appointment or a new election. It is also provided that "No person shall be excused from answering any question on trial of such action relating to any of the acts claimed to have been committed by any party thereto on the ground that such answer would tend to incriminate or degrade such person or witness. But no such answer or answers shall be used or be evidence against such witness in any criminal action, prosecution or proceeding whatever."

Every political organization is compelled to appoint a treasurer, through whose hands all the money spent for election purposes must pass. The treasurer must keep an account of all such moneys and within thirty days after the election shall "prepare and file in the office of the recorder of deeds of the county in which such treasurer resides a full, true and detailed account and statement, subscribed and sworn to by him before an officer authorized to administer oaths, setting forth each and every sum of money received or disbursed by him for any of the objects or purposes mentioned in the act within the period beginning ninety days before such election and ending on the day on which such statement is filed, the date of receipt and each disbursement, the name of the person from whom received and the object or purpose for which disbursed. Such statement shall also set forth the unpaid debts and obligations of any such committee, with the nature and amount of each, and to whom owing, in detail, and if there are no unpaid debts or obligations of such committee such statement shall state such fact. These statements shall be kept on file for four years and shall be open to public inspection." Appropriate punishment is provided for violation of the provision of the act by the treasurer or the mutilation of the books. While it is believed that this bill will pass the present legislature, which has thus far shown precious little sympathy with ballot or other reform, it is the association's belief that public sentiment will eventually demand its enactment, as, indeed, it ought to.

TOLD BY THE STARS.

Daily Horoscope Drawn by Ajacchus, The Tribune Astrologer.

Astrolabe cast: 2.15 a. m. for Saturday, March 30, 1895.

A child born on this day will open its eyes under auspicious circumstances. Like the almanac man governed by Taurus, he may occasionally get it in the neck, but will be able at all times to endure grief.

In joy the epicure appears,
As harbingers of spring awake,
And sees at morn, with smile that cheers,
New syrup on his buckwheat cake.

On this day two years ago the Hull family, of Blakely, were poisoned by eating cracked wheat mush. It will be seen that March 30 is a bad day for indulgence in wheat hulls, especially if one is member of the Hull family.

Dollars and devil begin with d. This probably accounts for the fact that many persons would seem willing to acknowledge themselves offspring of the devil where a few dollars are at stake.

Ajacchus' Advice.

If you wish to test a man's friendship, loan him money today.

Do not pose as a Wyoming avenue living picture if your trousers bag at the knee.

If you are a lawyer—a half-baked lawyer, especially—always take the reporter's chair in the court room, if no others are vacant. The dignity of the profession must be sustained even if the scribe is obliged to write upon his ear while endeavoring to furnish a comprehensive report of a case for the paper he represents.