

The Scranton Tribune

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Mrs. Franc T. Vall, who has been mentioned as a proper successor to Mrs. Swan on the poor board, is among the brightest and most progressive of Scranton's philanthropic workers.

Manufactured Damage Suits. A recent dispatch from Harrisburg to one of the Philadelphia papers contained the assertion that Senator Magee, of Allegheny, proposed to introduce a bill to check the multiplication of speculative damage suits against traction companies.

That this is "a growing evil" is shown, among other things, by a search which Mr. E. Parmelee Prentice, of the Chicago bar, recently made of the records of Cook county, Ill. During the first six months of 1896, 246 damage suits were brought, claiming a total sum of \$2,814,869.

A like increase in the size of the verdicts rendered and the number of judgments obtained is also shown, as we learn from the Times-Herald, from which journal these instructive statistics are taken.

Mr. Prentice asserts that the prosecution of these suits has grown into a regular business; that bureaus and brokers and runners are employed to hunt up such cases, and that more or less fraud is used in promoting, fostering and trying them.

It begins to look as if Clifton Knorr, of Bloomsburg, were about to establish a new record for the wanton abuse of the truth.

Three Instructive Examples. The Lancaster New Era cites three recent trials for libel under the present law wherein, with similar facts, dissimilar conclusions were reached.

The first case was a suit brought against the Reading Herald, and tried before Judge Endlich, in March, 1895. The Herald had published an item stating that one Zuber was arrested the night before, having been caught in the act of adultery at the home of Deborah Shelly, No. 354 Muhlenburg street, the caption of the item being: "Arrested in a Hawdy House."

The second was a Lancaster county case, that of Collins vs. the Morning News. In this case a mistake was made by the reporter in giving the wrong name as a defendant in a criminal charge. He was misled in doing so by the statement of the attorney for the plaintiff in the case, to whom he had been referred from the police office for details.

The third case was that of Becker against the Philadelphia Public Ledger, than which there is not a more careful, conscientious or cautious paper printed. Last November an item appeared in the Ledger stating that Mr. Becker had

been held in 1890 on a charge of embezzlement. This alleged libel also had its origin in a confusion of names. The magistrate gave the reporter the name of Mr. Becker instead of that of Segal, the real defendant. Becker sued for \$25,000, notwithstanding that a full and adequate retraction was published in the Ledger as soon as the error was brought to the attention of the city editor.

Here we have three different interpretations of the libel laws under practically identical circumstances. Judge Endlich, holding that "anything which is of public interest to the community is privileged," also says that a promptly corrected mistake inflicts no injury.

The fact that it is possible in this country for a bright man like Frank Thompson to work his way up from the very foot of the railway ladder to the presidency of the largest and best managed transportation company in the world within less than forty years is a tribute to American institutions.

The Man Who Dared. No other political event of the year has excited a greater stir among newspapers and politicians than the selection by Governor Black of Louis E. Payn to be insurance superintendent of the state of New York.

Concerning the clamor which has sought to defeat Payn we have only to say that it has exceeded in bitterness and in the number of its assailants any other political event of the year.

Predictions are superabundant that Black has committed political suicide. Time alone can tell. But for our part we believe it. Newspaper abuse, particularly in a case like this where it seems to be founded almost wholly on artificial grounds, is often a due bill of character which the future will honor.

Word is received from Canton, in a manner which courts credence, to the effect that a cabinet portfolio, very likely the postmaster generalship, will be proffered by the president-elect to New York first, and in the event of a failure among the factions of that state to agree upon a suitable man, this portfolio will next be tendered to Pennsylvania.

Lyman J. Gage is reported to have pronounced the greenback "ridiculous and immoral." But not all that is reported these days can be believed. We doubt if he ever said anything of the kind.

protective lines, besides 10 votes marked doubtful. On the financial question, there reported to be 46 silver votes, 43 gold votes and 1 vote in doubt.

STATE LEGISLATIVE TOPICS.

Senator Gibson, of Erie, will introduce a bill providing a radical reform in the present method of electing school directors in Pennsylvania. The main feature of his measure is that it will remove from school boards the power to employ teachers and vest it in the school principals or superintendents themselves.

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Discussing the proposed new libel law the Altoona Tribune commends its principal features, but adds: "We have no desire to see the restriction that prevents the movements of a private citizen removed or in any way weakened."

Odds and Ends, we find while taking stock, are being sold at greatly reduced prices to make room for new spring goods.

Have some good Dinner Sets we are closing out very low. \$15.00 Sets, with a few pieces short, now \$10.00.

BYRON WRITING That "sheet" was paved with good intentions, probably realized the truth of the assertion. Don't let your good resolution to buy only the best Blank Books, Office Supplies, Type-Writing Supplies, etc., at our store be a paving stone.

It is to be hoped that the present session of the legislature will not adjourn before it shall have either abolished the Legislative Record or taken some action which will insure the prompt appearance of that publication so printed and edited that it

can be read. This, we realize, is a stereotyped complaint; but it is also a just one. The money now spent on this disagreeable and unceremonious and simply wasteful, it might much better be donated to the Harrisburg fire department, which apparently needs help.

The Altoona Tribune wants the legislature to provide for the submission of a constitutional amendment abolishing the board of pardons, and the incorporation of a section forbidding the granting of pardons, save only under certain exceptional circumstances.

Senator Brown, of Westmoreland, proposes an amendment to the primary election law of 1874, extending it to include congressmen, and compelling all candidates to file a list of expenses with the clerk of courts.

From the Washington Post. Half a dozen congressmen want to step out of the house into the gubernatorial chair in Pennsylvania, and as only one man can be nominated and elected there is likely to be some heartburning before the election is settled.

TOLD BY THE STARS. Daily Horoscope Drawn by Aiacchus The Tribune Astrologer.

A child born on this day will notice that the suggestion that Mrs. Franc Vall would make an excellent poor director to succeed Mrs. Swan has caused several promising blooms to droop like the proverbial moist lily.

Take no stock in an enterprise that promises to pay Star line dividends upon a canal boat investment.

THE CLEMONS, FERBER, O'MALLEY CO. 422 Lackawanna Av.

Reynolds Bros., Stationers and Engravers, HOTEL JERMYN BUILDING.

PRISONER OF ZENDA Anthony Hope's Fascinating Romance.

Just Issued by the Same Author. Phroso.

BEIDLEMAN, THE BOOKMAN 437 Spruce Street. Opposite The Commonwealth.

GOLDSMITH'S BAZAAR.

Carpet Department

We Are Now Showing New Designs in Axminsters, Body Brussels, Wiltons and In-grain Carpets.

Silk Department

Large Invoice of Moire Velours, Taffetas and Pongees have been put in stock and are ready for inspection

E. ROBINSON'S SONS' Lager Beer Brewery.

Manufacturers of the Celebrated PILSNER LAGER BEER. CAPACITY—100,000 Barrels Per Annum.

A CHANGE IN A

SCRANTON BUSINESS FIRM

The shoe store known as the I. Banister store, corner Lackawanna and Wyoming avenues, will hereafter be known as The Banister Shoe Co., of Newark, N. J. Are going to make extensive improvements in the store and the building and will close out the entire stock of the store at prices way below any ever offered to the people of this city.

SALE OPENS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6.

Below Are a Few Prices. Read Them Carefully:

- All Kahler Last Shoes, \$5.00 and \$6.00 goods, will be sold for \$3.00 a pair. Laird, Schober & Co.'s Shoes, English Toe, worth \$6.00, for \$2.30 a pair.

The above are a few of the many bargains we have to offer, and will serve to show the cut made on all lines. Every shoe in the store must be sold. Men's, Boys', Ladies', Misses' and Children's. On tables neatly arranged will be job lots of fine goods that will interest you.

THE BANISTER SHOE COMPANY W. N. BROOKS, Manager.