

# The Scranton Tribune

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## Better Revoke That License.

There can be no question of the propriety of permitting a saloon to be licensed next door to a church. However, the propriety of the former may be conducted, its proximity to the latter is bound to be annoying and hurtful; and the less carefully it is managed the greater is the incongruity. As between a saloon and a church fighting on this issue before a license court, there can be no uncertainty as to which deserves to prevail. Even where the saloon is entitled to claim priority the church merits paramount consideration from all who value the welfare of society. Those facts are so well recognized that the mere statement of them appears almost superfluous.

In the case of the Penn Avenue Baptist church against J. C. Welch, public sentiment stands with the former, and the position assumed by the license court rests under popular condemnation. This feeling is not personal against Mr. Welch. His business is legalized by the state and is conducted probably with as much care for the requirements of the license law as is evinced by the average licensee. In these parts, where he is removed to another location, the opposition against him would doubtless cease, but in the place where his business now is, it is regarded by many worthy citizens as a nuisance, and nothing advanced in his defense vitiated their claim. The court, in ignoring the unanimous remonstrance of the Penn Avenue congregation, took a position which cannot be defended.

The best thing that the court can do, for its own sake, is to recall its grant of a license to Mr. Welch and lay down the rule that hereafter, under no circumstances, will it legalize a saloon within a certain distance from a church or a public school.

The president's message is wholly restricted to the one subject of legislation for whose consideration congress was assembled. It shows the need of more revenue and it reiterates the principles which should guide congress in securing more. Now let the legislative branch promptly act.

## The Insurance Business.

Insurance Commissioner Lambert's first annual report gained for him prompt recognition as a vigilant and vigorous official whose aim comprehended the utmost protection of policy holders possible by law, and his subsequent words and deeds have confirmed this impression. His report for the year just ended is largely occupied with narratives of successful attempts by the insurance department to uproot frauds about companies, and it shows that little, if anything, has been left undone.

Some queer tricks are exposed in the report, notably that credited to the directors of a Philadelphia company, who in their report for 1895 gave fit to enter among their assets a guarantee for \$22,000 contributed by them "out of a laudable desire to shield the policy holders from a legal liability of assessment in a contingency"; but some months later it was found that \$11,000 of this had been returned, without entry on the books, to the contributors of the guarantee. "As the department insisted," adds Colonel Lambert, "that this fund in each instance must be regarded as a free gift to all the policyholders which could not be taken out at the pleasure of the contributors, or if there was any intention of returning it, then it must be entered as a liability as well as an asset, they were all so held in the several annual statements, and as that very proper method of balancing the statement did not serve the purpose of the guarantee fund—that of making an imposing show of assets that were really not assets—interest in keeping up that fund was materially dampened." He intends to see if the law cannot be made to put a stop to such juggling with figures.

Another device concerning which additional legislation may be necessary has been developed by a Philadelphia mutual company which takes risk on its own account and reinsures them in a New Jersey mutual which is not licensed to do business in Pennsylvania and could not be admitted under our laws. It is evident that if this practice be tolerated, it would soon become unnecessary for any of the insurance corporations of other states to secure a license in Pennsylvania and the commonwealth would lose half a million dollars in annual revenue.

Among the recommendations urged upon the legislature is that it fix a standard form of fire insurance policy, which shall be uniform among the companies doing business in the state. The department thinks it must be apparent that almost any form authorized by law, even though laid in some features, must be better than none whatever, since, under existing conditions, there may be inserted in a contract any provision which the insured is willing to accept or which may escape his attention, no matter how venious. This certainly appears reasonable.

The report shows that the Pennsylvania companies have had another prosperous year, the premium receipts for 1896 being over four hundred thousand dollars more than the preceding year, while the losses were only a little over two hundred thousand dollars greater. Taking all the companies reporting to the department, the showing is better, as the premiums received were nearly a million dollars more than in 1895, while the losses were two millions and a half less. The ratio of losses to premiums received by Pennsylvania companies was 52.05 as against 56.41 in 1895, and of all the companies 52.29 as against 55.78 the year before.

There is no visible reason why this improvement ought not to continue during the present year.

The new tariff bill is entitled "an act to provide revenue for the government and to protect the industries of the United States." That fits exactly the wish of the people, notwithstanding the strident howling of a few Mugwump Importers.

## Buncombe.

According to the Philadelphia Inquirer's Harrisburg correspondent, who is doubtless supplied with misinformation by Senator Coyle, the anthracite coal region is so full of "misery, want and destitution, brought about by the manipulation of capitalists," that a legislative investigation is needed. The Senator's position is therefore determined to demand one, and keep on demanding until the auditory nerves of the millions of capitalist greed are paralyzed into acquiescence.

This is all very interesting from a gallery standpoint and it will no doubt tend to increase Senator Coyle's next vote among the class of professional reformers who labor in front of convivial resorts with the weapon that Philistine; but of what conceivable utility can it be from the point of view of the general public? Can a committee of the Pennsylvania legislature lift up the price of coal and thus, under the wage scale in vogue in Schuylkill county, augment the incomes of Senator Coyle's constituents? Can it force the transportation companies to halve their tolls on coal carried to tidewater? Can it do more than the operators themselves, working in unison, have sought to do to improve the condition of the coal trade and thus lead directly to a betterment of the financial and social conditions of the communities that depend for their welfare upon that trade?

No honest man fails to sympathize with the workers in our mines who find opportunities for labor restricted and gross earnings reduced by stockpiling in the anthracite market. But it is not going to help them to have a lot of junketers from Harrisburg traveling around among them, parading their misfortune before the public and fomenting the spirit of bitterness without cause. It is a rare industry nowadays which has not in the last few months had hardships to contend with; but it is not the business of the legislature at Harrisburg to turn detective for the purpose of exploiting privation.

We suspect that Senator Coyle is dealing largely in buncombe.

Reports are multiplying that Spain intends to give up the struggle in Cuba. Let us pray that they may prove accurate.

## Face the Music.

The case of George P. Loomis of Wilkes-Barre, now a subject of general comment in this region, presents points worthy of consideration. It appears, according to the best evidence at hand, that this promising young attorney, whose prospects until recently seemed the brightest, has for two years or more been pinched financially. He borrowed money of friends and also, it would appear, withheld portions of funds entrusted to him in a fiduciary relationship, afterward either making the balance good or promising to do so at some future time. Several days ago, he left Wilkes-Barre without explanation, and it is discovered that his accounts are short to the extent of \$5900 or thereabouts.

In a letter from San Antonio, Tex., to a friend in Wilkes-Barre Mr. Loomis is represented as having said that as he hoped his friends would not endeavor to forget him, he said some might think him a coward for not remaining and facing the music, but he could not do it, he tried for some time and the effort was driving him mad. For two years, he had been worried over his money affairs, and try as he would to straighten them out, he seemed to be so unfortunate that he got deeper and deeper in debt all the time. At last came the time when exposure seemed imminent and he resolved to go away, settle down in some place where he was not known, lead an honest life and work hard in the effort to make sufficient money to pay off his debts.

All who are personally acquainted with Mr. Loomis will, we imagine, readily acquit him of dishonest intent. His case is one that calls for sympathy rather than censure; and it is to be regretted that he has weakened it by flight. It is not too late for him yet to act the brave part by returning to the scene of his misfortunes, frankly acknowledging his error, and throwing himself upon the mercy of his creditors. Human nature has by no means sunk so low that such a course would not appeal to its generous side and win aid and comfort. One advantage of periods of business depression similar to that from which we are now emerging is that among the great majority of men and women it stimulates charity and mutual forbearance. The need of one is recognized by every other as a possible personal experience, and there is less of the wolfish inclination to rush to the roving of a fellow creature overtaken by misfortune.

Our advice to those who are placed as Mr. Loomis was is to face the music like men. It may be easier advice to give than to follow, but the experience of the ages shows that it is sound. It is to be hoped that business conditions will soon be such as to reduce very largely the temptations which appear to have swept this unhappy man to a crisis.

We offer sincere congratulations to the Philadelphia Times for rounding out the twenty-second year of its publication, and to Colonel McClure for the good fortune which has spared him to witness this demonstration of his presence and capability as an editor. The Times has established itself as one of the strong institutions of Pennsylvania; its voice is everywhere respected as that of a fearless and able defender of the public welfare; and we add with pleasure the paper's own testimony that as a business property it has fulfilled all expectations.

It is now proposed by some of the friends of David B. Hill to elect him to the Fifty-sixth congress, in the hope that it will be Democratic and that he may be its speaker. This is counting

chickens a long way in advance of their incubation.

"Squire Smalley has been interviewed by Secretary Sherman for the London Times and he quotes him as saying that the United States wouldn't take Cuba as a gift. We have our doubts about that. Time will tell.

Furnal denial is made by Senator Hanna that he ever contemplated breaking a patronage lance with Senator Platt or Quay. "I may have aims," he says, "but I am not a fool." We should say he wasn't.

If the Powers of Europe had not neglected their duty in Crete little Greece would have been a free state. The intervention, affecting furious in her presumption won't modify their damning record.

The wisest thing that the Pennsylvania legislature can do is to cork up its lefty new capital ambitions and proceed to pass a bill carrying out the governor's sensible suggestions.

When it is announced that the president and cabinet meditate no change in the government's policy toward Cuba, it doesn't signify that the Fifty-fifth congress won't make one.

We must say that Mr. Dana's Sun is treating its friend Cleveland more silently than we had expected.

## HAS A WILL OF HIS OWN.

From Major Carson's Washington Dispatch in the Philadelphia Ledger.

It can be said of President McKinley that he has exhibited remarkable tact at the opening of his administration in dealing with senators and representatives with the general public. Those who have met him in years past have been astonished to discover his prompt recognition of old acquaintances, his warm greeting to old friends, his cordiality of manner to the great mass of visitors who have called at the White House to pay their respects. There is universal content in Washington upon the democratic manners of the new chief magistrate, upon the entire absence of ostentation and upon the friendliness and courtesy which he has manifested to all with whom he has come in contact. This is not at all a matter of surprise to those intimately acquainted with Major McKinley during his honorable term in the house, where the same characteristics were always in evidence.

It is interesting, however, to note that there has been no change as the result of the elevation of Major McKinley to the highest office within the gift of the people. What is more interesting to note is that the new president has evidently a policy of his own to pursue and a will to enforce that policy in his dealings with congress and the people. There has been so much suggestion that the new president would be controlled in his views by others that evidence of the fact that he proposes to be absolutely the controller of his own destiny as president excites comment among those not familiar with his mental characteristics. If an indication does not fail, President McKinley will outline and dictate in every essential detail the policy of his administration both in regard to subjects which he feels it essential that congress should assist him in making part of the law of the land and in the methods by which the small part of money left to him by successive extensions of civil service reform is to be distributed.

Upon general principles it can be stated that the president and his cabinet reject that they have been relieved from a portion of the burden of patronage selection and that they desire rather to extend than to decrease the scope of the operations of the civil service rules. It is understood that a lively debate in congress is impending as to whether it is essential that congress should assist him in making part of the law of the land and in the methods by which the small part of money left to him by successive extensions of civil service reform is to be distributed.

## DANA ON THE "SCRAP."

From the New York Sun.

"This like other great contents, is considerably estimated by our readers as being greater than any ever known, and by another as much less than any of long ago. The deeper philosophers will content themselves with speculating on it in itself alone, without worry over contrast with events which have passed out of comparison. All must agree that in the two men under consideration, the battle of lightning fighters, more evenly matched as to physical qualities, and as to ability to use them well, than any who have met since Mac and Colburn. Analysts select for preference the differing peculiarities which their taste favors.

Corbett, for instance, is heavier. He must be counted stronger. He is a few years younger; and he is a rather more ferocious boxer. Against his greater age Fitzsimmons has generally been more respectful of the rules of training. He may perhaps endure a longer struggle. His strength is so fortunately disposed as to be wonderfully effective. He is reported to hit harder than Corbett. This we must doubt. Corbett notably delivers his blow with that clinching superiority characteristic of the champion pugilist. The well timed following after by the body's weight, which, whether in boxer, pugilist, or soldier, makes the great difference. Corbett, while as a rule more deliberate and patient in his style, is liable to grow hotter in the heat than Fitzsimmons, a fault more likely to endanger him through leading him to violate the rules than through putting him at a disadvantage toward his actual antagonist.

The result? While the prophets are as much alive as ever, they are no more valuable than they used to be. For our part, Fitzsimmons has generally been more respectful of the rules of training. He may perhaps endure a longer struggle. His strength is so fortunately disposed as to be wonderfully effective. He is reported to hit harder than Corbett. This we must doubt. Corbett notably delivers his blow with that clinching superiority characteristic of the champion pugilist. The well timed following after by the body's weight, which, whether in boxer, pugilist, or soldier, makes the great difference. Corbett, while as a rule more deliberate and patient in his style, is liable to grow hotter in the heat than Fitzsimmons, a fault more likely to endanger him through leading him to violate the rules than through putting him at a disadvantage toward his actual antagonist.

## GOOD FOR KANSAS!

From a Topeka Dispatch.

The Topeka Capital publishes an elaborate statement of the reduction in mortgage indebtedness in Kansas during the past seven years, showing a decrease of \$5 per cent, or over a hundred and five million dollars since January 1, 1893. The comparison is drawn between the figures of the federal census of 1890 and reports to the Capital from the registers of deeds of thirty-eight counties, showing the recorded mortgage indebtedness on January 1, 1897. If the same percentage holds good for the entire state, the total reduction in Kansas for the seven years amounts to \$105,383,208.

Careful statistics show that only 100,000 of lands mortgage debt is held by persons outside the state. In 1890 the total mortgage debt of the state on farms and lots was reported by the census to

be 27 per cent of the actual value of all taxed real estate. Today it does not exceed 15 per cent. The statement shows that Kansas has been difficult and successfully paying out and is today probably free of debt than any other Western state could say. They may be compared obligations of \$25,000,000 from the proceeds of a single crop.

## CONCERNING TRUSTS.

From the Altoona Tribune.

The recent collapse of the steel trust is a vivid illustration of the truth that human selfishness can always be depended upon to defeat combinations that make extortionate charges for the purpose of reaping undue profits. What has the Standard Oil company, against which there is so much sentiment and which is denounced in all quarters, really done? It has reduced the price of oil so that the consumer can now buy a single gallon for a dime, while if he buys the barrel he secures it at a lower figure. The same thing was done by the oil men, who have reduced the price of sugar until it is lower now than it ever was before. These people have driven competitors out of the field by reducing the price to the consumer. The moment they raise prices beyond a narrow margin of profit, others will enter the field and compete with them. Why should the man who pays ten cents a gallon for his illuminating oil or who gets twenty-five pounds of sugar for a dollar denounce and curse those who have brought about the era of cheap oil and cheap sugar? Why should he insist upon returning to the old prices as to when he paid four or five times the price he pays now?

We are just as much opposed to extortion and greed as anybody, but we recognize the existence of certain forces which dominate modern civilization and which cannot be suppressed. They may be controlled, must be, if the government of the republic is to serve the purposes which its founders intended. Congress and the state legislatures should enact same laws and executives and judges should enforce them impartially. But nothing is to be gained by extreme measures, contrary to the trend of the age.

## CAN THIS BE TRUE?

From the New York Sun.

The truth is that in no department of government has the triumph of civilization been so supremely as in the government of cities and this achievement in America has been most conspicuous in this city of New York. Every contribution made by science and mechanical skill for the welfare of society has been most rapidly and most completely utilized in the great town. Hence society, witnessing and duly appreciating these superior advantages enjoyed by the urban resident, tends more and more to aspire to participate in them. Population gravitates increasingly to the communities which are under municipal government, and the more so the larger they are. The whole country would be depopulated if the benefits of the cities if the inhabitants of the rural districts could follow their inclinations. Young men fly from the farms whenever the opportunity offers. The loneliness and monotony of rural life are a constant cause of complaint, the superior attractions of the city a constant magnet, and among these the foremost is the better government of municipalities.

## THE ONE WEAK SPOT.

From the Washington Post.

The ruling power in this nation is public opinion. It can make itself obeyed by all departments of the government. It dictates laws and insures their enforcement. It has no more important mission, just now, than a reformation of the administration of justice. The Post takes no stock in the theory that the republic is decaying. It knows that, in most things, the government—national, state and municipal—has made great advances in recent years. We have a higher average of public morality than we had a generation ago, the reason that individual morality has improved. The one respect in which the country has not advanced, but has apparently gone back, is in the respect of crime. The annual list of unpunished felonies is enormous, and it increases every year. We know of no way to change this for the better but to reform the agencies on which society depends for the detection, conviction and punishment of law-breakers.

## OUR COUNTRY'S CROSS THE SEA.

From I. N. Ford's London Letter.

Mr. Cleveland, who abruptly menaced England with war on account of Venezuela, retires into private life with the plaudits and eulogiums of the daily press as an American statesman of heroic stature and moral convictions. President McKinley, entering upon office with an instinctive preference for a treasury surplus, has been able to accomplish an ambition to restore old-time conditions of national prosperity, is greeted with cynical incredulity and secret misgiving as a politician incapable of taking broad, statesmanlike and patriotic views of national policies. So dearly does the Englishman love his cherished theory and so blind is he to the practical experience of other nations than his own!

## AN INCIDENT AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

From a Report in the Sun.

Just before lunch time a tall lady with dark hair and features, accompanied by two pretty little children, a boy and a girl, of perhaps five years each, came to see Mr. McKinley. They were immediately admitted. The lady "just wanted to shake hands, and also wanted her children to have a look at the man who is at the head of the nation." When they were ready to leave the president stepped over to his desk, on which was a huge bunch of flowers, and plucking two nice yellow roses, pinned them on the little children's coats. They went away the happiest little ones imaginable, and the mother must have felt greatly honored.

## TOLD BY THE STARS.

Daily Horoscope Drawn by Ajaxchus, The Tribune Astrologer.

Astrological cast: 1:15 a. m., for Tuesday, March 16, 1897.

A child born on this day will notice that it is about time for ex-alty Solicitor Burns to lay away to the sap bush.

There is nothing suggestive of the hayfield about Court House square as late from the "Keep Off the Grass" signs. There is probably no individual upon earth who will kick harder and for less cause than a politician. The rejuvenated Rowing association is now prepared to do almost anything except row.

On the asphalt pave question the council appears to have "gone dry." A saloon near a church can often furnish the "awful example," at least. Clannishness is one of Christianity's greatest stumbling blocks.

## BEIDLEMAN THE BOOKMAN

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Everybody is invited. Very Respectfully,

Goldsmith Brothers & Company.

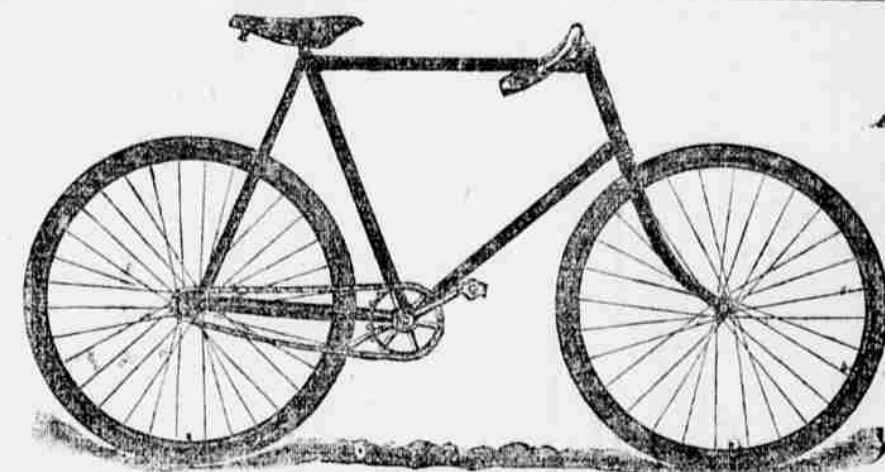
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Gives a brilliant mellow light not a GLASTLY LIGHT, all objects appear naturally. The mantle last twice as long as any other. It gives three times as much light and consumes only half the gas used by ordinary gas burners.

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