

The Scranton Tribune

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Maybe the Spruce ball club would prefer a game of marbles.

Stand by the Ball Club.

At the very beginning of the Eastern League season it is timely to suggest to the admirers of professional baseball in this city that they, at very little expense, can co-operate with the players and the management of the Scranton club in such a manner as to strengthen materially that club's prospects on the diamond.

The conditions for a successful season of wholesome sport at Athletic park are favorable in every detail save one. Good players have been secured by a liberal management which has also provided very satisfactory public conveniences. That which is lacking—or at least that which often has been absent in former years—is a disposition on the part of the attendants at local games to accord proper encouragement to the players. It is quite as easy to speak a word of praise now and then as to adopt a steady tone of ridicule, badinage or censure; and it does infinitely more to keep up the proper tension among the players. It does not become a Scrantonian to make light of any Scranton institution or performance simply because it is a Scranton achievement; yet how often have remarks been passed in belittlement of the Scranton ball club at times when a strong home sentiment in favor of the club would very probably have turned the scales in the direction of victory.

There is no reason why we should not be loyal to Scranton in our amusements as well as in our business activities. The management of the Scranton club last season sustained a financial loss in professional baseball. It doesn't bill for sympathy on that account, yet the man who carries common sense and justice into his sports will readily perceive that the local public is under an obligation to the management of the Scranton ball club not altogether canceled by the admission fee paid at the gate. If this fact shall be borne in mind this summer, it will tend to improve the chances of a satisfactory ball season.

According to Rev. B. Fay Mills, nineteenth of the criminals of the country are unmarried. Marriage he regards as one of the greatest reform agencies, and if he were a legislator he would favor a bill taxing bachelors. There are communities where he could win an election to the legislature on this issue—Colorado, for instance, where they have woman suffrage.

Where Ignorance Is Bliss.

The bill now before the legislature providing that the formula of each proprietary remedy offered for sale in Pennsylvania shall be printed in plain English on the outside wrapper is a standing "strike." It has within the past few years bobbed up, from time to time, at fully a dozen state capitals. Whether or not the patent medicine firms have responded to this transparent invitation to placate their legislative assailants we do not know; but in no state yet has the bill become a law.

Nor should it. The formula of a proprietary medicine is a trade secret, the value of which would be extinguished by publicity. Legislation may properly intervene to prevent the general sale of poisonous or deleterious substances, and statutes for this purpose are already on the books. But to require the unmasking of the medicine business simply in response to a morbid curiosity would be detrimental to that business and in no sense beneficial to the public. It would recall the fable of the man who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Of similar character is the bill, ever and anon introduced to public attention, the aim of which is to require physicians to write their prescriptions in English. Here again we have mere vulgar curiosity straining to no purpose. The unintelligibility of the prescription to the ailing layman constitutes a large percentage of its curative potency. Faith in the physician's skill is very often as strong a factor in the patient's recovery as is the medicine used. To shatter this saving confidence on the stone of publicity would be an act of wanton vandalism, unbecoming men of common sense.

No, let each trade continue to possess its tricks. Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.

Well Merited Success.

With its 32-page issue of Wednesday the Lancaster New Era commemorated its twentieth anniversary. This journal is one of the institutions of Pennsylvania which merits a word of explanation and tribute. Its ownership and control are the same as at its beginning. All the heads of departments who were with the paper at its birth remain with it today. The paper does not print patent medicine advertisements nor will it admit to its advertising columns and advertisement to conflict with the business of its Lancaster patrons. It will not print an advertising even at any price; even the Royal Baking Powder company, one of the most particular firms in the country in its advertising requirements, had to yield to the New Era's ideas on this subject or stay out of the paper.

The four daily papers in Lancaster, a city with a population about one-third that of Scranton, and they are all good papers, too; but the New Era is the community's daily gospel.

The people of Lancaster county, in their twenty years' experience with Editor Geist, have found him to be a gentleman of the old school, honest as the day is long, possibly a little notionate in some things, but ever to be found on the side of decency and good citizenship. The hard times haven't affected him; the New Era's business is larger now than it ever was, and the plan which he and his associates have been enabled on this platform to build up has few equals in the country in cities of Lancaster's size.

Here is an example of notable success in the newspaper business won without bluster, braggadoocio or sensation. It is a consummation worthy of general study.

A change has come over the spirit of the Wilkes-Barre Record's dreams. The chip has disappeared from its shoulder. Its snicker-snack is sheathed. Men and brethren, listen to this: "There is one fact that must not be overlooked, and that is, that as long as Luzerne county fights our United States senators we cannot expect any recognition in the distribution of the patronage they control. Neither can we expect them to break their necks in trying to procure an appropriation for a federal building at Wilkes-Barre. Although neither of them would stoop to anything like revenge in opposing it, yet we could not, with the same independence, ask them to assist us when we could in case we stood by them when they needed us." In the words of the immortal Grant, "let us have peace."

An Experiment in Prison Reform.

An interesting experiment in penology is now in progress in Indiana, where on the first of April an indeterminate sentence law went into effect. This law empowers the prison officials to reduce every sentence, save for murder and treason, to the minimum time fixed for the crime, when the prisoner appeals to their sympathies by good conduct while in confinement. The court no longer imposes sentence after conviction, but the convict is taken directly to the jail, and whether he shall remain there the full limit of the term prescribed as the maximum penalty or less will depend upon the impression he shall make upon the warden of the jail, the board of directors, the chaplain and the jail physician. These officials, in co-operation, may reduce sentences, modify the convict's routine while in duress, or issue paroles. Their authority over the convict is almost unlimited.

It is too early yet to pass judgment on this system. It is to be hoped that in operation it will produce more satisfactory results than is to be expected from a consideration of it on theoretical lines. One does not desire the sentiment for prison reform—a sentiment for whose existence there is good cause—to be set back or discouraged by failure of early attempts at reform. At the same time it is difficult to repress the belief that a mistake has been made in the Indiana instance in the subtraction from the bench of all power over the convict's length of confinement and the placing of it in the hands of a somewhat unwieldy board. Government by boards and commissions is rarely preferable to government by individual heads. The average intelligence and humanity of the judges of Indiana ought, one would think, to be quite as high and therefore quite as trustworthy as that of the wardens, chaplains, directors and doctors of the various Indiana jails; consequently the change from a centralized to a divided authority raises many points of doubt.

In a general way, in this broad subject of novelties in prison administration, conservatism is wise. As the Providence Journal remarks in its comment upon the Indiana "reform": "The approving ones have been a few experts in the criminal phase of the social organization and some charitable sociologists, whose study of society has been carried on under a stimulus derived from instincts of humanity. The minds of the mass of intelligent people are not yet made up as to the desirability of the sweeping ideas set forth by these men and women. They feel that they may fittingly demand to be convinced that what is proposed is wise."

After all, why begrudge Mr. Cleveland his brief resurrection? For a long time to come he will be very dead.

An Inheritance Tax.

An outcry of some intensity is made by the wealthy citizens of New York state against the graded inheritance tax passed by the late legislature and now awaiting executive approval or rejection. The bill under consideration provides for levying a tax of 5 per cent. on inheritances of personal property up to \$50,000, and a further tax of 1 per cent. for every additional \$25,000 up to \$3,000,000, at which point the tax will have reached 15 per cent. Beyond \$3,000,000 there is no addition to the rate.

Chief among the arguments employed to induce Governor Black to veto this bill is that it savors of the spirit of socialism and confiscation. "It cannot be argued," says the Rochester Post-Express, which is among the most determined of the bill's opponents, "that it is a legitimate function of government to have one law for the rich and another for the poor. It is not right for the state to discriminate against any class. The bill as it stands may be said to place a premium upon stupidity, inefficiency, laziness, lack of enterprise, unthrift and whatever else makes against prosperity. It says in effect to the citizens of New York, 'Be wary how you accumulate great riches, if you wish to escape excessive taxation.'"

Before this argument can be approved as sound it will be necessary to make sure that during the time when the threatened large fortunes were being accumulated the accumulators paid their full share of taxation to the state, and therefore owe nothing to the state in the form of delinquent or evaded taxes. If any of them has held large tracts of idle land in the cities and had it assessed as farm land, while next to these tracts, poor men owning little lots for home purposes have had their property assessed at about ten times the proportionate rating of the larger

tracts, because of their thrift and enterprise in improving it, then it becomes a debatable question whether an inheritance tax on the rich owners of this idle land would not be a rough approximation to justice. Or if in other ways the rich, during their lifetime, have dodged the tax-gatherer, and thus put an unfair tax burden on the poor man who has not the same opportunity for dodging, then it might reasonably be said that the inheritance tax would do something toward evening accounts. But there is still another point; and that is that when a rich man at death bequeaths a large estate to heirs who have been cradled in luxury and who, nine times in ten, are not qualified to administer it with the wisdom of the parent, he incurs an expense upon the estate in various ways for which an inheritance tax is usually less than an equivalent. There are exceptions to this rule, but the rule nevertheless is as we have stated it. The imposition of such a tax need not, however, be regarded as a socialist drive at the rich; for the rich man can at any time evade it by apportioning his estate prior to his death.

It will be interesting to see on which side of this argument Governor Black will place his signature.

The Bryan silver ratio of 16 to 1 is reflected in the relative per capita consumption in the United States of beer and spirits. Last year this was 15.9 gallons to 1. Here is the nucleus of a strong campaign appeal to the thirsty hosts of the unshaved.

Rumor is now busy asserting that John Sherman, as the result of failing health, will soon retire from the cabinet. It is doubtless merely guesswork, and yet it is not incredible. The exactions of the state department are enough to sap the strength of a far younger man.

More money by \$140,000,000 is reported to be in circulation in the United States today than there was a year ago. The chief trouble is that it hasn't circulated into the right pockets—meaning, of course, our pockets and yours.

Complaint is made by our Wilkes-Barre friends that their city's assessed valuation has in the past year grown only to the extent of \$45,501. We renew our invitation to them to move to Scranton.

Apparently one of the needs of the people of Greece, ere they say too much in criticism of the government at Athens, is the individual ability to govern themselves.

Of course Queen Lil is in this country merely for her health. Whoever thought otherwise? By the way, her health is not likely to improve.

The latest report from Washington is that "Cuba is shelved so far as this administration is concerned." Don't you believe it.

The Grover Cleveland Salvation club will doubtless soon proceed to pass the hat.

Gossip at the Capital

Special Correspondence of The Tribune.

Washington, April 29. President McKinley is reported to have the Hawaiian government is well known. He has positive convictions on the subject. He favors annexation, and so does young Sewall, who has just been appointed to represent this government on those islands. That is one of the reasons why the president appointed him. Minister Sewall will make a careful study of the situation, and if he finds that the majority of the white population favor annexation this administration will act promptly. The only difficulty to overcome is the opposition of Japan. For years there was a treaty between Japan and Hawaii which allowed unlimited immigration, but the latter's law-making body claimed the right, just as the United States congress did in regard to China, to abrogate the treaty, and passed a law that no Japanese could enter against the consent of the board of immigration, and as a result about 1,000 of them were not long ago refused permission to land in Hawaii, and were sent back home. If this government attempts to annex the islands it may have a race question to deal with. The Japanese are a crafty, cunning race, and preponderating as they do in numbers, have evinced some desire to take part in the government of the country. If this sentiment grows and particularly if they are reinforced by fresh immigration the situation may become serious. With the Chinese it is different; they are content with any government that treats them justly and show no inclination to meddle in political matters. They make good workmen, and their numbers will not increase, because there was never any treaty with China, and immigration from there has been stopped. The difficulty is that numerically the whites are weak. There are of the Teutonic element, all told only 5,000, while of the Japanese there are 25,000, and 29,000 Chinese. Hawaii for many years has been looked on by the Japanese laborers as a paradise. In their own country they get only a month's wages in silver, but in the islands they make \$25 a month. That has taken them to Hawaii in great numbers.

The story that Secretary Bliss will resign shortly after the president returns is on the rounds again. The story has been going in different forms since Mr. Bliss entered the cabinet, arising from the fact that the New York man was strenuously urged to take the place, and did it under protest and with an intimation that when the administration got its work well in hand he might lay down the reins. In official circles there has been no belief that Mr. Bliss has any idea of resigning in the near future.

There is not much likelihood of the bankruptcy bill, which passed the senate a few days ago, getting through the house this session. Had the senate passed the bill, instead of the Nelson committee, the committee on rules would probably have brought it up in the house by a special rule. The senate bill not being satisfactory, however, action on it would require consideration by a committee in advance. This would necessitate the appointment of the judiciary committee, and if that committee had no good reason could be given for not announcing the other committees. Moreover, it is evident that the senate will not accept such a measure as the business interests are demanding, and the possibilities of legislation at this time are confined to the Nelson bill, or something similar to it. Mr. Reed takes the position that it is not wise to attempt any legislation except on the tariff at this session, and he will not make any commitments unless there is a demand made by a majority of the Republicans in the house. It appears that a very large majority of the Republicans in the house are of this opinion, and he does not intend, as long as that is the case, to have the house take up general legislation. The bankruptcy bill, therefore, is expected to go over with other legislation proposed to the regular session of congress.

The meeting of the universal postal

congress in this city, May 5, will mark the first time in the history of the world of all the peoples of the world. At that meeting, Korea, the Orange Free State and China will be brought into the union, and then, for the first time in the history of nations, every independent government on the globe will be bound together for the enforcement of a single treaty. The United States may well feel proud of the part it has played in making possible this universal treaty. The suggestion of such a treaty was made an official act of this government, and it will be in its capital that the idea will be fully realized.

On October 9, 1874, the first "Treaty concerning the creation of a general postal union" was signed by representatives of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Spain, the United States, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Roumania, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and France. It was signed a short time subsequently and Montenegro also at once adhered to the treaty. The treaty went into operation on July 1, 1875, covering a territory containing a population of 375,000,000 people. The treaty greatly simplified the complicated system for the exchange of mail between nations. It also provided for a congress to convene once every three years for the revision of the treaty, and established an international bureau at Bern, Switzerland, at an annual expense of 75,000 francs for the purpose of collecting and distributing postal statistics and information. It also provided for arbitration of the two or more administrations could not agree upon an interpretation to be placed upon a provision of the treaty. The number of countries in the union grew to 18 when the congress met in Paris in 1878; the delegates represented a population of 720,000,000 inhabitants. It was there that the treaty forming the "universal postal union" was signed. When the Vienna congress adjourned it represented 1,300,000,000, and it is expected that another will be added to it by the congress to meet in this city by the millions of China, Korea and Orange Free State, when the body will, in the fullest sense, be a world's congress.

This congress will be asked for quite a big appropriation to cover the damage done by the recent floods in the Mississippi valley. Representative Catchings, of Mississippi, who used to be the chairman of the committee on the subject, said today that \$15,000,000, at least, would be needed to raise the levees along the Mississippi four feet on an average, in order to protect the rice and sugar plantations which the state of Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana have recently experienced. "Fifteen millions of dollars," he said, "seems to be a very large sum, but we have already lost \$30,000,000 in the cotton and \$10,000,000 in the sugar plantations, and the raising of the levees to railroads in the tying up of trains and the lack of ordinary freight traffic that results from good crops."

A BRIGHTER PROSPECT.

From the Philadelphia Stockholder.

New York houses are instantly proclaiming that the anthracite interest has lost markets in New England and elsewhere, aggregating millions of tons of anthracite through the competition of soft coal. This may be questioned, in view of the fact that while manufacturers are showing increased activity, the shipping companies are showing a decrease as compared with last year an actual falling off of 100,000 tons. It would probably require a very decided advance upon current prices to drive consumers from the use of anthracite to any of the available substitutes. To make such a change would, in most cases, involve costly reconstruction, and the consumers of anthracite are not likely to rush into extensive expenditures in this direction while the possibility remains that a rupture among the coal companies, or other change of conditions, may again make anthracite the most economical fuel. So far as the eastern markets are concerned, oil and gas are not likely to enter into competition. Bituminous coal can never displace anthracite for domestic purposes, and while coke might, in some circumstances, be largely available for household use, it is highly probable that the disparity of price will result in a large increase in the use of anthracite for industrial purposes. It has been found, moreover, in the attempt made to introduce coke for domestic consumption, that the anthracite interest will make them about equal in the market.

No estimate of anthracite's future is complete which ignores the fact that nearly 20 per cent. of all the coal ever mined in the anthracite region remains there in the form of great mountains of culm, or waste. This waste, if partially turned into marketable fuel at a cost of about 15 cents per ton on the cars. When the conditions of competition shall demand it, coal can be produced at a profit for many years regarded as waste, can be laid down at tidewater at prices which no other fuel can by any possible stretch of circumstances approach in cheapness. Buckwheat and the smaller sizes have been successfully washed out of these great culm banks, and the process of cleaning a number of years past; and not only are the methods of reclamation being constantly improved, but methods of consumption have been found which enable the use of these small sizes for both steam and domestic purposes. With respect to competition, therefore, the anthracite interest has little to fear from any fuel now in sight, and with a continuation of the harmonious relations now existent between the several interests, the trade's outlook from now on should brighten continuously.

DON'T CHEW GUM.

From the Globe-Democrat. The chief objection to the habitual chewing of gum is its effect on the face. A perpetual wagging of the jaws develops some of the muscles, and finally gives to all the features an unpleasant look of preoccupation in a task. No play of emotion, no fine shade of poetic feeling, can sweep over a face which the most of it is engaged in rapid muscular exercise. Its tendency is away from conversational improvement. The gum-chewer much addicted to monosyllables. In the bicycle face the dominant expression is anxiety; in the gum-chewing face it is a never-ending energetic pursuit after the unattainable.

THE BOYLESS TOWN.

A cross old woman of long ago, Declared that she hated noise; "The town would be so pleasant, you know, if only there were no boys." She scolded and fretted about it till Her eyes grew heavy as lead. And then, of a sudden, the town grew still For all the boys had fled. And all through the long and dusty street There wasn't a boy in view; The boys had fled where they used to meet Was a sight to make one blue. The grass was growing on every base, And the paths that the runners made; For the boys had fled from all the place. Who knew how the game was played.

The dogs were sleeping the livelong day— Why wouldn't they bark or leap? There wasn't a whistle or call to play, And so they could only sleep. The pony neighed from his lonely stall, And longed for saddle and rein; And even the birds on the garden wall Chirped only a dull refrain.

The cherries rotted and went to waste— There was no one to climb the trees; And nobody had a single taste, Save only the worms and bees. There wasn't a messenger boy—not one To speed as such messengers can; If people wanted their errands done, They sent for a messenger man.

There was little, I ween, of frolic and noise; There was less of cheer and mirth; The sad old town, since it lacked its boys, Was the dreariest place on earth. The bells had ceased to begin to ring; Their work with a sudden scream; "Dear me!" she cried; "I have been asleep; And I had a horrid dream." —Robert Clarkson in St. Nicholas.

GOLDSMITH'S G. B. BAZAAR.

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We still have about every worthy weave from Rag to Velvet and are anxious to sell them off as soon as possible.

We still have a few rolls of Matting, Price \$3.50 per roll of 40 yards, 25 pieces Stair Oil Cloth at 6 cents per yard.

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Is about the most appropriate name of a choice collection of pure Silk and Woolen Parisian Dress Novelties that our price cutter has played such havoc with. They are on exhibition in the northwest window. No Two ALIKE.

Coming Styles Adopted by The Great Costumers of Europe

Is the title of a book that we have control of for this city. It is worth \$1.00, we sell it for ten cents.

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100 dozen Ladies' extra quality hose, fine Maco yarn, Hermsdorf dye, high spliced heels, double soles, in all black; black with white feet, black with white soles; also in tan shades, 25c a pair

80 dozen Children's fine gage, fast black hose, double knees, high spliced heels and double soles; also in tan shades, sizes 6 to 9 1/2, 25c a pair

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FOOTE & SHEAR CO. MT. PLEASANT COAL AT RETAIL. Coal of the best quality for domestic use and of all sizes, including Backwood and Blazey, delivered in any part of the city at the lowest price. Orders received at the Office, first floor, Commonwealth building, room No. 4, telephone No. 324 or at the mine, telephone No. 372, will be promptly attended to. Dealers supplied at the mine. WM T. SMITH

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Sweeping reduction in all lines to save moving stock, on account of extensive alterations on our first and second floors. Now is the time to buy

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To the Ladies

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