

The Scranton Tribune

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SCRANTON, NOVEMBER 12, 1897.

Although the election is over and the Schadt literary bureau has shut up shop, the Carbonate Herald continues to yawn against Connellism. Evidently when County Chairman John Thomas declined to buy its alleged influence he made an enemy for life.

The President and Cuba.

In the matter of Spanish pretences of reform in Cuba, it is probable that President McKinley is altogether too trusting and good natured. The easiest way out of a difficulty is not always the best way. Spain cannot sow cruelty and oppression in Cuba for centuries and expect in the turn of a pen to reap billet doux and orange blossoms.

If it is the intention of the president in his forthcoming message to congress to take the position that a few real Spanish promises, in the light of history, are worth the paper they are written on, should suffice to terminate our practical interest in the Cuban revolution and justify this government in declining to take further cognizance of the matter, then in our judgment will be a serious mistake, both as a matter of politics and as a matter of principle. In such an event it can hardly fail to become the duty of congress to remind the executive of the preponderating will of the American people, which should be sovereign with their executive officials, and which is that the now thoroughly established republic of Cuba should be recognized belligerent rights.

No one fails to credit the president with the most honorable motives in the view which he apparently takes of this government's duty in the Cuban problem. Difference from that view is not coupled with disrespect. But if the apparently authentic forecast shall be verified that Mr. McKinley intends to rest the whole Cuban case on the treaty, his attitude serves as a Republican and to the propriety of the appointment. It is a selection that reflects credit upon Postmaster Ripple and that will be received with satisfaction by all who believe in the good, old doctrine of standing by one's tried and trusted friends.

The Root of the Difficulty.

We observe in the Lancaster Examiner, a Republican journal of independent proclivities, the following timely and sensible words, which are worthy of iteration and re-iteration until their import is thoroughly appreciated:

Too much rigidity in party lines forbids expansion and progress and leads to corruption; but on the other hand, excessive exuberance is the father of chaos and experiments. There would be no remedy for our anarchy if there were more sturdy lights within party lines at the primary elections. Parties are necessary and will exist for many a generation to come. The mass of people will rally around a central idea or particular man. To have both of the best will not come from inaction or paper resolutions, but by a united effort of the ablest and wisest element in each party organization battling for the best. Now and then casting ballots for revenge may win, but change is not reform. Turning from an indifferent Republican to a worse Democrat is a foolish proceeding. The true effort is the only thing to make Misswampy or general independence respectable and forceful is to render his power potent at the primary. There is the battle ground for the true men of every party.

A conference of prominent citizens of New York state is to be held soon to consider plans of legislation for the better safeguarding of the will of the people at the primaries in that commonwealth and its deliberations will possess interest for friends of good government everywhere. They will be especially interesting to the Republicans of Lackawanna county, who have pending before them a proposition to do away with the present methods of selecting candidates and to substitute in lieu thereof the Crawford county system of direct nominations by a free party primary vote. The effort has been made in this county to make it appear that the wish for better primaries is confined to a certain politically notorious and discredited local faction headed by some of the worst heeled and bolder of any community; but it need deceive no one. Whatever proposed changes from the present system shall upon due examination be found to promise of better results or lead to a more general and honorable participation by the mass of citizens in the making of nominations for office will be cordially welcomed and approved by the present leadership in the county's Republicanism.

At the same time it is only fair to warn the sanguine advocates of these and other reforms in the modus operandi of modern politics that until the voters themselves, as individuals, take in the large majority of instances an elevated view of their duties as citizens and show a willingness to work unselfishly and voluntarily for better results, changes in method will not be followed by noticeably improved consequences. The fountain of political achievement cannot rise higher than its source. Those who lay great stress on the virtues of new methods should not forget that reform in men is the great thing needful in a government where every male citizen above 21 years of age, good, bad and indifferent, is a nominal king.

It is a striking proof of William McKinley's great personal popularity that the country accepts his inert Cuban policy with as little protest as it does.

**Bossism in Politics.** The Washington Star compresses volumes into a sentence when it says: "Bossism and politics for revenue only are the outgrowth of the neglect of people to attend properly to their public duties."

The intelligent remedy for political ills is for the best citizenship to get off the perch of top-lefty criticism and get down into the trenches of active, incessant, determined political effort. It

is not so nice an atmosphere down there in the trenches in the democratic mix-up of all classes and conditions of men, as it is up in the tree tops where the white doves of civic phariseism sit in peace and grumble; but it has this decided advantage, that when once one gets used to it one can accomplish a great deal more for good.

**Bossism supercedes leadership** in the ranks of the active politicians only when the good citizen goes to sleep. When he is awake he is man enough to keep bossism down to its proper place.

Says Lemuel Ely Quigg, member of congress from New York city and committee man on foreign relations: "I think it unlikely that there will be any congressional action on the subject of Cuba. I hope that congress will not attempt to conduct our foreign relations. They are much better left to the administration. There was a time, perhaps, when a resolution conferring belligerent rights upon the Cubans might have passed without bringing on a war with Spain, but that time has gone. If the Spanish people have a spark of manhood left there could be but one result of any congressional declaration favoring Cuba." In other words, we shouldn't perform a manifest duty because it might make Spain angry. This is statesmanship with a capital S.

Dr. Swallow prances to the fore with another of his remarkable "open letters," which he accuses the governor of the state of being a perjurer and insinuates, although not flatly charging, that the governor is also a thief. The gentle doctor further alleges that Senator Quay has tried to buy him off by offering him "his own price," even up to a United States senatorship. In conclusion the doctor announces that he will have justice at the polls or proceed to fill up the penitentiary. There can be little doubt that Dr. Swallow imagines himself at this juncture in political affairs a very important man.

It is asserted that traders in Wall street recently lost \$10,000,000 in one day because of false rumors of McKinley's death and of a war with Spain. The organs of Wall street, with tears in their eyes, beg the public for heaven's sake to drop the Cuban issue; but somehow the public doesn't appear to evince a bit of sympathy. If the speculators and gamblers of the country get pinched now and then at their own game, why should honest citizenship care? Let them suffer the consequences.

The Baltimore Bonaparte who aspires to succeed Arthur P. Gorman as United States senator for Maryland and grand-nephew of the great Napoleon. Should he be chosen, his colleague would be a Wallington, and as they are heads of rival factions in Maryland Republicanism, there would be a fine chance to re-canvass the issues of the earlier Waterloo.

Ex-Mayor Grant, of New York, speaking for Tammany, calls Bryan an enthusiast. Enthusiasts and mercenaries are equally dangerous, but of the two kinds of citizenship we believe we prefer the former.

The base ball magnates who are now in session at Philadelphia should come down on base ball roedism or else get ready to attend the funeral of the national game.

Spain has promised to be good in Cuba. But as an anchor to the windward let congress promptly resolve to recognize the belligerence of the insurgents.

The question still arises, was Lloyd Wintersteen innocent or guilty?

**TOLD BY THE STARS.** Daily Horoscope Drawn by Alcehus, The Tribune Astrologer. Astrolabe Cast: 1.45 a. m., for Friday, November 12, 1897.

A child born on this day will notice the fact that for financial success one must present an act that appeals to the gallery every time.

There are few heroes in the present season of rapeseed, but the man who can pay his election bets without kicking is entitled to some hearty thanks constantly brought against the theater by well-meaning persons who know very little about the theater; they help to perpetuate the old, foolish prejudice against all actors, and they do more or less harm, in one way and another, to pretty nearly everybody who sees the posters and attends the performances. There is law enough pretty nearly everywhere in this county to make the existence of these things a nuisance, but the most plain duty of the authorities to enforce these laws.

And these frankly nasty shows, given as a rule in the cheaper theaters, are not the only ones that should receive the attention of the police authorities. There are some very pretentious productions sent out of New York by well known theatrical firms and played in the best theaters throughout the country that do not owe one whit from these "female minstrel shows" in their object. They are better staged, they are given by companies composed of people of more or less real ability, but their principal appeal is by indelicacy to animalism. The indelicacy is more cleverly managed, the appeals to animalism are less frank and more "suggestive," but, spite of the differences here indicated, these shows are really degrading to the stage, and just as reprehensible as their cheaper competitors.

**McKINLEY AND THE MACHINES.** From the Washington Post. President McKinley has recognized "the state machines" so far as to give the Republican senators and representatives a generally controlling voice in the distribution of patronage. In states having no Republican delegations in congress he has put in large numbers of appointments by recommendations of the local leaders of the party. The supposition that this policy has weakened his party is composed of people of more or less real ability, but their principal appeal is by indelicacy to animalism. The indelicacy is more cleverly managed, the appeals to animalism are less frank and more "suggestive," but, spite of the differences here indicated, these shows are really degrading to the stage, and just as reprehensible as their cheaper competitors.

**ONE BOOM PROBABLY LAID.** From the Philadelphia Press. There are a good many who do not believe in the election but they do not put some of the gubernatorial candidates out of the race, including Congressman Stone, of Allegheny.

**Plea for Better Law Enforcement** Editor of The Tribune: Sir: Now that the election is past, the smoke of conflict cleared away, and things have assumed normal conditions, I will not be suspected of a purpose to influence the election, if I avail myself of the privilege of saying a few words through the columns of your wide-awake paper. I would hesitate to write a word of criticism just at this time, were it not that the Tribune very generously opened the way a few weeks ago in its reference to a certain respectable class of law-breakers, to wit, some physicians and clergymen who had failed to make reports to the board of health, deaths and marriages, as required by law. The Tribune stated that for such violations of the law, these offending physicians and clergymen could be compelled to pay a considerable amount in fines. There is no doubt that they could be punished, and if after knowing what the law really does require of them, they willfully violate it they should be punished.

But somehow the physicians and ministers are not the only respectable law-breakers in the city. There are others. How about that class of business men, and the only class, too, who can boast of holding a certificate of good moral character, endorsed by twelve men, without which certificate our court would not be likely to permit them to engage in the business at all? Do they obey the law? Do they sell intoxicating beverages to habitual drunkards, and even to little children not ten years of age? Who but a constable making his report to the court is so exceedingly veridical as to suggest that they do not? Then what about the furnishing of liquor on election day during the hours when the polls are open? On election

day in the afternoon I took a stroll about town, visiting the vicinity of a number of the voting places. Either the liquor drunk the day previous held out better than it used to be, or there were immense quantities being drunk during the hours when to sell or give it was prohibited by law. I counted more than thirty men go in at the rear or side door of one saloon, on Main avenue, before any one came out. The front door was closed, of course. Election days and Sundays are the best days for business that many saloons and so-called hotels enjoy.

When complaint is made about the manner in which the average liquor seller violates the law, we are told to enforce the law, and we are told to want to say that under prevailing conditions the law cannot be enforced against this very respectable class of law-breakers. Because first, there were themselves in order to defend the liquor seller; second, the evidence required to convict is more than is required in any other case; third, usually on the jury will be chosen one person who is prejudiced against the lawbreaker and he will do his utmost to secure an acquittal; fourth, the malignity with which the costs of prosecution have been placed upon the friends of law and order, who have undertaken to prosecute such offenders, has cured many of us of any desire to place ourselves where we are sure to be punished for attempting to enforce the law. This is the condition as it appears to us. The physician or the clergyman who fails to make returns to the board of health, is a criminal. The man who spits on the floor of a street car is a brute. The wheelman who accidentally runs down a pedestrian in the street is a fiend, and the much-abused person who sells intoxicants to children and imbeciles, in any quantity desired, and who sells contrary to law, on Sundays or on election days, is a gentleman who may hope soon to be trusted to fill the office of mayor and to trust, by the suffrages of the people.

Now, the time has come when, in the interests of the community, the commonwealth, a change must take place. This base-faced, wanton, and anarchistic violation of law is a menace to the stability of our government. What should be done? Why, simply this. Give the law, and the friends of the law, a fair trial. Let the legislature enact a statute with suitable penalties, compelling constables and the police to arrest any person found intoxicated on Sunday or election day, and providing that the said intoxicated person be compelled under the law to testify where the intoxicants were obtained. If there be a refusal to give this information, such refusal to be punished by fine, or imprisonment, or both. It is time to take hold of this matter in a business-like way. It will work no harm to the respectable liquor seller who keeps within the bounds of law, and it will do much to remove one of the most noxious and dangerous evils which threaten the stability of the state.

If this government is to stand, its laws must be respected and obeyed. The notorious and constant violation of law by keepers of speak-easies, saloons, and so-called hotels, who cannot be punished with conditions as they now exist, is breeding contempt for a law which arrests a police officer, imbecile and stupid, and a fine of five dollars or some similar amount which a magistrate may impose upon him as a fine for being drunk and disorderly, when we all know that a more guilty party, who will not be arrested, violated the law in selling to an intoxicated person. Let us have done with a privilege to class lawbreakers, and remember that the law was made for the protection of the law-abiding, and for the restraint of the law-breaking citizen. If present laws are not adequate, let them be amended or new ones enacted which can be enforced. Your or civilization and a good government. F. P. Doty. Scranton, Pa., Nov. 11.

**STAGE INDICENCY.** Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. The respectable people of Reading, Pennsylvania, deserve the very greatest credit for the manner in which they have forced the local authorities to vigorously suppress an indecent theatrical show that recently afflicted that town. They should receive the hearty thanks of every true friend of the stage for their action.

The company driven out of Reading was one of those that used to be called "female minstrel troupes" and are now generally known as "burlesque and vaudeville combinations." These organizations may generally, though not always, be thus justly described. They are composed of three or three-and-a-half dozen men who figure as "comedians," and a dozen or more unfortunate women whose sole qualification for their work lies in their lack of cover, the most rudimentary womanly modesty. Their performances are composed almost solely of appeals, as direct as the performers themselves, to the basest passions of their audiences, by means of words and actions so frankly filthy that "twere grosser" to repeat them in the "suggestive" language of the "comedians."

They flood the bill-boards and the shop-windows of the city with indecent and vulgar pictures, so liberally distributed and conspicuously placed that no one can help seeing them. They bring discredit upon the whole stage, they afford occasion and seeming justification to some charges constantly brought against the theater by well-meaning persons who know very little about the theater; they help to perpetuate the old, foolish prejudice against all actors, and they do more or less harm, in one way and another, to pretty nearly everybody who sees the posters and attends the performances. There is law enough pretty nearly everywhere in this county to make the existence of these things a nuisance, but the most plain duty of the authorities to enforce these laws.

And these frankly nasty shows, given as a rule in the cheaper theaters, are not the only ones that should receive the attention of the police authorities. There are some very pretentious productions sent out of New York by well known theatrical firms and played in the best theaters throughout the country that do not owe one whit from these "female minstrel shows" in their object. They are better staged, they are given by companies composed of people of more or less real ability, but their principal appeal is by indelicacy to animalism. The indelicacy is more cleverly managed, the appeals to animalism are less frank and more "suggestive," but, spite of the differences here indicated, these shows are really degrading to the stage, and just as reprehensible as their cheaper competitors.

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