The Scranton Tribune

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TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, MARCH 2, 1898.

Undoubtedly the happiest spectators of the pending effort to ascertain the legal status of the Scranton board of control are those candidates for school directorship honors who had the foresight to reserve a place under both umbrellas.

Senator Quay In Motion.

Senator Quay Is without doubt the ablest politician in the country; a man of wonderful qualities, whose equal after he shall have retired may not appear for a generation. The idea which prevails in some quarters that he is nothing more than a schemer is of course, wide of the truth, Those who have had opportunity to study him know that there are few men in public the who have his natural equipment for constructive statesmanship or who, if called to some position making extraordinary demand upon them for grompt and efficient executive workus, for example, the secretaryship of war at the beginning of a great military campaign-could acquit themsolves as brilliantly as he could

On a buttle-field, too, it is believed that he would easily take rank among the greatest living commanders. His resource in strategy, in accurate estimating of men, in the ability to forroulate a plan of action without disrevery of its details to the enemy and In the facility with which he rises to emergencies and comes luckily out of surprises, is well-nigh inexhaustible Added to all this is a neculiar personai fascination which wins men to him and holds them sometimes even against their better judgment. Not at all a magnetic man in the conventional sense of the word, he nevertheless is clothed with a hypnotic power which few who have been brought into personal centact with him have failed to realize. Beyond all this and perhaps accounting for a good deal of his success in life is the fact of his loyalty to friends and his generosity. He is necessarily cruet as a politican, and the field of his operations is often bloodstained; but the man himself, in his personal relations, is singularly goodnatured and humane. Had politics never compelled him to carry the torch and gun, Matthew Stanley Quay very probably would have risen to renown as a philanthropist.

His besetting sin-and we propose to be as frank in criticism as in praiseis laziness. He is prone to procrastinate. His self-confidence is not egotistical, it is rather philosophic, but it often gets him into trouble which a little prompt activity on his part, put forth at the right time, would have averted. It was so in the Delamater episode. It looked for a time as if it might prove true also in the peculiar and ominous situation now prevalent in Pennsylvania politics. Fortunately the report comes that he is moving; that he has begun to get a knowledge of the situation by personal inquiry and investigation, and not through the percolated advices of none too trust worthy lieutenants, who, it is strongly suspected, have been somewhat addicted to the narration of fairy tales. All of which is important if true, and of its truth we are convinced.

No man has suffered more from newspaper criticism and caricature than David B. Hill, yet he openly opposes the Elisworth bill, saying that an honest public man need not be afraid of the criticism or witticisms of the press, and he is right.

Crime a Costly Luxury

The fact which stands out most prominently in the statement of the year ended Jan. 3, 1898, is that commenwealth costs, court expenses and prison expenses aggregate nearly \$92,-000, or about \$1 apiece for every voter in the county. We suspect that an analysis of these costs would show that two-thirds of them are the result of crimes. That is to say, every voter in the county is put to an expense averaging \$2 a year by reason of the scant obedience shown to the laws of the commonwealth in this vicinity. Putting the average at \$2 understates the case, for there are criminal costs that never go on record and these are perhaps equal to the recorded costs. It also is to be noted that perhaps onehalf of the voters of this county are not payers of taxes on property. Subtracting these and estimating the unofficial costs as equal to the official, we have an annual average per capita criminal cost of \$8 which has to be carried by the owners of taxable property. If there were included in this estimate the sums paid in the different cities and horoughs for police protection the figures doubtless would be doubled.

It would be an interesting study, if one had the time, to tabulate the figures from the commissioners' statements since the crection of the county and to note in what ratio the court costs have grown as compared with the growth in population. Such a tabulation would give a tolerably fair answer to the question, Are the morals of the inhabitants of the anthracite coal region improving? Another interesting study might be made by comparing the trend of court costs in Lackawanna with the court costs in purely agricultural counties where the racial complexities incidental to immigration are unknown. President Judge Stewart of Franklin county once told us that the year's criminal business in that county could usually be disposed of in from one to two weeks, there being only riage, neither would he protest against. History has no finer instances of head-

times Franklin's population but also with three courts, would consider herself fortunate to get through the year's riminal dockets in twelve weeks, There is now ample business for a

Put this is somewhat aside from our purpose. It would seem that comprehension of the foregoing figures would move field. Those papers go to press at the uplifting influences of the community to renewed activity in the deelepment of a better citizenship, and also create a demand for the better enforcement of law all along the line. If the single item of speak casies were acorded the attention it demands it is not unreasonable to suppose that our tremendous and multiplying court costs would sensibly lighten.

The Cuban junta, it is said, has instructed General Gemez to hold himself n readiness to co-operate with the American navy in reducing Havana. The junta should not be too eager.

How to Get at Pension Frauds.

In the North American Review this month there is an article upon the continually recurring pension question which is very liable to stir up a hornets' nest. It is by Dr. John H. Girdner, for many years a pension examiner. His way to purge the pension list is as follows:

"Let congress pass a law requiring a

e-examination of every pensioner, or applicant for pension, who bases his laim on physical disability contracted white discharging his duty as a Union oldier. A board of medical examiners should be established in each statetwo or more boards might be required in some states to facilitate matters. Each beard should be composed of two members, one a surgeon and the other a physician. They should be selected solely for their eminent and acknowledged professional ability, and their honesty and standing in the state. They should give all their time to this vork, and be paid a salary of twenty thousand dollars each per year. They should carefully examine every penioner in their respective states, and eport to the government exactly the physical condition of each, and how much, if any, disability in any case was the result of service in the war of seession. They would be influenced by othing except the physical facts presented, and always give the applicant the benefit of any doubt. Such a revancination would require about one year to complete it, and would cost the everament from two to three millions of dollars. Twenty thousand dollars a year for

uch work is putting it a little strongly. A better suggestion would be to divide Dr. Girdner's suggestion by four, But here is the formets' nest: "No nan can predict certainly what the result of this re-examination would be. My experience for twenty years in the practice of my profession has made me amiliar with the physical condition of number of pensioners, and basing my pinion on my own experience I believe t least one-third of those claiming to ave been permanently disabled while n the discharge of duty will be found to be frauds, and would be dropped from the pension roll," What Dr. Girdner believes is, of course, his own affair; but he will find it difficult to get the public in this instance to believe with him. There is a suspicion widely prevalent that publication of the pen sion rolls would lead to the detection of many cases of misrepresentation and to a considerable saving to the government without injury to the honest penioner; but this suspicion has never gone so far as Dr. Girdner's has. His upposition impresses us as incredible. One thing remains to be said on this ubject. The citizen who has knowldge of pensions being fraudulently drawn is in duty bound to communiate his knowledge to the pension department, and thus open the way to an nvestigation. Failure to do this where mowledge of fraud is specific makes the citizen particeps criminis.

In connection with Superintendent Howell's wise plan to have instruction given in the public schools concerning Cuba it might be well to place special emphasis upon the history of the varous attempts which have been made by the Cuban people to liberate their persecuted island. The history of Cuba is one of the most interesting, dramatic and pathetic pages in the book of modern history and it is far too little understood in this country. Our sympathy for the Cuban aspiracounty commissioners for the fiscal tion for freedom is general when it should be definite and based on accurate information. With every necessary allowance made for differences in standards, social, commercial and political, between the Latin-American and the Anglo-Saxon races, the fact shows up clear to the careful student of Cuban annals that no cause in history is nore thoroughly grounded in justice and more worthy of approval and support than the cause of those ill-fed and desperate patriots who, under an enervating tropical sun and in the face of great discouragement and desolation, are fighting against tremendous odds. but fighting successfully, for Cuba Libre.

> It is to be hoped that the house judilary committee at Washington, will listen attentively to the presentation this morning by representatives of the Lackawanna bench and bar of argunents for the creation in Pennsylvania of a new federal judicial district. The arguments with which our people are armed are unanswerable.

If the aim in holding back the court of inquiry's report is to wait until the American people have lost their resentment at the destruction of the Maine, the hold-back will have to continue until perdition freezes.

The New Brunswick preacher who denounced the women of his congregation who confessed themselves exhausted because of playing cards until 2 o'clock in the morning, had certainly grounds for complaint, but his argument that according to Anthony Comstock's statistics, six people had committed suicide in one year on account of losses at cards will scarcely have the Cuban struggle that most Ameri-much weight. More than that number cans deem war next to impossible on the

one court. Luckawanna, with three religious enthusiasm because many people annually kill themselves as a result of going mad over religion.

> It seems evident as the days go by that the yellow press of the country is steadily and surely bringing itself into general disrepute by the manner in which it is manufacturing and publishing sensational despatches concerning the present difficulties with Spain. The majority of readers whose nerves have been kept at an awful tension during the past few days are becoming disgusted to find that much of their anxiety has been caused by fake stories originating in the heated craniums of New York space writers, and they are turning to home papers or to the few reliable metropolitan journals for news. This fake business when confined to the discovery of scamonsters, midwinter snakes, and encounters with bears and ghosts, can be endured, but when such wholesale lying is brought to bear upon matters of vital interest to the nation, even the indulgent and long-suffering public is liable to become weary.

Representative Mahaney, of Buffalo, won the admiration of the patriotic everywhere the other day when in firey terms he called attention to the members of the New York "400," who made attempts to lionize the officers of the Spanish warship Viscaya while the sailors of the Maine were being borne to their graves. Mr. Mahaney's rebuke was timely and no doubt was merited, but the doings of that unthoughtful band of goslings known as New York's "400" are scarcely of enough consequence to claim the attention of a congressman.

A resident of Upper Lehigh writes to the Philadelphia Press a timely letter protesting against the jeopardizing of our costly warships and the lives of their gallant crews by the use on them of bituminous coal, with its large liability to spontaneous combustion. The point is well taken. All naval vessels should burn anthracite.

Bishop Newman is quoted in a published interview as having said that we are now passing through the most unsettled condition of the whole world since the crucifixion of Christ," and it is added that he predicted a general smash-up. We don't believe that he said a word of it.

In silence Senator Billy Mason is decidedly more cloquent than in speech.

Some Paragraphs of Casual Comment

X-SHERIFF CLEMONS appears to be one of the happiest men in the city those days and has no hest-tancy in expressing his preference for life as a property of the control of eity these days and has no near tancy in expressing his preference for life as a private citizen. Shertiff Clemons upon retiring from the office left a clean record behind him which proves that, in that position, as in other departments of public service, he is a man who can be trusted.

I see that Mr. S. M. Nash, the well-knewn hotel keeper, will again deal in real estate this spring as a side issue, still retaining the management of that excellent family hotel, "The Nash," Landlord Nash is one of the most experienced real estate dealers in Secretary Landlord Nash is one of the most ex-perienced real estate dealers in scranton, and has a knowledge of the values of property hereabouts that will doubtless prove of much benefit to parties who entrust their business to his keeping.

Attorney Charles A. Van Wormer, for-merly of this city, but now of Montrose, has announced himself as a candidate for the state legislature to represent Susquehanna county in the Twenty-sixth district. Mr. Van Warmer is one of the ablest of the young lawyers of Susque-banna county and is amply qualified to represent the district in the house of representatives. He has shown a disposkien to tackle the capitol commission question a trifle early in the fight, but unless this proves to be loaded, he will doubtless have little difficulty in securing the nomination, which is equivalent to an election on the Republican ticket in Susquehanna.

One does not always have to look towards New York for the real thing in yellow journalism. The Williamsport Sun the other day produced a "scare head" article treating of a rumor to the effect that an attempt had been made to assassinate Minister Woodford. The sleepless daily of Lycoming does not print any colored supplements or per-fumed editions, but it does not propose that the metropolitan fournals shall have the nenopoly on har raising "scoopa."

Sam R. Smith, of Wilkes-Barre, 5 sam R. Smith, of Wilkes-Garre, a again at the front as an author and publisher. His latest product in is en-titled "Daniel North of Wyoming Val-ley." Some time ago Mr. Smita endeavgred to stimulate the literary people of the Lackawanna and Wyoming valleys to greater efforts by the publication of a magazine to which all were invited to contribute. The publication was intended as a haven for the efforts that had been returned from the New York pub-lishing houses marked "unavailable." Mr. Smith desired to give the writers an opportunity to demonstrate that the publishers had erred in rejecting the efforts of the aspirants for fame in this section. The magazine bad a very promis-ing birth but time demonstrated that the big publishing bouses and magazine edithad not made many mistakes and enterprise did not receive the sup-that Mr. Smith had expected. As Mr. Smith is a man of genius his last publication will no doubt be a financial success.

A dog at Hartford, Ohio, is in a fair way to give a scientific demonstration of the force of explosive elements, and in of the force of explosive elements, and in consequence of his supposed ability in this line is given a wide berth by the nervous clitzens of Hartford. The pe-culiar position in which the animal is placed is due to his abnormal appetite. A day or two ago the dog ate six sticks of dynamite that had been left in his pathway by some parties who were blasting rocks. For a time the dog had his own way about the quarry, no one daring to venture near him. At last one of the party plucked up converse and ing to venture near him. At last one of the party plucked up courage and attacking a rone to the canine's neck tied him to a tree. Developments are now being awaited by the residents in the vicinity of the captive cur, who expect that a vigorous bark or sudden movement of his tail may at any time cause the dog and a large part of the circum-adjacent territory to disappear from the face of the earth.

THE DANGER POINT.

From the Philade phia Press. The Spanish ministry and public are scarcely considered by Americans in discussing the chances of collision between the United States and Spain, but the present Spanish situation is the most serious and perilous element in all the var-ious factors which make for peace or war. Spain is so nearly bankrupt and her resources have been so exhausted by the Cuban struggle that most Ameri-

long courage than occur in Spanish annals. The idea that Spaniards will not fight is nonsense, but in the century since Wellington recorded the brutal judgment that his dispositions must be made exactly as if he had no Spanish troops, because in action they were worse than worthless, there has been no reason to revise this opinion. Spanish arms have had no success in a century and Spain in that time has been contury and Spain in that time has been century and Spain in that time has been twice invaded without appreciable resist-ence from the Spanish army.

While impotent in organzed warfare While impotent in organized warfare, Spaniards possess both pride and individual courage. Failure in Cuba has been an intolerable national disgrace. The monarchy is in grave danger. No Spanish public man can permit himself to be associated with the surrender or loss of Cuba. It is doubtful if the throne would stand the shock of such an event. A short war with the United States could not injure Spanish credit, because it is gone. An American invasion of Spais gone, An American invasion of Spair is deemed out of the question. Spain has no mercantile marine. Many Spaniards, from those near the throne down, undoubtedly feel that the dynasty would be safer and the position of the nation improved before Europe if Cuba were lost at the end of the marine the safe of the s proved before Europe if Cuba were lost at the end of a war with a power five times the size of Spain than if the is-land wrenched itself free and left Spain impotent, exhausted and discredited.

The practical result of this is that it the Maine disaster ends in a diplomatic demand for indemnity Spain is in a sit-uation and Spanish public opinion in a posture which may make it practically impossible for a Spanish Ministry to do anything but refuse and court war as the best way to reach defeat without disgrace. Granted that the Maine was blown up by negligence on the part of the local authorities, an adjustment would befareasjer with any one of the six great European powers than with Spain. Th big country could pay the bill and be done with it. Spanish pride and preju-dice are of exactly such a type and tem-per as to make frank reparation danger per as to make frank reparation danger-ous for any ministry, and perhaps im-possible. If our government, therefore, is forced to ask some reparation, the con-sequences may be most serious, not be-cause our claim was not just, but be-cause a powerful party in Spain has long urged war with us as the best way out of a had business.

THE COST OF KLONDIKE GOLD.

From the Philadelphia Press.

From the Philadelphia Press,

Unless all signs are misleading or there should be a sudden change in the aspect of national affairs the country is likely to witness this year an exodus to the gold fields of Alaska such as has not been seen in the United States since the rush to California in 1849. Some estimates place the number of people who are preparing to go to the Klondike as soon as the weather permits as high as 25,000. This is probably an exaggeration, but that great numbers will go there is no reason to doubt. According to shrewd managers to doubt. According to shrewd managers of transportation lines and those who expect to make money by fitting out mining parties there will not be less than 100,000 men who will seek their fortune in Alasko this summer, and this number may be doubled.

Will it pay these men to travel thousands of miles to hunt gold in a frozen region? A very simple calculation will show whether it will or not. Probably only a snail number of those going have sat down and made a dispassionate estimate as to what it will cost to get to the mate as to what it will cost to get to the Klondike and be ready to begin work. Most of them will go in a haphazard way trusting to luck to bring them out all right. These, however, who have pru-dence and foresight will count the cost before starting and listen to the experi-ence of those who have been there before them. And if those who have not looked at the journey other than as an adven-turous summer trip can be brought to face the facts and the situation as it is by a piain statement in figures much fruitless effort and suffering and loss of life may be avoided.

Beginning at San Francisco the dis-Yukon river is 4.650 mtles. If the over-land route from Juneau is preferred the stance from San Francisco to Daws City is about 2.200 miles. Taking the lat-ter route as the shortest, a computation can be made as to the cost of getting to the mines and sustaining oneself for scason. An old and experienced miner who has prospected in Alaska gives the San Francisco Call the following figures us to the necessary outfit and its cost:

Clothing
Tools and camp outfit
Medicines Weapons 20 00

The fare from San Francisco to Dyca is \$48 first class and \$29 second class, and about \$15 in addition must be paid for freight on the outilt, which will weigh about 1,500 pounds. Then comes the overland travel which is expensive. The entire cost of a journey from San Francisco to Dawson City including this outlit cannot be placed at less than \$49. Of course many will not prepare themselves in so complete a way. They will omit the provisions, a good share of the clothing and camp outilt and all the medicines. they will expect to obtain these after they get to Dawson City, but they will have to pay more for them. The cost then of a miner going to the Klondike, obtaining his outfit and sustaining him-self during the brief mining season can scarcely be less than \$400. And if 100,00 men go the total outlay will be \$40,000,000 Large as this sum is it is more likely to be increased than lessened.

What return will there be for this large outlay? The largest yield of gold in Call-fornia was in 1853, the sixth year after its discovery, when \$65,000,000 was mined In 1849, the second year after the discov-ery, \$25,000,000 was taken out, and 50,000 people had gone there then, and the conditons of mining were vastly more tayor-able. Mining could be carried on through all the year, while in the Klondike three or four months is the limit. The utmos amount of gold the Klondike mines can be expected to produce in 1888 will not be beyond \$29,000,000. But if it costs \$40,000,-000 to obtain this where is the gain? If half or three-quarters of the 100,000 men who think of going to the Kloudike wil consider these facts and stay at home the country will be better off. There is undoubtedly gold there, but if it costs \$2 for every \$1 mined the hunt for it will make the country poorer instead of richer, to say nothing of the suffering, privation and loss of life which will have to be added.

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