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When space will permit, The Tribune
is always glad to print short letters from
its readers on current topics, but its rule
is that these must be signed, for publication, by the writer's real name.

TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, NOVEMBER 17, 1899.
What is this from the Scranton
Times? Aguinaldo's army in flight, the
grand concatenation of Filipino patri-
ots melting like snow, the back bone
of the opposition to America's dis-
graceful conquest broken, the Malay
George Washington likely to skip the
country and leave the noble cause of
Filipino freedom in the lurch, figure-
head though he be? And all this "a
turn the American people will be glad
to see?" Do we dream, or has the
Scranton Times so soon deserted its
former ally now that he is down? For
shame, brother Times!

Ballot Reform.

PROGRAMME of ballot re-
form has been formulated
by the Philadelphia Times
which certainly seems
to cover the ground. It comprises these
features:
First—An honest registration law re-
quiring every citizen to appear in person
to register and establish his qualifications
as an elector, including evidence of
personal payment of the necessary taxes.
Second—The payment of an advance
sum to qualify a citizen as an elector
should be required to be paid in person,
or by some specially authorized repre-
sentative who may be required to answer
under oath, that he is paying the taxes
of an otherwise qualified elector with
money furnished by the elector himself.
Third—That ten reputable electors of
a precinct, upon process, sworn petition
to the court stating that there is need of
independent watchers for said precinct,
it shall be the duty of the court to ap-
point such watchers, and their appoint-
ments made by regular political or-
ganizations.
Fourth—That the official ballot shall
contain but a single column with the
name of each candidate given under the
head of the particular office, with their
political designations following the name,
thus requiring the elector to mark his
choice distinctly for each office.
Fifth—That upon the sworn petition
of ten reputable electors of any precinct
alleging that the vote returned is fraud-
ulently obtained, it shall be the duty of
the court, when sitting to compute the returns,
to open the ballot box and make exhaustive
examination into the charges of fraud.

A good bit of the present outcry in
Pennsylvania for ballot reform seems
to be on a par with the pickpocket's
cry of "stop thief." This is peculiarly
the case with the ringsters just now
prominent about the Wanamaker com-
missioner. Their indignation at al-
leged discoveries of political crooked-
ness in wicked old man Quay's camp
would be more convincing if it did not
so strongly suggest the fable of the
pot calling the kettle black.

But be that as it may, there can be
no question of the need of substantial
amendments to the Pennsylvania elec-
tion laws, and the five suggestions of
our Philadelphia contemporary impress
us as going directly to the heart of the
matter. The man too lazy to register
should not vote. The man who does
not pay his own taxes should not vote.
These are self-evident propositions;
and it is almost as self-evident that
the amplest security against frauds
both in the polling of the vote and in
the counting is to be had along the line
of judicial rather than partisan action.

Finally, the need of a simplified ballot,
necessitating of the voter careful ac-
curacy of each name is recognized almost
unanimously among the people. A
sixth reform could advantageously be
added in the nature of a law providing
that the "help" at a booth must be a
sworn officer of the court, required to
return to court a record of the name
and number of each assisted voter, for
use in case the court is called upon to
order an investigation.

The Pittsburgh Times is correct in
arguing that voting machines would
not make dishonest officers honest.
Reform which does not reach the
individual is of little account.

For a Parcels Post.

IN THE ANNUAL report of the
third assistant postmaster gen-
eral, just submitted, occurs a
very timely reference to the
feasibility of doing away with the
fourth class postage rate of a cent an
ounce on small parcels of merchandise,
increasing the limit of weight to, say,
six pounds, and carrying this parcel
trade at the present third-class rate of
8 cents a pound—in other words, the
parcels post.

At it is now, only 9,171 tons of fourth
class mail matter is carried a year,
bringing in about \$3,000,000. To reduce
the rate would, of course, reduce the
income provided the volume of busi-
ness carried did not increase. On this
point the report says:
"It will be noted that about one-
third of the postage is collected on
third-class matter and only about one-
thirtieth or fourth-class matter. If
the latter were mailed at the third-
class rate the loss of revenue would be
4.3 per cent. of the total collected."

"Referring to the weight of fourth-
class matter handled during the year,
we see that it only amounts to 9,171
tons. Were this weight doubled, as
may easily be assumed would be the
case if the rate be reduced, it would
be the case if the rate be reduced, it
would scarcely make an appreciable
difference in the cost of transportation
and handling, while the increase in
amount mailed would make good the
deficit in postage.

"That the reduction in rate of post-
age would increase the amount of such
matter mailed; that the apparent de-
ficit in revenue would be more than
extinguished; that the measure would
meet with public approval, and that
existing difficulties in classification
would be obviated, to the great satisfac-
tion of the patrons of the mails, as
well as the relief of postal officials, can
scarcely be questioned."

"The third assistant postmaster gen-

eral goes further in his advocacy of
this much needed improvement. "We
now transport," says he, "a pound of
merchandise from San Francisco to
Germany for 12 cents, but the same
package mailed for delivery in the
United States will require 16 cents
postage. Again, samples of merchan-
dise may be sent in Postal Union
mails at the rate of two ounces for 1
cent, but when sent in the domestic
mails 1 cent per ounce (double the for-
eign rate) is required. I recommend
the consolidation of the third and
fourth classes of mail matter as serv-
ing the public interest and conven-
ience greatly in the direction of fac-
ilitating the work of the department.
It has been suggested that the limit of
weight of mail matter (four pounds)
might be increased to, say, six pounds.
The argument is found also in the par-
cels post arrangements. In many cases
packages weighing as high as eleven
pounds may be sent by parcels post.
A reduction of the rate on fourth-class
matter by a consolidation of the third
and fourth classes, accompanied by an
increased limit of weight, would be a
great benefit to the public, but the pro-
position is open to the criticism that
the department would be going too ex-
tensively into the freight carrying
business."

This criticism would not come from
the bulk of the people, but from the
interested few.

Secretary Gage's offer to purchase
government bonds in order to put
into circulation, for the purpose
of relieving a temporary stringency,
money now lying idle in the United
States treasury constitutes an excel-
lent object lesson teaching the need of
currency reform. The currency of the
United States ought to be sufficiently
elastic to adapt itself without artificial
aids to such periods of stringency; in
other words, it should automatically
expand and contract in accordance
with the fluctuating needs of business.
It is a bad sign when the secretary of
the treasury has to sit in paternal
guardianship over the monetary cir-
culation of the country, as a kind of dry
nurse, alternately feeding it paregoric
and pap.

Chinese in the Philippines.

THE QUESTION of the perma-
nent attitude of the United
States government toward
Chinese immigration into the
Philippines is one which is entitled to
receive the most careful consideration.
Rumor asserts that upon the propo-
sition of excluding the Chinese the Phi-
lippine commission is divided, three fa-
voring that course and two, including
Admiral Dewey, opposing it as both
unjust and inexpedient. If there be
this division of opinion among the ex-
perts it might be well to pursue a li-
beral course until experience shall have
cleared the pathway of all doubt. At
all events, the light in which the Chi-
nese minister at Washington presents
the arguments against exclusion is
worthy of attention. Says he:

"The Chinese entered the Philippine
Islands by invitation. There are now
upward of 100,000 Chinamen engaged in
industrious production among the Phi-
lippines. Many of these Chinamen have
intermarried with the native women,
and there are a large number of their
children, known as 'mestizos,' who are
living witnesses that there is no abso-
lute racial prejudice between the Chi-
nese and the native Filipinos. I am
reliably informed that Aguinaldo, him-
self, has Chinese blood in him. These
Chinese have lived peaceably with the
people, and under the Spanish rule
they frequently attained to offices of
considerable importance in the govern-
ment. I am prepared to admit some-
what of rightful expediency if not jus-
tice in the American exclusion laws.
In this country the wages paid were
extraordinarily higher than Chinamen
had ever before earned. Therefore the
measure of protection against the Chi-
nese was natural. In the Philippines
this is not the case, because as a gen-
eral thing it is the Chinaman and not
the native laborer or artisan who com-
mands the highest compensation. The
Chinese have done much to raise the
general level of civilization in that
archipelago."

It may well be asked how we could
hope to share largely in the coming
trade of China if we should go for it in
the face of having excluded the Chi-
nese from the ports of the Philippines.
Let it be sincerely hoped that our gov-
ernment will not make a mistake in a
matter of such obvious delicacy and
importance.

The inflexibility of the eight-hour
law is illustrated in the complaints
made at the recent postmasters' con-
vention in Washington. Under the
law no letter carrier dare be employed
on any day more than eight hours,
overtime being forbidden. Some days
when the mail is light, the carriers'
work can be done in six or even five
hours. Other days, when the mail is
heavy, it cannot be done in eight
hours, and carriers have to stop work
on routes with delivery uncompleted.
The postmasters want congress to
amend the law so as to make fifty-
eight hours a week's work, with the
permission to work the carriers nine
hours in emergencies, on condition that
all overtime shall be made good. On
its face this seems a reasonable re-
quest, and we believe that reasonable
men would be willing to grant it.

The Washington correspondent of the
Chicago Record, Mr. W. E. Curtis, an-
nounces that Senator Hanna will, on
account of ill health, decline a re-elec-
tion as national chairman, and says
that Senator Penrose is prominently
mentioned as his successor. Mr. Curtis
must delight to worry Hon. John
Wanamaker.

In announcing the permanent or-
ganization of the anti-Quay forces in
Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Record
says it is contemplated to have each
insurgent leader sign a pledge not to
succumb to temptations from the
enemy. The Record is unkind.

Right upon the heels of Edward At-
kinson's pause for breath, Mr. Hayes,
of the Knights of Labor, appears on
the stage at Boston and points out
the dangers that would attend a rush
of ten million unskilled Malay laborers
to this country. It really looks as
though nervous citizens of the Hub

would never be allowed an opportunity
to recover from continuous attacks of
heart palpitation.

The expectation seems to prevail at
Washington that the coming session of
congress will close without having
witnessed any progress toward a
trans-isthmian canal. People and con-
gress both regard such a canal as a
great and growing necessity, but still
the belief is that the subject will drag
along inconclusively as of yore. Some-
body needs a shaking up.

The Philadelphia Inquirer professes
curiosity as to whether the announced
purpose of the new independent rail-
way from Scranton to New York to
reduce coal tolls will be carried out in
good faith. If the individual coal op-
erators are satisfied on this point we
fall to see the motive behind the In-
quirer's anxiety.

Reports are current that Secretary
Long will retire. If he believes what
he has written touching Rear Admiral
Schley's unfitness for a flag command
the retirement of one or the other of
these men would seem to be impera-
tive.

Should Senator-elect Hayward of Ne-
braska, who is said to be ill beyond
recovery, die, the appointment of his
successor would devolve upon the gov-
ernor of Nebraska, who is a Populist.
That would be Colonel Bryan's oppor-
tunity.

In addition to the generous terms
offered Aguinaldo by the government
to come out of the woods and surren-
der, the rebel chief can probably secure
a position on one of the New York
locomotive engines.

The picking of the Molinoux jury
has proved a tedious affair. The un-
expected exhibition of intelligence
given by men selected as talebears has
staggered the attorneys connected
with the case.

It is feared that General Buller may
have difficulty in slaughtering Boers
rapidly enough to preserve the reputa-
tion that has been given him by the
newspaper correspondents.

The third assistant postmaster gen-
eral is correct in his assertion that one
cent postage is quite enough for drop
letters.

Hobson threatens to break the seal
of oblivion by saving the Charleston.

POLITICAL DISHONESTY.

Editor of The Tribune—

Sir: In your issue of today you quote
from a Philadelphia paper some com-
ments on the Langstaff-Kelly election
contest, and then make some comment
of your own on the subject. You
write, and so far as I have seen all
other journals have missed, one side of
this subject. I refer to the utter fail-
ure to punish or attempt to punish
illegal voters and dishonest election
officers. Some of our journals are call-
ing for a new reform, and others
are demanding new constitutional pro-
visions so that our elections will seem
like a game of cards or a horse-
race in the integrity of the results
reached. But in fact the greatest of
our difficulty in relation to the fran-
chise is not the want of a strong, healthy
moral tone in the community. Men
who claim to be honorable will do
political matters what would cost a
man his life in the lowest gambling
den in the country. That is, men who
are engaged in politics pay less atten-
tion to the laws of honor than gamblers.
And no great credit attaches to
these things in the public mind.
Sodom and Gomorrah did not do much
worse, only it was not in politics that
their shortcomings appeared, and their
reputations have suffered in conse-
quence.

The men years ago who tried to legi-
slate their fellow-citizens into heaven
by their statutes and acts of parlia-
ment on religious matters were just as
wise as the men who now believe that
new constitutional provisions and new
statutes will take the place of common
honesty in the citizen community.
What statute or constitutional provision
will prevent men from stuffing the ball-
ot-box before the election begins, as was
done in Philadelphia at the last elec-
tion, unless we have honest election
officers who will prevent such frauds?

The only way to secure honest elections
is one that will provide us with honest
men to do the voting, and honest elec-
tion officers to do the counting. At
present there seems to be a mournful
silence in both departments. Josh
Billings sneezed some time ago that
he was afraid the time might come
when there would not be honesty enough
in the world to do the business with.
That is the trouble at present with our
politics. And yet we are insisting on
our right to bless the Cubans and the Phi-
lippines with just such institutions as
these.

But the feature I intended to call
your attention to is directly connected
with election contests to which you re-
ferred in your editorial, Lackawanna
county is famous for its election con-
tests, and has been so from infancy.
What we have spent on election con-
tests, taken together with the expense
of the one we now have on the stocks,
would pay off our county debt. And in
every one of these contests there have
been a large number of votes thrown
away on both sides. Some of these, it
is true, were rejected on purely technical
grounds. In such cases both the voter
and the election officer may have been
innocent of fraud. The voter may have
believed that he had a legal right to
vote and the officer may have honestly
believed that the vote should be re-
ceived. But election contests could be
thrived alone on such materials. In all
these contests there have been many
votes thrown out by the court when
both the voter and the election officer
knew or ought to have known, that
the vote was a fraud. And yet these
men have gone on voting from year to
year as if they were the most upright
electors in the county.

Now the casting of these votes by
the voters and the reception of them
by the election officers was as much of
a crime as the breaking into a house,
or the picking of a pocket. But for all
these violations of the law, who has
suffered? So far as we know not a
man. And year after year these bogus
votes have been deposited in the bal-
lot-boxes at the election and afterwards
thrown out by the court. Our constitu-
tion is thereby nullified and dishonored.

James Whitcomb was a prominent
citizen of Indiana in her early days,
and was not only a politician, but
one of the best amateur musicians in
the country. He composed several
pieces for the violin, which was his
own chosen instrument, and many are
the stories told of him and his fiddle.
At one time he was traveling from
Indianapolis to Eastern Indiana, and
stopped for the night at a house on a

lonely road. He entered the cabin with
his companion, and there they found a
lame young man called Amos sitting
by the fire scraping at an old violin
with most disastrous results.
He laid the violin on the bed and
started away to the stable with the
horse. Mr. Whitcomb at once took
up the violin, tuned it, and when Amos
returned was playing light and beauti-
ful airs. Amos was entranced. He
sat down, and mouth wide open in
wonder, watched the musician. Then
Mr. Whitcomb struck up "Hail, Colum-
bia," and the youth could bear it no
longer. He sprang to his feet. "If I
had \$50," cried he, "I'd give it all for
that fiddle! I never heard such music."

Mr. Whitcomb said nothing, but kept
on playing. By and by, when he had
finished, he laid the violin on the bed.
This was the young man's opportunity.
He sprang up, seized the instrument,
carried it to the fire, where he could
see more plainly, and turned it over
and over, examining every part.

"Master," he sang out, in high ex-
citement, "I never in my life see two
fiddles so much alike as yours and
mine!"—Exchange.

Startlingly Sententious.
A delegation of Indians from a
western state visited the land office in
Washington, says the San Francisco
Wave were duly introduced to a
bumpous little official who had charge
of this territory. This little man, who,
by the way, has a big head, patronized
the red men for all he was worth, and
talked elaborately about the land of-
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themselves. "What are they saying?"
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sisted and with great persistence the
interpreter finally yielded. "They
said," he translated, "Little man, big
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He Resented the Imputation.
If one may judge from the number
of stories appearing in English papers,
the faculty for making "Irish bulls"
is growing in that country. At a re-
cent temperance gathering the chair-
man thought it desirable to reply to an
attack made upon him in the local
press. "My opponent," said he, "calls
me an ascetic. I hurt the accusation
back in his teeth, and have been a total
abstainer from my birth." A still
more humorous lapeus lingue was
that of the London vestryman who, in
referring to the financial condition of
the baths in his district, described
them as "a magnificent hanging around
the necks of the rate-payers like a
white elephant."

HUMAN NATURE STUDIES.

Dakota Slang.

One day, says the Bismarck Tribune,
when Caesar was leaning up against a
wooden Indian in front of Brutus's
cigar store, half way between the
Forum and the Republican central
committee headquarters, he was ac-
cused by a bunco-steerer with a green
grip and the finest set of illaces that
ever split the breeze.

"Hello," said the bunco-steerer,
"haven't I seen you before?"
"I don't think you have, Jo Jo,"
said Caesar, with a dead on. "I
never was in the penitentiary myself,
and if I ever saw you outside of the
bustle file it's a mighty good thing for
you I wasn't a policeman. You look a
good deal like a local option sentiment
in a German village. How much will
you take for a slip from that foliage
plant on your face to seal my lawn
with?" Caesar was one of the great
joshers in Rome at the time and it
tickled him to guy the rube, although
he savvied his graft all the while.

The bunco man pretended not to no-
tice that he was a joshmark and
dropped his grip on the sidewalk.
"Ah! you Polonius Applesodas, from
over at Pompey's Crossing?" he asked.
He didn't know Caesar from a fever
blister, but he thought he might make
the graft stick.

Caesar enjoyed the whole thing more
than a July show. "Not on your little
red shawl," he said, "I'm the iceman.
You're on the wrong sidewalk, uncle.
You'd better consult an oculist. Here's
an egg that some chicken laid in your
hair," he said, handing the bunco man
an egg that he carried around to use
in slight of hand tricks that he fre-
quently did for the boys.

The bunco man saw that he had
struck a dead game sport and passed
on. Caesar went inside the cigar store.
"See me jolly the rube?" he said, drop-
ping a nickel in the slot and winning
a handful of nickels.

Brutus laughed fit to kill, and put
another handful of stogies into the
perfecto box.

"While you were jollying the easy
mark," he said, "he touched you for
your watch."

Caesar looked down and saw that it
was so.

History does not record what he said,
but it was hot stuff.

Wooing a School Teacher.

"Yes," said a young man, as he threw
himself at the feet of the pretty school
mistress, "I love you, and would go to
the world's end for you."

"You could not go to the end of the
world for me, James. The world, or the
earth, as it is called, is round like a ball
slightly flattened at the poles. One
of the first lessons in elementary
geography is devoted to the shape of
the globe. You must have studied it
when you were a boy."

"O course I did, but!"

"And it is no longer a theory. Cir-
cumnavigators have established the
fact."

"I know, but what I meant was that
I would do anything to please you. Ah,
Minerva, if you knew the aching void!"

"There is no such a thing as a void.
Nature abhors a vacuum. But, admit-
ting that there could be such a
thing, how could the void you speak of
be a void if there were an ache in it?"

"I meant to say that my life will be
lonely without you; that you are my
daily thought and my nightly dream. I
would go anywhere to be with you. If
you were in Australia, or at the north
pole, I would fly to you."

"Fly! It will be another century be-
fore men can fly. Even when the laws
of gravitation are successfully over-
come, there will still remain, says a
late scientific authority, the difficulty
of maintaining a balance."

"Well, at all events," exclaimed the
young man, "I've got a pretty fair bal-
ance in the bank, and I want you to be
my wife. There!"

"Well, James, since you put it in that
light, I—"

Curtain.—Wichita Eagle.

A Story of Fiddles.

James Whitcomb was a prominent
citizen of Indiana in her early days,
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Caesar enjoyed the whole thing more
than a July show. "Not on your little
red shawl," he said, "I'm the iceman.
You're on the wrong sidewalk, uncle.
You'd better consult an oculist. Here's
an egg that some chicken laid in your
hair," he said, handing the bunco man
an egg that he carried around to use
in slight of hand tricks that he fre-
quently did for the boys.

The bunco man saw that he had
struck a dead game sport and passed
on. Caesar went inside the cigar store.
"See me jolly the rube?" he said, drop-
ping a nickel in the slot and winning
a handful of nickels.

Brutus laughed fit to kill, and put
another handful of stogies into the
perfecto box.

"While you were jollying the easy
mark," he said, "he touched you for
your watch."

Caesar looked down and saw that it
was so.

History does not record what he said,
but it was hot stuff.

Wooing a School Teacher.

"Yes," said a young man, as he threw
himself at the feet of the pretty school
mistress, "I love you, and would go to
the world's end for you."

"You could not go to the end of the
world for me, James. The world, or the
earth, as it is called, is round like a ball
slightly flattened at the poles. One
of the first lessons in elementary
geography is devoted to the shape of
the globe. You must have studied it
when you were a boy."

"O course I did, but!"

"And it is no longer a theory. Cir-
cumnavigators have established the
fact."

"I know, but what I meant was that
I would do anything to please you. Ah,
Minerva, if you knew the aching void!"

"There is no such a thing as a void.
Nature abhors a vacuum. But, admit-
ting that there could be such a
thing, how could the void you speak of
be a void if there were an ache in it?"

"I meant to say that my life will be
lonely without you; that you are my
daily thought and my nightly dream. I
would go anywhere to be with you. If
you were in Australia, or at the north
pole, I would fly to you."

"Fly! It will be another century be-
fore men can fly. Even when the laws
of gravitation are successfully over-
come, there will still remain, says a
late scientific authority, the difficulty
of maintaining a balance."

"Well, at all events," exclaimed the
young man, "I've got a pretty fair bal-
ance in the bank, and I want you to be
my wife. There!"

"Well, James, since you put it in that
light, I—"

Curtain.—Wichita Eagle.

A Story of Fiddles.

James Whitcomb was a prominent
citizen of Indiana in her early days,
and was not only a politician, but
one of the best amateur musicians in
the country. He composed several
pieces for the violin, which was his
own chosen instrument, and many are
the stories told of him and his fiddle.
At one time he was traveling from
Indianapolis to Eastern Indiana, and
stopped for the night at a house on a

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