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

TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 11, 1899,

Saturday evening's street car accident at the West Lackawanna avenue crossing forcibly emphasizes the need of a viaduct at this place. With a movement of freight trains across the avenue nearly four times as great now as at any prior time and a continual increase of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, the time is at hand when the viaduct proposition will need to be taken up in earnest and pushed through to completion. The safety of the people demands it.

Safeguard City Funds.

HE LAW, we understand, provides for the paying over monthly to the city treasurer by the mayor of all fines collected. Non-observance of this law has in the past occasioned confusion and its honest observance Infuture should be insisted upon,

The statement presented by Controller Howell to select council at its last session indicates that for several months the mayor had in his possess sion in a manner not contemplated by law funds belonging to the city. The aggregate of these funds was sufficlently large to make it worth the city's while to secure, when due, the full use of them. It is not, to our knowledge charged that the withholding of these balances has been dictated by any wish on the mayor's part to reap personal benefit; on the contrary, it must be assumed that carelessness alone was responsible. But should a dishonest man ever get into the mayor's office and hold back these balances for the purpose of pocketing interest upon them, a scandal would be inevitable; and the way to prevent that is to require monthly settlements. Had this requirement prevailed during the administration of Mayor Bailey, there would have arisen no necessity for the adoption at the last meeting of select council of a resolution directing the city solicitor to proceed against that official for the recovery of money alleged to be due the city in the matter of fines not yet accounted for. Had it been observed by Mayor Moir, he would have been spared the necessity for the explanation of his course which appeared in print on Saturday.

This is in no sense a political issue but a matter of simple arithmetic. When money is collected for the city, the city should get the use of it and not any particular official in the employ of the city. Such provision for the proper accounting for all city funds should be made as would both cut off dishonest use of said funds, should such use ever exist, and likewise protect an honest official from the possibility of getting into embarrassment through the carelessness either of himself or of his subordinates. In such a demand there can be no unfairness to any man or any party.

The late Judge Ward was peculiarly fortunate in his picking of protego for advancement in the legal profession. From his office were recruited some of the brightest ornaments of the Lackawanna bar. He was himself a great lawyer and a fine type of citizen; but in nothing did he show to better advantage than in the helping hand which he extended to the junior members of his profession, The preceptor of such men as Judges Gunster and Edwards and George S. Horn, leaves behind a monument which local history will perpetuate,

The Water Question.

URING THE present lull in the interesting controversy recently excited over the water question, it may be well to re-invite the attention of the public to what we conceive to be the nub of the whole matter.

We have not yet arrived, and we may never arrive, at a point in the community's relations with the Scranton Gas and Water company where the question of the city's taking over of that company's plant is a practica? question. Those who discuss that topic are indulging simply in the pleasures of debate. A city government which cannot clean the streets, provide sewers for infected localities, afford a paid fire department, properly police the residence sections, grant franchises on a basis of equity or keep the policcourt's financial records in joint with the law is not in position to undertake large projects of municipal ownership and control. A time may come when this will be feasible in Scranton, but it is not in sight yet.

Nor has the time arrived for the adoption of the Melvin ordinance or a similar ordinance fixing arbitrarily the rates which the water company shall charge. A step of that character is not to be taken save under the pressure of public necessity clearly established and not otherwise to be relieved. The courts, we may be sure, would nullify all parts of an ordinance going beyond the well-defined line of public equity; and before inviting a test in court the community must, if it would win, equip itself with a substantial and accurately measured

What, then, is the starting point of the present outery? The introduction of meters in water connections for industrial and commercial use. The conditions governing the domestic use of water evoke no complaint. The charges for commercial and industrial, and chiefly for industrial, use are alone in question. The board of trade has undertaken to convince Mr. Scranton

that it would be advantageous to his

water company to quote to manufact-

urers easier terms on a water supply.

It is going to send a committee to him

to have a talk upon the subject. The board's object is to advance the city of Scranton. Mr. Scranton's object, we assume, is to advance the Scranton Water company. But are these objects irreconcilably hostile and is it necessary, before a conference to harmonize them is held, that the air should be filled with thunder and the heavens with lightning flashes?

We cannot believe so. Neither side in this controversy has the right primarily to question the other's motive or exhibit excitement before the conference has taken place. There is omplaint at the meter rates and these complaints are proper subjects of inquiry and investigation. But the first thing in such a case is to get together all the facts. After these have been fully collected and compared, if abuse remains and amicable settlement is denied, then will be the time for thunder and lightning.

How would the citizens of Scranton like to have the vastly important matter of sanitation, which is none too well attended to now, put in charge of a committee of councils and thus made, in nine instances out of ten, the sport and byplay of peanut politics?

That Wreck at Paterson.

HIS AFTERNOON at Paterson the inquest of the coroner into the accident at that place on Nov. 29, which was begun on Friday night, will be continued. The testimony heard on Friday brought out no fact of importance not already known. It was said by one witness that a flagman of train No. 6, the one in which many passen gers were killed or injured, started back to signal train No. 96, the one which did the mischief, as soon as No. 6 stopped, but 96 was too close at hand. Another witness said that the flagman might have jumped off before train 6 stopped, but it does not appear that jumping off before the train stopped had been customary or that ti was called for in the rules; and in lew of the fact that the trainmen on 6 were believed to know that train 6 was just ahead, it may readily have been supposed on board 6 that 96 was being run cautiously and under easy

So far as we can see at this disance from the scene, the proper objective point of the coroner's inquest will be to ascertain why train 96 was running within the city limits of Paterson, around a sharp curve, near the station and in full knowledge that No. 6 was not far ahead, at a rate of speed which ordinary intelligence should have condemned as unsafe. Was this the fault of the men in immediate charge of the train or the management above them, or was it due to peculiar circumstances not subject to human control? The clearing up of speculation touching these inquiries is necessary both in respect to the fixing of responsibility for this particular wreck and as a lesson,

Until the judicial processes of investigation shall have been completed. honest men will suspend judgment. No man has the right to assume that the investigation will not be thorough and impartial. Nor will any man of discretion, however keenly he may be unded in feeling on ac destruction wrought by that wreck, subordinate fairness to impulsive re-

With the election of Governor Taylor settled, it is to be hoped that Kentucky will set a better example of selfgovernment for our ambitious colonies.

Faith Not Declining.

O THE proposition recently put forth and voluminously. discussed in the New York Sun that the men and women of this generation are experiencing a decline of religious faith-a proposition assumed by very many able philosophers of our time to be correct -our venerable friend, Rev. Dr. N. G. Parke of West Pittston, one of the patriarchs of Pennsylvania Presbyterianism, enters vigorous dissent,

"Is it true," he asks in a letter to the Sun, "that men or women have ceased to attend the sanctuary or have lost their faith in the Bible as our rule of faith and practice?" and he replies: "Personally, I do not believe they have. I believe that the Bible and the ordinances of God's house never had a firmer hold on the masses of our people than they have today.

"The Presbytery in Pennsylvania, with which I have been connected since its organization, is next to the largest in the state: and, in this Presbytery we have heard of no abata ment of the interest felt in maintaining the ordinances of God's house. The Edble critics and the herotics are talked about, and, to some extent, lionized; if that is what they are after they have it, and prosecutions before the General Assembly are helpful in that line. But these lionized ministers, chiefly professors, who apparently covet martyrdom, are to the church of God in our land very largely as driftwood on the swollen river that is moving its waters to the ocean. They are not to be ignored, but they are not of as much importance as they and their friends imagine, Our

churches and our pastors, our organized church workers, were never doing better work than they are doing now. "It certainly is a fact that in the church's history, as I have read it, there has been no time when there was more of a spirit of toleration among the professed followers of Christ than there is at the close of the nineteenth century. There has been no time, too, when the Bible was more universally acknowledged as the word of God, and there are now more tons of Pibles published annually than at the commencement of the century. Moreover, there has been no time when the membership of the entire church, including men, women and children, was so fully engaged in christian work. The Young Men's Christian association, the Sabbath school, the Christian Endeavorers and the missionary socleties are features of the age, and they were never more in evidence than

they are now. Nor has there been a

time when money was given as it is

given now for missions at home and

abroad, for church erection, for edu-

type of samaritan work. The deliverances of the churches of every name on the subjects of Sabbath observance, temperance, marriage, social and political purity, have never been more in line with the teaching of the Bible. It is true that iniquity abounds; Satan is not bound; offences have come and they will come. Pride and envy and jealousy and worldliness and selfishness are in the hearts of men, as they always have been; but only a child, in view of the work that the church under its Divine Leader is doing, can ask, 'Is God dead?' "

The proclaimers of a decline in faith may be sincere in many instances, but in all instances they are mistaken in estimates of contemporary events. This is an age of faith manifested in works. The works of righteousness were never larger.

No reason has been presented from any quarter tending to show why the proposed location in this city of a six mill tin plate plant capable of manufacturing 5,000 boxes a week should not result profitably to the subscribers for stock and to the city at large. The demand for tin plate nearly always exceeds the supply; Scranton is a good distributing center for the eastern market; and if to the natural advantages of the city were added, as it is reasonable to assume would be added, capable expert management of the processes of manufacture and modern methods in the sales department, success could hardly be avoided. We accept the judgment of the gentlemen who are backing Mr. Torbet in the promotion of this contemplated new industry and trust that it may speedily materialize,

Pittsburg has produced the latest apostle of "Darius Green," in the person of a Mr. Whitehead, who has invented a flying machine. Unlike the scientific models of the day, Mr. Whitehead's machine has wings and wheels, and on the ground looks like a huge bird. When Mr. Whitehead gets his machine in operation he expects to present an appearance as imposing as that of a Pittsburg politician at a state con-

Instances have been reported where diphtheria and scarlet fever signs have been removed from the front to the rear of infected houses, thus depriving the public of due warning. This is distinctly contrary to law; and we will forward to the health officers properly authenticated complaints from our readers setting forth such a condition

The recent fire at Reading, In which one woman lost her life and several girls were badly injured, again points out the necessity of having fire-escapes that are fire-escapes. Are all of the Scranton factories and hotels properly equipped in this respect?

Mr. Grau, the operatic manager, figures up his losses in the endeavor to create a musical sentiment in Chicago at \$30,000. He still avers that he cannot understand Chicago.

The country will be impatient for the next few days to learn what Consul Macrum has up his sleeve.

The Star Document of the Whole Lot

From the New Haven Register.

ITH each new day the value of the report of Secretary of War Root become more impressive. As the doctors would say, the realization has "set in" that it is the most businesslike, thorough and uninfluenced report from that department at least since the close of the civil war. "He seen his duty and he done it.'

For a day or two after its publication, this report seemed not at all likely to meet a new and more flattering experience. It appeared as if it, too, would answer the purpose merely of an official expression and thereupon lose itself in the great mass of departmental literature. There were, how-ever, a few men who read it carefully, word for word and who issued forth from the self imposed task with the very decided conviction that here was a report wholly out of the ordinary in its form and point of view, a report which revealed the presence back of it of a man who manifestly saw no galleries to play to and who therefore stuck to the business of clearly and explicitly setting forth the conditions and needs of the regular army. We certainly do not intend to exaggerate, and we do not think we do when we declare the report, in our opinion, to be the most convincing of all official statements in regard to this entire off-continent problem. We are quite sure it will be found elastic enough to answer all of the quack arguments our antiimperialistic friends can conjure up for many months.

The chief quality of course of the Root war report is its common sense and business simplicity. It is that which strikes the reader and at once onvinces him that the cheap spirit of Algerism has indeed taken wings and departed from the department, and that the department itself is under the control of the strongest man since Stanton's time. We should find, for example, no such recommendation as this proceeding from a machine made and driven secretary: "Whereas it is necssary to employ Americans (in Porto Rico), except in the chief offices, a sys tem of civil service examinations should provided, under which requests from the governor of Porto Rico, for suitable persons to be appointed, may be filled." Secretary Root is seeking the simplest and speediest way of putting that island upon its political feet. and knows, just as we all know, though few of us are honest enough to admiit, that an essential of uniform progress and administrative honesty is a system of civil service examination. Otherwise, if not already under a diferent expectation, the island will be filled with ne'er-do-wells, with a record for local political usefulness which they point to as cause enough for such official preferment as they covet. Sec retary Root sees this and would anticipate its evils.

There are a lot of illustrations in this report of the man's freedom from partisan bias and organization control. He treats the economic questions, which have already arisen between Cuba and cational institutions and for every Porto Rico and the United States, as

something to be settled upon a broad and natural basis, and not at all upon exclusive grounds. There are a great many who will shift uneasily in their chairs, as they read this: "I wish most strongly to urge that the customs duties between Porto Rico and the United States be removed," and yet every of justice demands that that should be the point of view of all proposed legislation, in reference to economic off-continent problems. It is with like directness that Secretary Root considers the army post canteen, which so many well intentioned Christian people, carried among by emotions which will not bear analysis, have condemned as a clasp of the flesh between the devil and Uncle Sam. This report sweeps all of this religious misrepresentation aside, without for a moment giving any attention to its possible political value, and declares that the canteen, instead of being demoralizing, "has promoted the temperance, discipline, morals and health of the enlisted men, and that in the interest of morality and effective service it should be re-

We have thus commented upon this report because it seems to us to posess the quality which needs most to be impressed upon political parties and public officials, namely, that of common horse sense and directness. The surest way to party success is the straight and narrow business way; the surest way to retain power is to give the very best possible administration for the least money. This is not the Platt way nor the Croker way, and these men have been successful in a sense. but it is the way of every man in American history who made and is accredited with a career and a prominent place in history. It will be found, for example, before the next presidential campaign is over that this simple business-like report of Secretary Root will do more to offset and upset the schemes of the opposition to the existing order of things than all of the official public utterances that have been or will be made. A comparatively untried man has won out because he did his duty with his eyes upon it, instead of upon politics.

A native Maori chief, the descendant or nedical education in Chicago.

be made to stock the abandoned farms of Maine with cattle from the West. Coffee as a beverage had a slight start of tea in Lorden, for the first coffeehouse was opened about the year 1652. Today more than 80 per cent, of the ost of running this government is caused wars, past, present and prospective. Builders while excavating in Brussels

All the European navies are practicing shooting. Our soldiers taught them the necessity for good shooting in the Spanish war.

posed to be nearly, if not quite, 2,000 years

The two counties of Brewster and Presidio (Texas) having a joint area of 6,000

estimated that the earth had been the abode of life for about 20,000,000 years. According to the Canadian Bank the yield of gold from the Klondike this season is about \$8,000,000, which is one-third

announced by fastening a silk pincushion on the door knob. If the pincushion is red the baby is a boy and if white a

ning have been traced to scratche rom rusty wire.

cars for conveying mail bags to and from railway stations, and also for the colection of letters from the mail posts. of many lands-Egypt, Siberia, Japan China, Peru and others-and a group of twenty-six skilled American builders has just departed for Rangoon, British India, where an American company has one of its construction in progress.

The lake's dark breast Is all unrest, It heaves with a sob and a sigh; Like a tremulous bird From its slumber stirred, The moon is a-tilt in the sky.

From the silent deep The waters sweep, But faint on the cold, white stones, And the wavelets fly With a plaintive cry O'er the old earth's bare, bleak bones.

And the spray upsprings On its ghost like wings. And tosses a kiss at the stars, While a water sprite, In sea pearls dight, Hums a sea hymn's selemn bars.

And its light on high, Like a Cyclop's eye, Shines out through the mist and the

And against the pier The waters rear And break with a sullen roar.

And the mist-wrought veil, Gives way to the lightning's glare, And the cloud-drifts fall, A sombre pall. O'er water, earth and air.

His whip he plies, And bellows down the wind. The lightning rash, With binding flash omes pricking on behind.

Sweep, wild winds, sweep, And tear the deep To atems in the storm.

And the wild winds swept, And blew out the moon in the sky; And I laughed with glee, It was joy to me As the storm went raging by.

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NUBS OF KNOWLEDGE.

annibal kings, is now completing his An attempt on a large scale is soon to

recently unearthed a boat which is sup-

square miles, have, it is said, fewer than 3,000 inhabitants.

Lord Kelvin in a lecture stated that as a result of recent investigations it was less than the output last season.

In some parts of Holland a birth is

Berlin booksellers are strictly forbid-

den to sell school children books stitched with wire, as several cases of blood poi-

The Austrian minister of commerce is ontemplating the introduction of motor Th American bridge is flinging its maestic spans and arches across the rivers

A SONG OF THE STORM.

Far out in the night. On the wav'ring sight, see a dark hull loom;

Now the winds well up From the earth's deep cup, And fall on the sea and shore,

Up comes the gale,

The storm king flies,

Rise, waters, rise, And taunt the skies With your swift-flitting form,

And the waters leapt, -Paul Laurence Dunbar

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A New York journeyman printer writes: "On Saturday last I went to see one of the best if not the best physician and surgeon in Brooklyn. After paying some money I owed, we spoke of my boy of ten years whom I had along with me. The boy was not feeling well, his stomach appeared to be out of order and he was getting thin. I told the doctor that I had given the boy Ripans Tabule the night before. Then I told him what the ingredients were-rhubarb, ipecac, peppermint, nux vomica and soda-and he exclaimed 'What's that? What's that?' Upon repeating the formula be said, 'Good, very good. You could not give him anything better. The rhubarb is what he needs for the stomach, and the nux will tone up the system. Contipue giving him one each night and he will be all right.' He gave me no further prescription for the boy and charged me nothing for the advice."