

The Scranton Tribune

Published Daily, Except Sunday, by The Tribune Publishing Company, at Fifty Cents a Month.

New York Office: 150 Nassau St. S. B. FREELAND, Sole Agent for Foreign Advertising.

Entered at the Postoffice at Scranton, Pa., as Second-Class Mail Matter.

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; and the condition precedent to acceptance is that all contributions of whatever nature and by whomsoever sent shall be subject to editorial revision.

SCRANTON, JANUARY 5, 1900.

After munching at the patronage crib for about fifteen years, Resident Clerk Fetterolf, of the house of representatives at Harrisburg, has resigned in order to assist in reforming the Republican party of the state. Mr. Fetterolf appears to possess all the qualities necessary in the role of a professional reformer.

The Status of the School Board.

THE EFFECT OF Judge Archibald's recent opinion with respect to the city controller's supervisory jurisdiction over expenditures of the board of control is to make the board a supreme law unto itself, subject to no check whatever as to its expenditures of money within the limits of the school district's ability to foot the bill. Provided that the warrants of the school district bear the signatures of the president and secretary of the school board, and provided further that there is money in the treasury sufficient to cash them, the city treasurer, in his capacity as treasurer of the school district, under this opinion, will have no alternative but to honor them. There will be no independent audit unless the board itself voluntarily provides for one.

It is unnecessary to say that such a condition of affairs will be most unfortunate. This is not meant as a criticism of the court, which simply expounded the law, not as it ought to be, but as it is. The fault is with the legislature, in the first instance; and more broadly speaking it is with the public opinion which has appeared to rally in support of the board to the question of good school administration, thus permitting such an anomalous system to grow up as that which exists today throughout Pennsylvania in the separation in our cities of school from municipal authority.

We call this system anomalous for the obvious reason that no matter how well-meaning or efficient may be the members of the board of control, their legal status as an autonomous body virtually divorced from all accountability to the people or to any representative of the people save on election day is not in keeping with the best ideas of government and, in practice, is a fertile source of mischief. It is a patent development of municipal experience that sovereign power parceled out among boards and commissions is less effective than authority and responsibility which are centralized. This year by year the office of mayor gains in importance for the reason that the occupants of it can be more readily held to account than can six or a dozen coordinate boards or commissions. Application of this idea to school government is none the less beneficial; and a time will probably come in Pennsylvania when, in the cities, the maintenance of a scheme of government for the schools wholly separate from the general city government, with its tendency to extravagance and with its divided responsibility, will be discarded as it has been in many other states.

The Cubans seem to be entirely satisfied with General Wood, but sorrow still lurks in the hearts of some of the northern critics of the McKinley administration.

Government for Puerto Rico.

AS A BASIS for the deliberations of the senate committee which is expected to report a form of civil government for Puerto Rico, Senator Foraker, the chairman of the committee, has introduced a bill empowering the president to name a governor of a supreme court, seven heads of administrative departments and also five native citizens, all of whom, in addition to whatever other work may be required of them, are to constitute the upper chamber of the insular legislature. A lower house of thirty-five members, to be elected by citizens of the island, is also provided for, and all inhabitants of the island are made citizens of the United States. The citizens are also to elect a delegate to congress, who is to have a seat, but no vote. The island is to be divided into five districts for judicial and legislative purposes, and each district is to have a local court, to consist of such a number of judges as the legislature may provide for.

The Constitution and laws of the United States are extended to the island, so far as the latter are locally applicable. Export duties are prohibited and free trade is provided for between the island and the United States proper. Articles imported into Puerto Rico from other countries than the United States are to pay the same duties as those imposed in the ports of this country. The money thus collected is to go into the island treasury, but money realized from the internal revenue collections is to be covered into the national treasury of the United States. A commission of five members, two of whom are to be natives, is provided for, to revise the system of laws and of judicial procedure in the island. For the present no franchise is to be provided, except upon the approval of both the governor of the island and the president of the United States.

This appears to present a fair starting point in civil administration, assuming that over all insular legislation the governor will possess the veto power. It is the judgment of most of those who have studied the problem that the people of Puerto Rico are not yet qualified for a territorial form of government such as is possessed, for example, by Arizona or New Mexico.

The printed abstract of the Foraker bill does not say anything about the franchise to be imposed on the qualification in the election of the lower house of the insular legislature; but if some educational and property test be applied, we can see no reason why the Foraker plan should not be worthy of trial. As its author says, it provides a simple and practicable plan capable of development as fast as the Puerto Ricans grow beyond it.

Judges Wilson and Arnold, of the Philadelphia courts, in a suit involving a violation of the anti-obscenity law, recently tasted the outlawed compound and had to confess that it tasted fully as good as genuine butter. It is proper that those who sell "oleo" should be made to sell it on its own merits and not palm it off as dairy butter; but with this qualification the crusade against "oleo" represents more rather than hurt.

No Further Dictation.

THE "UNANIMITY OF OPINION" reported among the captains of the warships which took part in the Santiago sea fight that "where charges of reprehensible conduct stand on the record against an officer, there should be no such reward for him as promotion to the rank of vice admiral, until he shall have asked for an inquiry, or until they were explained" is perfectly natural. These men have pride in their profession; they do not want to see their standards bespattered.

Charges do stand on the record against Rear Admiral Schley and he has not removed them. The charges are of so serious a character that it is reliably said a court-martial was impending when the victory at Santiago decided the president to pursue a policy of clemency. It has not been the administration's fault that agitation of the Schley affair has been kept up. The administration could not change the record and would not let Schley or any other man distort or pervert it; but it has at no time exhibited ill-will toward Schley. It named him for promotion along with the rest and it was Schley's friends who thwarted confirmation because their indicted and acquiescent favorite had not been put at the top of the list. It kept silent when the Maryland senators tried to club it politically. It lifted no finger when Schley, by garbling and suppressing the correspondence of a brother officer, conveyed to the public a wrongful impression and exposed himself to discipline of a humiliating character. It gave Schley, with all these charges hanging over him, a sea command, because it did not wish to appear as showing any prejudice against him or any wish to punish him because of past mistakes. While it did not withdraw a single fact of record, it met every situation in a spirit of exceptional generosity and the continuation of the discussion was wholly the work of its critics and assailants.

But now that the matter of conferring rewards for the decisive battle of the war has again arisen, the administration properly declines to let the pretensions put forth in behalf of Schley a second time balk obvious justice to men on whose official records there exists no speck of taint. There is no longer in any quarter a desire to punish Schley; the record which he does not challenge conveys to all who have examined it ample information as to his shortcomings and abundant testimony to President McKinley's kindness of heart; but neither Schley nor any cabal in his interest is to be permitted to dictate to president and congress the terms upon which awards for good work shall be made to the other participants in the Santiago naval campaign; and the sooner this fact is comprehended the sooner will an unpleasant controversy end.

Captain Leary, naval governor of Guam, seems to be making the most of his opportunities for bringing about reform on that island. He has abolished slavery and deported all the Spanish priests and is Americanizing the people as rapidly as circumstances will permit. As Captain Leary is the only political party on the island he is able to devote his whole attention to the betterment of the natives, who probably enjoy better government than many of the larger colonies where numerous office-seekers are liable to make mischief.

The United States Treasury.

IN SPITE of our government's extraordinary expenses growing out of the recent war, its cash account shows up well. Uncle Sam began the new year with \$283,395,453 available cash on hand, including the \$100,000,000 gold reserve. For December the excess of receipts over expenditures was \$7,612,545; for the six months ending with the old year, the excess was \$21,000,000 in round numbers. One year ago there had been, during the six months previous, a net deficit of nearly \$4,000,000. In one year, therefore, there has been an improvement in the government's financial condition represented by \$105,000,000 notwithstanding the cost of the military operations in the Philippines.

Of course, it will be said by those disposed to complain, that this good showing is due to the fact that, although the war itself is over, we are still paying war taxes. The statement is true; but if we consider what we are getting for those war taxes it will not impress us that we are driving a bad bargain. As a consequence largely of the advertisement which the war gave to us, our merchants and manufacturers are today selling more goods to the outside world than ever before; our diplomats are securing more favorable terms of trade with other nations than we ever had before; and the entire outlook for our exporting interests is brighter than ever before. This is worth what it has cost; and while the cost will soon begin to diminish, the gain will go on increasing from year to year.

As for the war taxes themselves, comparatively few of them are really burdensome. The average man does not feel them. That fact would not excuse unnecessary taxation nor justify an extravagant use of the federal funds; but it supplies a good reason why necessary improvements should no longer be deferred and why mere chicanery at Washington should cease.

Partly Correct.

Most of the stores in the remote business sections of the city are constantly annoyed by children of the neighborhood coming to the door and asking for cards, empty boxes and similar articles. The clerk says, "I can do nothing for you, sir, and the warfare never ends. The other day a small boy poked his head in the door of a West Side store and called out: "Say, mister, got any empty boxes?" "No," said the clerk, not very politely. "Got any cards?" "No." "Got any almanacs?" "No." "Got any empty bottles?" "No." "Got any soap?" "No—yes—no—you miserable little wretch," and the clerk flew at his tormentor, but the latter had fled.—Ohio State Journal.

A Tattle-Tale.

The Sabbath school teacher had been telling the class about Joseph, particularly with reference to his coat of many colors, and how his father had rewarded him for being a good boy. For Joseph she said, told his father whenever he caught any of his brothers in the act of doing wrong, says the Baltimore News. "You may little boy or girl tell me what Joseph was," the teacher asked, hoping that some of them had caught the idea that he was Jacob's favorite. "I know," one of the little girls said, holding up her hand. "What was he?" "A tattle-tale!" was the reply.

An Anecdote of Ruskin.

In a village in the lake district a man established a library for the benefit of the people and just before it was opened Ruskin was asked to inspect it, relates the Chicago News. He did so willingly, was much pleased with all he saw, and, after warmly expressing his approval, finally departed with a promise to send a present of books. It came in the form of a magnificent set of Scott's novels.

The wife of the founder of the library thought the books far too handsomely got up for the purpose for which they were intended and expressed this opinion to the donor. "Madam," said he, "if the money the books cost had been spent for floral decorations or for wines for a dinner, nothing would have been so grateful to me, but because it was laid out for the enjoyment of simple villagers it is considered extravagant."

Incredulous.

A party was being shown over the British Museum. In one of the rooms the keeper pointed out a collection of antique vases, which had been recently dug up at Herculaneum, says Pearson's Weekly. "Dug up, sir?" echoed one of the party. "Yes, sir." "What, out of the ground?" "Undoubtedly." "What, just as they now are?" "Perhaps some little pains have been taken in cleaning them, but in all other respects they were found just as you see them."

The Wise Man Turned to One of his Companions.

and, with an incredulous shake of the head, whispered: "He may be a philosopher, but he shall never persuade me that they dug up ready-made pots out of the ground."

Case and Comment.

The solemn air of judicial gravity and dignity of the Supreme Court is sometimes disturbed by a flash of humor. On one occasion there was an argument going on, and the attorneys were using a map to illustrate the case. One attorney, in the course of his presentation of the case, pointed to the map in question and was proceeding to dilate upon the same, when Justice Gray asked him what the map was.

It Was a Good Picture.

Ex-Governor Budd, while on a fishing trip in the high Sierras, one day came upon a traveling photographer and had his picture taken. Upon his return to Stockton he exhibited the likeness with considerable pride, asking his friends who crowded around him if they did not think it a remarkably good one. General Barnes, who happened to be present, caustically remarked: "Yes, governor, it is a perfect picture of you. But who is the fellow holding you by the bride?"—San Francisco Wave.

LITERARY NOTES.

The January number of the Century has the Happy New Year cover designed by Will Bradley and printed in colors. Among the contributors are the Right Hon. John Morley, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Rudyard Kipling, Governor Theodore Roosevelt, Walter T. Washington, Ernest Soton Thompson, Stephen Phillips, and Captain Joshua Slocum, and the artists represented are Mr. Thompson, who illustrates his own contribution; Frederic Remond, Joseph Pennell, Edmund Sullivan, Varian, Pothast, and Mary Hall-Loock Foote, to say nothing of the reproductions of paintings by Sir Thomas Lawrence, Van Dyck, and Cooper. The magazine is rich in full-page pictures, many of them in tints. These last occur in the decorations of Mr. Kipling's poem, "In the Matter of One Company," and especially in the reproductions of photographs of Antarctic scenery accompanying Frederick A. Cook's account of the two years' exploring expedition of the Belgica.

HUMAN NATURE STUDIES.

One of Sothern's Jokes. Mrs. John Wood appeared with the elder Sothern in the same company for several seasons. On one occasion, while the company was playing in Birmingham, Mrs. Wood met Mr. Sothern in the street. They were near an ironmonger's shop, when he shook hands with her and bade her good morning. "Would you mind going in here with me? I want to make some small purchases," he said. She accompanied him. "We do not sell books here," said the assistant to the counter and said: "I want some 'Macaulay's History of England.'"

NUBS OF KNOWLEDGE.

America has 208 female lawyers. Peru is the birthplace of the potato. Kansas pays its governor only \$2,000 a year. London annually consumes 140,000 tons of imported meat. A sewing machine is supposed to do the work of twelve women. A pure blue is shown by experiment to be the natural color of water. Five million roses are required to produce one kilogram of attar of roses. Ferry boats are to run across the Danube between Roumania and Bulgaria. An automobile street-cleaning machine is in successful operation in St. Louis. California produces about one-third of the almonds consumed in the United States.

ON TOP.

A horse owner to no doctored horses in Colorado. A law has been passed making it unlawful to import any horses with docked tails, as well as illegal for a horse owner to so mutilate any animals he owns. A fine of not less than \$10, or thirty days' imprisonment, is the penalty.

A very curious fact concerning tobacco.

The remarkable change in color which it undergoes after entering the mouth. From the burning end of a cigar the smoke issues in deep blue threads, while that which is expelled from the mouth is of a decidedly brownish tint. An English soap manufacturer has received a communication from the authorities of a Presbyterian church in Scotland asking for the firm to advertise the soap on the walls of the church. The letter intimated that the church was in pecuniary difficulties, and that this way had been decided on as the best means of raising money.

A couple of years ago bicycle riding.

was made responsible for the falling off in many sections in literary enthusiasm. The wheel took them away from books and overcame the ailments of the library. Now, however, one publisher has discovered that the bicycle has at least been the means of awakening an interest in natural history, and reports as a direct result an increased demand for books on that subject.

A London doctor has announced his belief.

that in diagnosing a patient's case it is as essential to observe his walk as to feel his pulse. From recent investigations in this branch of what we may venture to call pedestrian therapeutics, it appears that a person in vigorous and robust health walks with his toes pointed to the front, and that as he begins to go the toes turn gradually out and a perceptible bend appears in the knees.

According to the Chicago Tribune there were in 1899 within the United States 107 lynchings, the smallest number in fifteen years and twenty less than in 1898. Of these more than 60 per cent. took place in the southern states. Let us hope that our people have at last turned the corner toward improvement in respect of this gross evidence of moral insanity.

A New York restaurant keeper who refused.

to feed an actress on account of the shade of her hair, has just been obliged to pay a handsome sum to avoid a larger penalty in a damage suit. It is always difficult to tell how much law there is in a woman by the color of her hair.

Mrs. Dewey has no desire to take advantage.

of the battle of Manila in a social way. She has announced that her visiting list will include only those who were friends before the war. All others will receive acknowledgement of courtesies in the form of post-boards delivered by a footman.

The Kentucky elections were as quiet.

as a Thirteenth ward caucus, but before the Goebel contest is over the smell of powder may again be prevalent in the blue grass region.

Parties in charge of the Paris exposition.

will do well to put out more attractive "advance paper" before the show opens if they expect to achieve financial success.

By becoming an expert hunter of panthers,

Colonel Bryan probably hoped to be better able to cope with the Tammany tiger.

The lunatics of Ward's Island, New York,

have been provided with golf links, and it is said that they readily take to the game.

In one respect Admiral Montijo's report.

indicates that he is a man of judgment. He knew when he had had enough.

It begins to look as though there would also be an "open door" controversy.

at Delingoa bay.

Advices from Kentucky indicate that hope springs eternal in the breast of Goebel.

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Reynolds Bros. Stationers and Engravers, Hotel Jermyn Building, Scranton, Pa. A boss burner in a sewer-pipe factory at Alton, Ill., had such a severe pain in his right side that he could get but little sleep or rest. His doctor told him the trouble was a disordered liver. The man had always been healthy before, and doubted what the doctor told him, but he knew something must be done, and took the physician's advice and treatment. He got relief, but it was not lasting. His subsequent experience is given in a letter, in which he says: "I read some of the advertisements about Ripans Tablets, and concluded to try them, and had used less than one-half dozen Tablets when the pain disappeared. Of course, I felt a little doubt as to whether it would return or not, so took a few more to be sure. The result has satisfied me that one dollar spent for Ripans Tablets will accomplish more than five dollars spent for so-called advice and treatment as meted out by the ordinary practitioner."

FINLEY'S Blankets. Will claim particular attention during the first week of January, 1900. And we intend unloading the bulk of our stock at lower prices than will again be possible—probably in years. There is nothing wanting in the assortment—from the Lowest Priced Cotton To the Finest California Wool Blankets made, and with zero weather this sale ought to be interesting. We still have a few Extra Fine Silk Covered Down Quilts. Which we now offer at from \$3.00 to \$4.00—below actual value—our reason being we never carry this line of goods over. Best value offered in everyday Comfortables, of fine selected cotton, from One Dollar up. 510 and 512 LACKAWANNA AVENUE. Excelsior Diaries. A complete line for 1900, for office and pocket use, numerous styles of Calendars, Pads and Stands to select from. Blank Books and the largest and most complete line of office supplies in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Reynolds Bros. Stationers and Engravers, Hotel Jermyn Building, Scranton, Pa.