

The Scranton Tribune

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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...

THE FLAT RATE FOR ADVERTISING. The following table shows the price per inch each insertion, space to be used within one year.

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SCRANTON, FEBRUARY 1, 1901. Senator Finlin's position on the proposed changes in the libel law indicates that with all his faults the Pittsburgh statesman is willing to "take his medicine."

Get Together. THE LEGISLATURE at Harrisburg is not endowed with mind-reading powers sufficient to guess what kind of charter Scranton wants it to enact; it must necessarily rely for information on that point upon the representative citizens of this city.

You can hear plenty of animated talk about the ripper feature. That is a concrete proposition of intensely practical politics embodying the tenure of a number of offices and those affected naturally have vigorous views on the subject. In the current discussion of this new charter question the ripper section has been too often elevated into the place of chief importance, whereas it is in reality incidental and temporary.

The right stand for the representative citizens of Scranton to take is in the first place to get together on the main items of the charter programme that they would like to have prevail at Harrisburg, and then to send a practical steering committee down there to put it through.

The Grady bill seems to be in healthy condition now, but wait until Hon. Thomas Voluble Cooper throws off his sweater and gets down to business!

Libel Legislation. THE CORRECT lines for honest legislation defining libel are well indicated by Representative Cooper, of Delaware county, when he says: "There should be freedom of criticism as to all candidates for public office and all public officers, but it should be truthful, and if not, there should be liability not only in actual but reasonable preservative damages. A bill framed on this line would protect all legitimate newspapers, guard the public interest, and afford proper protection from false assaults upon candidates and officers."

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No victim of libel can feel more keenly than we do the disgrace put upon the business of reputable newspaper production by the subsidized coyotes of yellow journalism, who make a stock in trade of hounding public men regardless of truth or justice. The establishment of a whipping post in Pennsylvania for these bohemian mercenaries would receive the applause of all lovers of decency and fairness. But it is not possible to enact legislation to abolish their mendacity without putting undue restraint upon the honest processes of self-respecting journalism. The fact that

some criticism of public men is malicious and disgraceful supplies no warrant for outlawing all criticism nor does it justify the establishment of impossible requirements. The fundamental theory of our institutions is that the common sense of the people as represented in the jury system is a sufficient safeguard against injustice.

The function of the law is to define the crime and to prescribe the punishment, leaving it to the twelve good men and true to do the rest. Hence the present libel law, if amended at all, should only be changed to give to the injured citizen a wider scope of recovery for damages sustained. The extent of damages where proof of falsity in printed statement is duly made should be left wholly to the intelligence of the jury of trial. If to this should be added a revision of the laws relative to the drawing and selection of jurors so as to invite a higher degree of character and ability into the deliberations of the jury room, all will have been done that can be done to make safe the reputation of the individual against mendacious attack.

Pittsburg's evident jealousy may be prompted by the fear that Scranton will enter into competition in the manufacture of "tobies."

In Jefferson's Footsteps. THE SPOONER bill, which is to be passed as an administrative measure at this session of congress is possible, so as to legalize necessary executive action pending the Supreme court's disposition of the insular cases, provides that "when all insurrection against the sovereignty and authority of the United States in the Philippine Islands, acquired from Spain by the treaty concluded at Paris on the 10th day of December, 1898, shall have been completely suppressed by the military and naval forces of the United States, all military, civil and judicial powers necessary to govern the said islands shall, until otherwise provided by congress, be vested in such person and persons, and shall be exercised in such manner as the president of the United States shall direct, for maintaining and protecting the inhabitants of said islands in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and religion."

To this objection has been raised that it contemplates the massing of extraordinary authority in the hands of the president. That it does. But there is a precedent. On October 23, 1863, congress passed an act authorizing President Thomas Jefferson to take possession of the territory then recently ceded to us by France and made the following provision for the government of it: "That until the expiration of the present session of congress, unless provision for temporary government of the said territories be sooner made by congress, all the military, civil and judicial powers, exercised by the officers of the existing (French) government of the same shall be exercised in such manner as the president of the United States shall direct for maintaining and protecting the inhabitants of Louisiana in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property and religion."

Numerous small men are getting their names in print for the first time by objecting to testimonials of respect to the late queen.

THE CALL summoning a convention of representatives of the people of Cuba to formulate a constitution for a free Cuba republic included as part of the convention's mission the defining of the nature of the relation to exist between that republic and the United States. This part of its work the convention has resolutely declined to perform. Its refusal opens up a question of much perplexity.

The completed draft of the Cuban constitution is expected to arrive at Washington on or about Feb. 15. What shall be done with it? Congress by resolution has declared the people of Cuba free and independent and has asserted the intention of the United States to withdraw its military forces as soon as the pacification of the island shall have been completed. The fact of Cuba is a foreign country. The fact of its pacification is apparent. The completion of a constitution duly drafted adds substantial corroboration to the other reports that good order now prevails throughout the island. What is the next step for the United States to take? This is the question that the president proposes to place before congress.

On this subject Walter Wellman writes: "No one disputes the president's power to withdraw our troops from Cuba, and turn the island over to the people thereof at any time he may see fit. Nor is there denial of the corollary of this proposition that as long as the conditions are unsatisfactory to him the president has power to stay and to administer the government. It was under this power that the president and Secretary Root prepared their plan for a Cuban republic that should be independent in all its interior affairs, but outwardly acknowledge American paramountcy, for the purpose of securing protection internationally and guarantees of a stable and enduring government. Two things have occurred to interfere with this programme: First, the Cuban radicals have been found unamenable to the wholesome influences of the United States. Second, public opinion in the United States, little understanding the true nature and fairness of the administration's plan, has not only failed to support it, but has been severe in criticism upon it. The president is altogether willing to insist that the Cubans shall formulate the relations between this country and the island as a condition precedent to the setting up of a Cuban republic, but if he is to do this he must have the support of congress. It was congress which unnecessarily and gratuitously pledged the United States to withdraw; it was congress which tied the hands of the American government

and brought about this condition, and it is for congress now to say in what manner escape from the dilemma shall be found."

As to what congress can do in the premises, Mr. Wellman continues: "The president and the cabinet have no idea that congress will care to go so far as to approve or reject the Cuban constitution. But as congress three years ago went out of its way to express an opinion as to the future of Cuba—a mere declaration of purpose, not an act of legislation—so congress may now find it convenient to reiterate, to withdraw or to modify the declaration. If congress is satisfied with the Cuban constitution and with the outlook for stable government in the island, it may, by another joint resolution, declare its opinion that our military occupation should come to an end. The president would promptly comply with such an opinion and turn Cuba over to the Cubans. The constitutional power of congress to 'direct' the president to withdraw our troops is disputed, but he will respond to the will of congress, no matter how expressed. If congress is not content with the constitution and with the outlook for the future peace and security of the islands, it may, by another joint resolution, indicate its opinion that until the Cubans formulate the relations which are to exist between the two countries, our military occupation should continue. All the president wants is the moral support of congress. Given that, he is more than willing to see to it that when Cuba does set up a government of its own that government shall be sound and enduring."

The dilemma is awkward, but as congress made it, congress should solve it.

Portraits of Mrs. Carrie received to date look more like those of a person who has been cured of a malady than those of a woman with a world-wide reputation in the use of the tomahawk.

Introduced as a Spaniard. POSTMASTER GENERAL SMITH told this story on Colonel Curtis Guild, of Boston, who accompanied Governor Roosevelt on his campaign tour, relates the Baltimore News.

"It was in an Ohio town at a night meeting, Colonel Guild, who is a magnificent orator, is always particular about his introduction. He usually had it put something like this: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honor to introduce to you Colonel Curtis Guild, of Boston, who was one of the first American officers to reach Santiago, and who was with Governor Roosevelt during the memorable campaign.'"

The chairman of the meeting was told what to say and was given a slip with the little introduction written on it, so that there could be no mistake. He was so nervous that he threw the paper away, saying he could remember. When the time came for Guild to speak the chairman rose and said: 'Ladies and gentlemen, follow me to the introduction of our guest, who was the first Spanish officer to reach Boston.'"

An Amateur Fisherman. BRIDE'S little brother (to bridegroom)—Did it hurt you much when she did it? Bridegroom—What hurt me? Bride's little brother—The hook. Did it get into your lip? Bride's mother—Leave the table this instant, Johnny.

SENATOR TOWNE'S SPEECH. Editor of The Tribune—Sir: I would willingly miss from your paper such staidly abused "exclusive" items as that in this morning issue on "Cost of Mr. Towne's Speech." The latter carried the carrying of the vulgar dolt who "didn't believe in pay" a preacher five hundred dollars a year for working one hour a week and easy work. The latter carried the carrying of the vulgar dolt who "didn't believe in pay" a preacher five hundred dollars a year for working one hour a week and easy work.

Outline Studies of Human Nature. Having Fun with Tim. ONE of the most amusing experiences of the Philadelphia convention has been related in print, says the Washington Post. It concerns Senator Chandler, Prof. Maurice Francis Egan, of the Catholic University, and others. It happened one night—the same night, by the way, that Chandler went to Hanna with Spooner and Allison and told him that it would be impossible to resist Roosevelt's proposition. After leaving Hanna, Senator Chandler walked down Chestnut street with Senator Carter to the Continental, found Prof. Egan, and finally returned by way of Woodruff's.

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to the bottom of the lake. A most ingenious idea, isn't it? When they are needed they are floated to the surface, towed ashore and cut up. The whole bottom of the lake is quite paved with the blocks I am talking of. It's a most extraordinary thing, but one can't help seeing that a lake of ice water is very cold. It's really a lake of ice water, you know. I shall tell them at home that you Americans are so fond of hot water that you keep a whole lake of it in the states. Curious idea, isn't it? But so cleverly American, you know.

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FINLEY'S. We have just opened a choice new line of Satin Foulards IN Persian Patterns, New Brocade "Panne Satins" for Waists, Plain and Fancy Stripe "Waist Cloths," Challies, Albatross Cloths, in Choice Colorings and Exclusive Designs.

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RAILROAD TIME TABLES. Lehigh Valley Railroad. In Effect Nov. 25, 1900. Trains leave Scranton for New York via D. & H. R. R. at 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For New York, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Philadelphia, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Harrisburg, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Pottsville, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Easton, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Bethlehem, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Allentown, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Reading, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Pottsville, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Easton, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Bethlehem, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Allentown, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m. For Reading, 11:05 a. m. and 2:15, 4:27, 6:45, 8:55, 11:30 p. m.