

## The Scranton Tribune

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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 it is not to be understood that the Tribune is bound to accept of them.

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DISPLAY.	Per Line.	Per Column.	Per Page.
Less than 500 lines.	25	25	25
500 to 1,000 lines.	20	20	20
1,000 to 2,000 lines.	15	15	15
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4,000 to 5,000 lines.	5	5	5

For cards of thanks, resolutions of condolence and similar contributions in the nature of advertising, the Tribune makes a charge of 5 cents a line.

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SCRANTON, JULY 8, 1901.

We guess there is more bark than bite in the gossip about contemplated wholesale rapping at the City Hall.

Defaming the Legislature.

THE EVER interesting "Roderick Random" of the Times professes great amazement at the Tribune's "depths of depravity" in failing to throw a fit because the Wainmaker organ, reechoed by the Democratic organs, charge the recent legislature with wholesale venality.

"Roderick" proceeds: "There is no attempt on the part of The Tribune or any other of the Quaker press to deny the damage done by this tremendous amount of money (\$1,000,000) according to the Wainmaker organs was spent in debauching the men elected to make laws for the people of this commonwealth."

Attempts at denial of vague general accusations from notoriously discredited sources are plainly unnecessary and would simply encourage the corners of defamation to increased output.

Whenever the virtuous defeated "reformers" of Philadelphia want to invite in court a study of the methods employed at Harrisburg the probabilities are they can be accommodated; but they, though liberal in maligning others, will take good care to keep well under cover.

There has not been a legislature since we can remember that was not accused of stupidity and crime by those who didn't get what they wanted from it. Hurling bricks at men in public office, and especially at makers of laws, is the easiest and most widely distributed occupation that we know of, and to qualify for it requires neither knowledge, experience nor judgment.

Let the present critics cool off and scrutinize the recent legislature's record in the judicial spirit. Those who are fair will then soon reach the conclusion that it was good and clean in the main and that its worst faults were the inevitable fruitage of "reform" hypocrisy.

By the time the interest is paid, the Langstaff contest will cost the county easily \$100,000. And for what?

Merely a Midsummer Fantasy.

E. A. Coray, of Luzerne county, has been nominated as a candidate for the Republican nomination for state treasurer. He would be the right man for the place, but he is strongly objected to by the highland lobby that has been going on at Harrisburg this year.—Nelson Examiner.

M. R. CORAY has been for five terms a member of the Pennsylvania legislature and there hasn't been a moment in that time when he wasn't strongly objecting to something. As an objector he is without doubt the most conspicuous success that the politics of Pennsylvania has yet produced; but the biographer who searches through his public record for data of affirmative achievement—who looks for traces of some legislative enactment which bears the Coray impress of constructive statesmanship or of some concrete evidence that his habitual scolding has affected practical results—discovers little that is worth the effort. The record on this side is barren.

It is not difficult to win a reputation by the process of ingenious fault-finding; and Mr. Coray's methods exhibit considerable ingenuity. But it is usually an ephemeral reputation. People in time tire of a rhetorical diet of political biliousness and long for more substantial achievements. The harlequins of "reform" in our state have found Mr. Coray's gifts of sarcasm and invective temporarily useful in their plottings for place and power; and through their newspapers they have been liberal in their administrations of verbal taffy. But it need not be feared that they meditate conferring more substantial recognition. Mr. Coray would be much too critical, pessimistic and incorrigible in public office to constitute the kind of official they would care to elevate if they had the power. That spirit of perverse captiousness which they now applaud when leveled by him at the organization would soon lose its charm if aimed at themselves; and Mr. Coray is just the kind of man to be always "agin the government."

The Coray state treasurer boom can therefore be dismissed. It is merely a midsummer fantasy.

Old Kruger, safe in person and pocket, orders the starving Boers to fight on. Such heroism does not ring true.

The second-class mail matter now embraces nearly three-fourths of the entire weight of all mail matter, and yet it brings in a revenue of less than \$1,000,000 a year out of the entire postal revenues of more than \$100,000,000. While it aggregates three-fourths of the weight, it contributes only about one-third of the revenue. To handle and carry the second-class matter costs fully \$60,000,000 a year above what the government receives for handling and carrying it. This extra-

ordinary loss grows largely out of abuses which have crept in gradually and which the law never contemplated.

And Postmaster General Smith is about to try his hand at administering practically venalities. It is to be hoped that he will be able to draw the line fairly between merit and fraud. This is not as easy as it looks.

The Wilkes-Barre Record wants the organization of the Republican party of Luzerne county placed in the hands of "absolutely fair, non-factional Republicans," a proper enough wish if such Republicans can be found.

In the meantime, it is encouraging to observe that the organization in that county is in the hands of Republicans who are not hot one year and cold the next, nor fusionists nor assistant Democrats, but regulars.

Sunday Observance and Law.

THE EXPERIENCE which Pittsburgh is undergoing through the purpose of its recorder, Major A. M. Brown, to effect a stricter enforcement of the Sunday laws, more especially of the so-called Blue Laws of 1794, is of general interest, since the conditions in Pittsburgh are not materially different from those prevalent in most large cities more than two generations old.

Soon after his qualification as recorder, Major Brown issued an order to the director of public safety, informing him, and through him, the police, that it was the recorder's desire that the laws for the safeguarding of Sunday should be enforced strictly and impartially. This wise general principle immediately developed confusion as to details. The Blue Laws, roughly summarized, outlaw all transactions on Sunday which are not "works of necessity or charity." What are "works of necessity or charity," judged from a twentieth century standpoint?

The answer came from the recorder in a general way, that all Sunday business provocative of public disorder must be stopped; and the superintendent of police added: "All ice cream parlors, lemonade stands, refreshment booths of all kinds all over the city will have to close. Drug stores may sell soda water, soft drinks and drugs. That is the limit for them." Under the law the "dressing of victuals" is permitted, and the cry forthwith arose that ice cream, soda water and lemonade constituted "victuals" within the meaning of the act. The Commercial-Gazette, a representative and conservative paper, endorsed it by saying:

"The prohibition of sales at booths or in ice cream parlors seems aimed directly at the people who go to the parks on Sunday. In the public parks in every other city in the country there are spacious and well-appointed restaurants where the people may go to get meals or refresh themselves with ice cream and cake. On the afternoon of Sunday, the people's rest, the broad porches of these restaurants are crowded with happy family parties. In the Pittsburgh parks visitors can hardly get decent water to drink. In default of decent municipal provision for pavilions and restaurants in the parks themselves, vendors have gathered about the park approaches, and these, according to report, are marked out for suppression. Those booths and shanty-parlors are not attractive surroundings for the parks, but the fault is with municipal authority, which has been shamefully remiss in not providing for the erection of suitable restaurants in the parks themselves. Carriage people, enjoying the parks drives, may stop at the country clubs and get what they want. What is needed is provision for the masses of the people, and there is reason to fear that the police are using the law to oppress the very classes who deserve the greatest consideration. It would be a piece of ingenious cruelty to deny to the masses of the people, who do not happen to belong to country clubs, the opportunity to get a cooling drink while taking an outing on a hot Sunday. And, while simple and harmless pleasures are put under the ban, everyone knows that there are plenty of illicit resorts, which, instead of dealing in ice cream and soda water, do a roaring Sunday trade in liquor."

The retail druggists sent a representative to learn from the recorder what the drug stores were expected to do. He reported that the recorder admitted the necessity of the drug stores being open on Sunday, but said they would not be permitted to sell adapted which binds the druggists to stop the sale of cigars on Sunday.

This is as far as the movement has proceeded as yet. Its next step, it is understood, will be to suppress the sale of liquor in houses of ill-fame on Sunday. On Saturday night the licensed saloons of Pittsburgh close promptly at 12 o'clock; but the sale of liquor is then merely transferred from places which pay a license to places which contribute nothing to the community but disease and scandal, and it goes on within these disorderly houses throughout Sunday with little hindrance. Gambling, too, of the professional type, with all kinds of devices for fleeing the unwary, is a Sunday vocation in certain places, and the real objective of Recorder Brown is to put the clamps of the law as tightly on these vicious practices as it is possible to do without provoking a reaction to a condition of "wide-open" vice.

This qualification is important, and extremists often ignore it to their own rapid undoing. Elective government is never ideal, but nearly always average. The people who are way up are counterbalanced by those who are way down in the moral and social scale, giving the balance of power to the medium class. This class opposes violence and disorder, but is not, as a rule, enthusiastic over the outlawing of ice cream and soda water selling on Sunday, and soon voices out the government which fuses too much over the gnats while swallowing the camels of Sunday desecration.

Testimony as to the pitiable plight of the Boer women and children whom the British in South Africa have con-

centrated in poorly equipped detention camps is accumulating rapidly and comes from sources not to be scouted.

Whatever the military motive of this reconcentration policy or its apparent justification on the score of existing conditions, the fact remains that the growing death, the fact and frightful sufferings of these non-combatant victims of war should arouse the British government to put forth its utmost mercy. It has by no means done that yet.

Striking Canvasses at Pan-American

IT IS RATHER strange, to say the least, that one American artist whose work is probably best known through reproductions is utterly unrepresented at the Pan-American exposition and that another who has received honors at the Paris Salon and a medal at the world's fair should also be conspicuous by absence from this exhibition. It is still more peculiar that both have claimed this region as home and birthplace and are