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 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 shall be subject to editorial revision.

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SCRANTON, DECEMBER 30, 1901.

Lona Day, the new acting police chief, has an untarnished record for obedience to orders. Like the man who carried the message to Garcia, he does not hem, haw or ask fool questions when told by his superior officer to do a thing. He goes and does it. The first week he was on the force he laid out three thugs who attacked him at one time, and from that on to the time when he rid his Providence precinct of speakeasies he has been going right after law-breakers for all he was worth. Whatever shortcomings Lona Day may develop as an executive officer, absence from a place of duty or half-heartedness in its performance will not be one of them. This much can be said with entire confidence, based upon his record. His loyalty, too, is of the kind that doesn't have to be bonded. When men of that kind receive promotion it does us good.

Reorganizing the Police.

THE REMARKS of admonition and censure addressed on Saturday by Recorder Connell to the assembled membership of the Scranton police force were pointed and severe but they were made necessary by conditions which had grown intolerable and they must not be misinterpreted.

Every syllable in those remarks was meant and will be carried out to the letter. Men serving the city under oath to enforce peace and good order will be held to a firm accountability and either neglect or defiance of duty will be punished summarily. The new charter gives to the recorder and to his department chiefs sweeping power to enforce discipline, and it will not be spared. In the city's transition from the old to the new order of things many pressing problems have arisen, which could not all be met and mastered in a day. Perhaps the most urgent of these was the bringing of order out of chaos in the fire department. To a satisfactory degree and in a comparatively brief time this problem has been solved. The Scranton fire bureau today is more efficient and better prepared for hard duty than it has ever been. This is generally admitted. Then came the task of adjusting assessments and revenues and it likewise took time. Upon it depended all the estimates for the coming year—the vital problem of ways and means. That earlier attention was not directed publicly to the reorganization of the police force was partly due to the pressure of other duties apparently coming first in the order of necessity, and partly to local conditions rendering it of doubtful wisdom to swap horses amid-stream, but the eyes of those in charge were not blind nor did they fail to note where deficiencies and delinquencies occurred and who were responsible for them.

Saturday's admonitory talk to the men, introductory to the appointment of a new acting superintendent, signalized that a new order of things is to be evolved in an arm of the city service which for five years has been partially paralyzed. The personnel of the police force, we believe, is excellent; its capabilities great. There are men on it who, in the face of discouragement and sometimes lack of proper support from above, have done their duty manfully and deserve special credit. There are others on the force who have good stuff in them but have permitted it to deteriorate. In spite of complaints, we are reluctant to believe that there is an officer on the pay roll who, if made to know his duty and held by intelligent discipline to just account, will prove derelict. If there is, that man will go. Neither politics nor pull can save him. Upon this point the determination of those held responsible is fixed and absolute.

During the more critical period of the street car strike police ineffectiveness justly provoked public criticism and censure, which in many instances, however, was not informed as to the difficulties under which the department of public safety labored nor prepared to credit it fairly for what it did. Much of this was necessarily kept out of view and will appear hereafter. But on the face of things the showing, when compared with street car strikes in other cities, is not so discreditable as may hastily be assumed. Destruction to property has been slight. Loss to life has resulted in one instance only and that through no fault of the police. Small annoyances have been many and exasperating, but a regiment of police could not wholly have stopped them; and on the whole, taking into account how much worse other cities have fared under circumstances sometimes less irritating, while criticism here has had warrant, it can easily be overdrawn.

This, however, offers no excuse for police negligence or inefficiency. There has been both and both must disappear. For five years Scranton has not known what it was to have a well disciplined and systematized police force. To bring this about after so long an interval of deterioration, much of it unconscious and not due to negligent intent, will take careful supervision and patience. It can better be accomplished through the co-operation of good citizens than through their hasty public utterance of impatience or censure. The recorder and the director of public safety both want that co-operation, but they will do their duty whether they get it or not.

Governor Shaw of Iowa, who is soon to become secretary of the treasury, warded off an interviewer the other day by quoting what Colonel "Ike" Stephenson, of Wisconsin, said to "Jim" Wilson, of Iowa, when "Jim" was going into McKinley's cabinet as secretary of agriculture. "I don't know what kind of cabinet officer you'll make," said Colonel "Ike," "but if I were you, 'Jim,' I'd keep —— still for a while." The official who can keep still at the right time will always be in demand.

Shaw's Views on Finance.

A CORRESPONDENT of the New York Herald has been looking up the record of Leslie M. Shaw, who is to succeed Lyman J. Gage as secretary of the treasury. With regard to financial problems this is found chiefly in the various addresses he has made before public assemblages. Finance is a dry topic to most folks but it is important to know what views in regard to it are held by the man who is soon to have great power in shaping our country's financial policies and methods.

In an address before the Northeastern Nebraska Bankers' association last summer he was specific in statements of his views on bank circulation, currency, the national bank system and the need of further financial legislation to conserve the gold standard by providing for the redemption of silver certificates and silver coin. This speech shows that Governor Shaw believes that everything which circulates as money should be made redeemable, directly or indirectly, in standard coin. Until that condition shall have been remedied by further legislation he thinks there will be ever present in the national financial system a latent cause of panic. His argument on this head is:

> Years ago the penny was made redeemable, and because of the statutory provisions for its redemption, a piece of copper of less value than the tenth of a mill circulates at par and as the equivalent of the hundredth part of 2.58 grains of gold. If it were not redeemable it would be worth the same as other copper as soon as its coinage exceeded the absorbing capacity of commerce. If it were originally wise to safeguard the penny by making it redeemable, upon what theory is the silver dollar safe without analagous legislation for its protection? Present provisions may be sufficient to protect the present volume of silver under ordinary circumstances, but so long as there is an element of doubt there is an element of danger, and this danger will exist in proportion as the doubt is recognized. There is in existence no excess of pennies and they are coined only as actually needed and every penny coined is immediately absorbed, and yet, I say, to insure their circulation at par it is deemed necessary to provide for their redemption. The same cannot be said of silver. We have a volume of coined silver now in the vaults of the United States sufficient to fill a corn crib eight feet wide, ten feet high and twelve hundred and fifty feet long. This volume commerce refuses to absorb. In lieu thereof, the government issues a warehouse receipt, commonly called a silver certificate, and stamps upon a piece of paper the statement that there have been deposited with the United States treasurer twenty silver dollars to be paid to the bearer on the surrender of the receipt. But there is no provision for the exchangeability of either the silver or the certificate at par with gold. Under the present conditions there is no danger in this. The balance of trade is in our favor. We sell abroad five hundred millions per annum more than we buy abroad, and this requires the importation of five hundred millions of gold per annum or the purchase or redemption of five hundred millions of outstanding national, municipal or personal obligations, or the investment of that much money in foreign securities. The account has to be balanced. But these conditions may not last forever. We hold one-fifth of the world's supply of gold. Suppose this balance of five hundred millions per annum should be settled in gold. In ten years we would have the world's supply. It is needless to say it would not remain with us. Other nations would borrow or buy, and it would need to be exported. The point I make is this: As soon as we begin to export gold in any large amounts the timid will begin to cast about for a place of safety. Knowing that this great volume of silver is not exchangeable or redeemable in gold, this timid fellow may deem it wise to hoard a little gold against a possible danger, and the next timid fellow, discovering as he looks over the reports that some gold has been hoarded, will be induced to hoard also. Such conditions might start up well on the road to a panic. Some time, in some way, either with or without an enforced lesson, provision will be made for the exchangeability of all our forms of money.

Secretary Gage in his recent annual report took advanced ground in favor of what is known among the experts as "asset" currency—currency secured, not by government bonds, but by bank assets under certain general restrictions. On this subject Governor Shaw is quoted:

> I am willing to go on record as in favor of an elastic currency, and if I believed there was no way to secure an elastic currency other than asset currency, then I should advocate such an issue. But I do not believe it necessary to resort to asset banking in order to provide an elastic currency. I recognize a public prejudice, akin to fear, against a currency based on assets, and prejudice, so long as it exists, constitutes an element of danger, even when the thing itself against which the prejudice lies contains no element of danger. I believe that a graduated tax on currency based on government bonds would result in elasticity. When a western bank now needs more circulation, more cash, it rediscounts its commercial paper and is compelled to redeem it at a given date and pay a much higher rate. Let the banks be permitted to increase their circulation when needed, to be retired as soon as the demand for it ceases, and keep ever present the inducement to retire it when not needed, and elasticity is secured. I repeat that currency based on assets contains, in my judgment, no element of danger except popular prejudice. This will vanish as the question is discussed and explained by those who make a study of it, and the depositor would be in no worse condition than now.

Regarding national banks, he said:

> I consider our national bank system one of the best in the world. It was a great and wise conception. Suppose it were abolished. The government would still owe the debt. If the bonds were held abroad the interest would have to be paid just the same, and this would help to settle the balance of trade and would reduce the importation of gold in proportion to its volume. A rate of interest would be charged higher than now. We have all noticed that, as the facility for using government bonds as the basis of national bank circulation increased, the value of these bonds has increased, rates have decreased, until our government obligations now circulate at a lower rate than the securities of any other country on the map. The government could now borrow at practically one and one-half per cent. interest. It would probably be compelled to pay three per cent.—two and one-half at least—but for the national bank system. Thus the people are saving something in interest. The fact that a national bank can purchase bonds that will yield one and one-half per cent. interest and issue national bank currency against them is an ever present inducement to an increase of circulation and an ever present attraction to capital toward the banking business. Capital will be invested in banks so long as the profits to be derived from all sources are satisfactory. Thus the very interest which the government pays on its bonds tends to reduce the rate of interest which the people are compelled to pay for the use of money. In this way the people pay the interest on the government bonds to themselves.

These remarks might seem to imply that the new secretary of the treasury will not be so thoroughly in sympathy as Secretary Gage has been with the more advanced ideas on currency reform. Possibly at this time he is not. Men in the middle West are usually willing—that is, the big men—to move forward one step at a time and leave something to be done next day and next year. If that is Mr. Shaw's frame of mind he will be more nearly abreast of the average public sentiment than Mr. Gage has been. Nevertheless, the position held by Mr. Gage with great ability today will be that to which this average public sentiment will in a few years have advanced. Then Gage will get monuments and applause, while today he is looked upon by the average congressman as a fine old gentleman given to hobbies.

After increasing its capital stock from $500,000 to $10,000,000, the First National bank of New York city declares a 20 per cent. dividend. Since its organization in 1863 this bank has distributed in dividends to its shareholders $21,310,000, a record without a parallel in this country. Yet this wonderful showing, to those who are informed in such matters, does not excite envy. For they recognize that the First National of New York has been one of the most helpful agencies active in the great developments which have come to pass in the United States within the past quarter of a century. All would have been the poorer but for its prosperity.

Stock sales in Wall street this year have been almost double the sales of 1900. Sales of bonds have been 50 per cent. greater. General business of all kinds has been proportionately more prosperous. Let us hope that the oncoming new year will keep up the good work.

We should like to suggest that the newspapers now give bridegroom Chauncey Depew a rest. Likewise their readers.

THE END.

From the New York Sun.

Death could not have caused the peculiar pathos of this note, which calls for no explanation of its origin:

"Washington, D. C., Dec. 25, 1901.

"My Dear Mr. Weeks: Admiral Sampson is too ill to really understand your most kind letter, just received, but if he were well he would wish to thank you for it; he cares so much for 'old times' and for anything that concerns Palmyra. * * * My dear husband is quite worn out with a long life, consecrated to duty. Physically he is comfortable and happy, but the brain is tired beyond ever being rested. Sincerely,

"Elizabeth Burling Sampson."

The wrong, cruel, bitter and intense, which has been done to William T. Sampson is now beyond reparation. The commander of the American fleet throughout a war that ended in our complete and momentous triumph, has lived without a shred of the honors that traditionally follow faithful and successful service, until he has passed beyond their reach for all time. If congress were today to load Rear Admiral Sampson with rank and thanks, they would be empty, for he has lost the power to accept them. And to this he has been brought, not by the inevitable force of age, but by abuse such as we have not known equalled in all the annals of political controversy.

Savage and fatal as this outrage has been, it was founded upon feeling that was simply childish in its illogicality. The offences for which Sampson has been made to suffer in this extreme manner, in so far as they could be formulated, consisted in the wording of his despatch announcing the victory of Santiago and in his describing, in a letter to the secretary of the navy, the conduct of a subordinate, Commodore Schley, as "reprehensible"—a criticism which a court of inquiry consisting of three high admirals have virtually declared to have been merited to the full.

George Dewey, the commander of a squadron the effect of whose operations was great politically, but insignificant upon the actual war, was made admiral. But Sampson, the commander of the fleet upon whose operations the actual triumph of the American arms over Spain was based, is rewarded with every circumstance of popular insult. And finally the same Dewey aims an uncalled-for blow at him, forbidden, under the attending circumstances, by the simplest laws of good faith.

Throughout the progress of this tragedy, however, Sampson has had one immeasurable and irreplaceable satisfaction. His commander-in-chief, President McKinley, and his more immediate superior, the secretary of the navy, honored him and spared no effort to obtain for him his deserts. And his subordinates, the men of his fleet, particularly those who commanded and fought at Santiago, hailed him ever with an almost passionate affection and respect. At this moment we can think of nothing so humiliating to this country, so shocking to the sense of justice, as the closing years of the career of Rear Admiral Sampson.

OUR RAILWAY MILEAGE.

The announcement by the Railway Age that a larger addition has been made to the railway mileage of the United States in 1901 than in any preceding year since 1890 lends special interest to some figures just published by the treasury bureau of statistics regarding the railways of the United States and of the world. According to these figures the steam railways of the United States now aggregate practically 200,000 miles, and those of the entire world nearly 500,000 miles. To be more accurate, it may be said that the figures of the bureau of statistics show the number of miles of railway in operation in the United States at the end of 1900 as 194,321, and adding the estimate of the Railway Age, 5,057, the construction for the year 1901 brings the grand total for the United States to 199,378 miles. This, it is understood, does not include railways operated by electricity, of which the mileage, exclusive of street and suburban roads is now considerable and rapidly increasing, so that it may safely be said that the railway mileage of the United States, exclusive of those for street and suburban service, is fully 200,000 miles.

For the entire world, the London Daily Mail Year-book for 1902 estimates the total miles open for traffic at 484,348, of which 220,057 miles were in North America; 168,095 in Europe; 35,580 miles in Asia; 28,364 in South America; 15,899 in Africa, and 15,282 miles in Australasia. Thus the United States has two-fifths of the railway mileage of the world, and a larger mileage than any other single country. Comparing the mileage of other countries with that of the United States, the United States stands first with 199,378 miles; German Empire, 31,934; Russia, 29,804; France, 26,013; India, 25,855; Austria-Hungary, 22,940; Great Britain and Ireland, 21,700; Canada, 17,057; British Australasia, 15,246; Argentina, 10,419; Italy, 9,819; Mexico, 9,093; Brazil, 8,718, and Spain, 8,300 miles.

Of these half a million miles of railway in the world, it is estimated that about one-third are owned by the governments of the countries in which they are located. About nine-tenths of those of Russia are owned by the government, and nearly one-half of those of Austria-Hungary are also owned by the government. A large proportion of the railways of France will become the property of the government about the middle of the present century. In Italy nearly all of the railroads are owned by the government, but are operated by private companies which lease the lines from the government. In Australasia nearly all of the railways are owned by the governments of the various colonies, and in India, a large proportion of the 25,855 miles in operation is owned or guaranteed by the Indian government.

It is especially with reference to the railways of the United States that the bureau of statistics figures present details suitable for comparative purposes. They show that the railway mileage of the United States was, in 1830, 23 miles; in 1840, 2,818; in 1850, 9,021; in 1860, 30,626; in 1870, 52,922; in 1880, 93,262; in 1890, 166,654, and in 1900, 194,321; and the addition of the mileage construction for this year, estimated by the Railway Age at 5,057 miles, brings the grand total for 1901 to 199,378 miles. It is only in more recent years that statistics of operation are available. According to the bureau of statistics' figures, the number of passengers carried was: In 1887, 423,000,000; in 1890, 520,000,000; in 1895, 529,000,000, and in 1900, 584,000,000. The growth in the freight business is shown by the figures which state the number of tons of freight carried one mile. These figures are: For 1883, 39,000,000,000; for 1887, 61,000,000,000; for 1890, 79,000,000,000; for 1895, 88,000,000,000, and for 1900, 141,000,000,000 tons. While the length of railways and amount of freight tonnage have been increasing, the cost of transportation has greatly decreased. The average cost of freight transportation is given by the bureau of statistics figured at 1.24c. per ton per mile in 1882; 1.05c. in 1887; 93-100c. in 1890; 84.100c. in 1895; 80-100c. in 1897, and 75-100c. in 1900. In no other country in the world are freight rates so cheap as in the United States, where the railroads are owned and operated by individuals or corporations.

FRICTION THAT CAUSES FIRES.

Assemblyman Otto Kelsey, who is one of the receivers of the Manhattan Fire Insurance company, was in the office of the adjuster of that company the other day when a farmer from the extreme end of Long Island came in and began inquiring about a claim he had against the company for a barn that had been destroyed by fire, relates a New York newspaper. At the conclusion of his argument, he said: "You folks ought to pay that claim. It's an honest one. My wife and myself have talked it over, and we can't find any reason why the barn should have burned. We had no hands around at the time, and no tramps wander down our way at that time of the year. So we would like to know the reason it caught fire."

The adjuster, who had apparently given the matter some previous attention, said: "I guess it was friction."

"Friction!" said the old man; what kind of friction?"

"The kind that comes from rubbing a $3,000 policy on an $800 barn," replied the adjuster.

MR. CHANDLER'S EARLY LESSON

It was always noticed of William E. Chandler, while in the senate, that he never allowed the present moment to pass when he had anything to do, says the Washington Post. The word "procrastination" was not in his lexicon. This lesson he had drilled into him early by his mother, a New England woman of sturdy conscience and character. Once, when he came home for a holiday from an academy six miles distant, she discovered that he had left his umbrella at school. "William," said she, "you need not take off your hat. Go right back and fetch that umbrella."

"But, mother," pleaded the lad, "that's six miles, and the trains are all moving this way now, so I shan't get a lift."

"Then walk," was all the comfort he got.

He trudged off, recovered his umbrella, and made a philosophical application of this and other experiences in the same line to the business which filled his life at a later stage.

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Perhaps you were late with your Christmas gifts. Come to us, we can help you save on your

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At the close of every season of heavy Dry Goods Selling there are accumulations of odd lots of merchandise that must be disposed of without figuring the loss. Today you will find upon our counters the following items, marked at prices that will move them quickly.

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First Choice—prices are not for a limited time, but hold good until the entire lots are sold.

Taffeta Silk.....

Black, white and all the desirable colors. Eighteen inches to thirty-six inches wide.

50c Taffeta to.....39c
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$1.00 Louisine Silks.....88c
75c Black Figured Silks.....59c
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All Novelty Dress Pattern Plaids and Fancies at about half price.

Lot 1 at 29c

36-inch All Wool Dress Flannel
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58-inch All Wool Tourist Suitings,
38-inch Silk and Wool Plaids
58-inch Scotch Mixtures
58-inch All Wool Checks

Lot 3 at 88c

40-inch Umb.e Poplin
44-inch Pebble Bengaline
40-inch Two-Toned Armures
55-inch Camel's Hair Stripes
54-inch Plaid Cheviots

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25 dozen Ladies' White Ribbed Extra Heavy Fleece Lined Vests and Pants, at..... 25c

15 dozen Gent's Extra Heavy Grey Fleece Lined Shirts and Drawers, at..... 43c

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Odd lots of Boys' and Misses' Grey and Ecru Fleece Lined Vests Pants and Boys' Drawers, all sizes, 24 to 34 at.. 25c

Ladies' Natural Wool Vests and Pants, our 75c quality, to close at..... 59c

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10-4 White Blankets at.....65c
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rear 511 Lackawanna avenue, manufacturer of Wire Screens of all kinds; fully prepared for the spring season. We make all kinds of porch aprons, etc.

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