FREELAND TRIBUNE.

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—BY—

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FREELAND, FEBRUARY 18, 1892.

THE delegates from the four territories of Oklahoma, Arizona, Utah and New Mexico are loudly knocking at the Statehood door for admission. They feel confident that the Democratic House will pass the necessary bill for their admission, but the Republican Senate will likely obstruct the legislation, since three of the four Territories are Democratic.

SECRETARY ELKINS' report to Congress on the militia forces of the United States shows the aggregate to be 110,718 men. Quite a respectable army to fall back on in case of war, a good portion of this large force, at least, being well officered and in a commendable state of efficiency. New York leads with 13,539 and Pennsylvania occupies the second place with 8,469. The Secretary estimates that there are in the United States, within what are considered the military ages, 8,567,158 men capable of bearing arms.

THE Wilkes-Barre *Leader* urges Ex-Chairman Elliott P. Kisner to become a candidate for national delegate from the Luzerne district, and adds this comment: "Mr. Kisner is a first rate Democrat, a worker all the time, and a useful man, and on these scores has fair title to such honors. He would probably represent and satisfy the lower end of the district, and with John T. Lenahan for the upper end, the district would be brainly present, so to speak, at what is likely to be one of the most important conventions ever held under the auspices of the party."

THE Pottsville Iron & Steel Company has made a reduction of 10 per cent. in the wages of its employes. This goes into effect to-day, and has caused much dissatisfaction among the men. The probabilities are that another strike will take place. The employes of this company are particularly unfortunate in failing to secure any of the promised benefits of the McKinley bill. They went on strike last July because the firm refused to sign the scale, and their places were taken by non-union men, and it is the wages of the latter force the company is now reducing. The iron-workers of Pennsylvania have a national reputation for their pig-headedness in upholding protection, but a few more 10 per cent. reductions may bring them to their senses.

THE following touching story is told in a despatch to the New York *World* from Atchison, Kan.: B. J Schmitz, a wealthy farmer of that State, went to Germany last November to visit his old home. While there he was arrested for deserting the German army thirty years before The matter was placed in the hands of the United States Minister in Germany, but all efforts to secure Schmitz's release appeared fruitless. Schmitz's eleven-year-old daughter, however, wrote a letter to the Emperor of Germany from her home in this country, setting forth in a child like manner the facts in the case and asking for her father's release. The letter reached the Emperor, and he was so touched that he issued a pardon for Schmitz, who is now on his way home.

THE only chance for the people of both parties to be heard and respected and obeyed is by the people taking control. We are pleased to think that New York is worse off with Hill than Pennsylvania is with Quay. The Republicans of the Keystone State have rebuked Quayism and the Democrats of the Empire State have not condemned Hillism. But down at Washington, and in the eyes of the world, the parallel in politics and in the Senate of the United States, between these two leading Commonwealths, is as remarkable as discreditable. Quayism and Hillism are synonymous characterizations of machine politics between the mill stones of which the people's interests and the public service are ground to powder for the advantage of unprofitable political machines and to the detriment of the country's welfare.

THE increase of liquor license fees in Philadelphia to $1000 did not greatly decrease the number of applicants for licenses to sell at retail, partly, perhaps, because each man thought that there would be fewer licenses and therefore a better opportunity to make up the increased fee. There were 3358 applicants last year and 3014 this year. But as only 1253 licenses were granted last year, it is evident that there is still a great surplus of applicants. The wholesale business having been brought under virtually the same law as the retail, the Judges being given discretionary power and the fee having been raised to $1000, very few except genuine wholesale dealers applied for licenses. There were 1613 applicants for wholesale licenses last year, of whom 538 were given licenses. This year there are only 561 applicants. Taking the two classes together there is a reduction of 1396 in the number of applications compared with last year.

Bob Ford, who killed Jesse James, was shot dead yesterday in a saloon at Creed, Colorado.

Success of Ballot Reform.

In an article with this title in a recent number of the *Forum*, Joseph B. Bishop gives an interesting account of the rapidity with which ballot reform has spread in this country. Where there was not a single secret ballot law four years ago the new system is now adopted in thirty-three States, three-fourths of the Union, and the remaining States are practically certain to adopt it in a very short time. Mr. Bishop truly says that "the rapidity with which the reform was advanced, especially by the labor organizations, is, in fact, without parallel in the history of reform movements in this country." The chief reason for its rapid progress Mr. Bishop considers to have been the chaotic condition of our election laws at the time the agitation was begun by Henry George, to whom belongs the credit of being its first and formost advocate in this country.

There was deep popular dissatisfaction with the system of machine control and with the money power in elections. The dangerous power that political organizations possessed in the printing and distribution of ballots, the excuse that the old system furnished for political assessments, the opportunities for bribery and intimidation afforded by the lack of secrecy in balloting, the want of needed inducements for independent voting—these were dangers and evils too apparent in our political system not to be known of all men.

Of the thirty-three secret ballot laws now in existence in as many States, Mr. Bishop classes twenty-six as "good," three as "poor," two as "bad" and one as "fair." Of those ranked as good there are two kinds, the alphabetical blanket-ballot and the party group blanket-ballot. The first Mr. Bishop concedes to be the better of the two, but the second he does not consider to be objectionable. The first bears the names of all nominees on a single ballot, arranged in alphabetical order; the second carries the names in party groups. The latter arrangement is considered to be no more than a reasonable consultation of the convenience of "straight party" voters. When, however, the party group idea is carried further, and a party emblem added to the ticket, the concession is rather to the illiteracy than anything else, and the law can only be ranked as fair. The Maryland statute is the only one of this kind. Of poor laws there are three, one in California, one in Connecticut, and the other in New Jersey. The two positively bad laws are in New York and Pennsylvania.

The trouble with the California law is discrimination against independent candidates. The Connecticut law allows unofficial, separate party ballots distributed in and out of the polling places and voted in official envelopes; as also does the New Jersey law. The Pennsylvania statute, besides discriminating against independent candidates in the arrangement of names, requires all independent and third-party nominations to be made so far in advance of election as to amount to practical prohibition. The worst law of all is Hill's New York statute, with its separate party ballots and its pernicious "pasters," which give only a mockery of ballot reform in the Empire State.

A Standing Army of Thugs.

New York and Illinois legislators have at various times attempted to expose, if not disperse, the Pinkerton detectives. This organization has grown up in most of the States of the Union since the war. It appears upon the scene whenever public panic distrusts the normal forces of the law, and its conduct has long been the cause of popular indignation. Congress is now about to be called upon to investigate the meaning and motives of this truculent instrument of vengeance and lawlessness. The number of men under the Pinkertons is set down as 35,000 men—ten thousand more than the army of the United States.

This body, which has for years maintained a secret existence and power, is maintained for the intimidation of the weak, the vengeance of those who dare not confide their cause to the regular instruments of law and order. Whenever the oppressed take their fortunes in their own hands the Pinkertons are always heard of in the role of constabulary or soldiery. The proletariat of Pennsylvania know them, the sons of labor in every State in the Union have felt their insidious machinations. They revive in form and intent the most pestiferous form of secret informers, encouraged in monarchies where tyrants bend their efforts to the repression of popular tendencies. Under the law, outside of or above the law, they assume the authority and responsibilities of regular militia, police of the United States army. Subject only to the will of one man, they take upon themselves the solution of every dispute arising between capital and labor. In one State they are agents of evictions, in another instruments of the terror and rapacity of syndicates and land-grabbers.

The proposed investigation is urgently needed. The proletariat of New York State has repeatedly gone before the Legislature demanding restraints upon this alien band of bravos, always at the disposal of the brow beating and the plutocrat. If semi-military agencies are required to arbitrate between citizens, it is certainly not a mercenary gang like the Pinkertons law-abiding citizens should call to their aid. The mere toleration of them is a confession that republican institutions are ineffective or a rank failure.—*Scranton Truth.*

Another Voice for Tax Reform.

There is a growing conviction in the minds of thinking men that too little encouragement is offered to the development of unimproved property. Under our present taxing system it is often more profitable to hold vacant property, which is lightly taxed than to cover it with improvements, which will be immediately pounced upon by the assessor, without respect to their income producing qualities, so that if a man proposes to build a home for investment, he has to consider whether it will be more profitable to improve his property than to leave it vacant. He reasons that immediately upon the completion of a building, his taxes are sure to be increasin much greater ratio. Thus it is that masons, carpenters and the hundreds who are employed in the making and shaping of the materials which enter into buildings, find less work in the same ratio that taxes increase on improvements. Think this out workmen.—*Minersville Free Press.*

Cleveland Is the Favorite.

From all portions of Pennsylvania comes the welcome news that delegates will be instructed to go to Chicago next June to vote for Grover Cleveland as the Democratic candidate for President. A dispatch from Harrisburg says that the delegates from that district will not be selected for over a month, but a fight is already in progress. The Cleveland sentiment is so overwhelming and the Hill followers so insignificantly small that candidates for the National Convention, to stand the least chance of success, find themselves compelled to enroll themselves under the banner of the Ex-President. There are two sets of delegates to the State Convention in that district. One of these is running in the interest of Christian Hanlen, who has been a pronounced Cleveland man for years, and the other for Mayor Fritchey, who also has announced himself favorable to Cleveland's renomination. The Mayor has shown his popularity by being elected in two municipal contests by large majorities, but his present fight is anticipated by reports that until recently he was an open supporter of Hill for the Presidency. In consequence of this attitude on the residential question many of his warmest personal and political friends have refused to support his delegates to the State Convention, because they fear he is a Hilite in disguise.

The Law and the Reading Deal.

The great consolidation by which almost the entire anthracite transportation of the country passes under a single ownership and management changes so many conditions, alters so many values, and readjusts so many conflicting interests in the railroad and financial world that it is certain to be widely discussed, carefully scrutinized, hotly assailed, and as warmly defended. The consolidation removes competition between the coal roads. It, however, increases the risk of competition, as far as the Pennsylvania Railroad is concerned. The present State Constitution was undoubtedly intended to prevent such a consolidation, just as it was intended to prevent many other things which it has not prevented. Whether it legally and technically prevents and forbids this consolidation in the precise way it has been made, no sound lawyer will unhesitatingly assert or deny. It takes two lawyers and a Judge to tell what is the law in a case like this, and often a great many lawyers and several judges. Besides the State law and the Constitution in the case, there is also the interstate commerce act to be considered. New Jersey law is quite as important in the case as Pennsylvania. Public policy has also to be taken into account.—*Phila Press.*

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5 pounds best sugar	25c
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3 pounds bologna	24c
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3 boxes axle grease	25c
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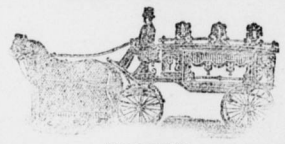

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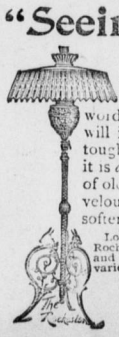

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