

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 conditions precedent to publication is that all contributions of whatever nature and by whomsoever sent shall be subject to editorial revision.

TEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 19, 1899.

The Scranton Times last evening issued a special Christmas edition of thirty-two pages not only highly creditable from a literary standpoint, but in its advertising columns illustrative of a boundless prosperity. We wish for our neighbor and its accomplished proprietor many happy returns of the day.

The City Revenue Problem.

IN THE LICENSE tax ordinance recently introduced by Councilman Morris, of the Eighteenth ward, a peculiar discrimination appears in relation to insurance agents and book agents. The former, if residents of the city, are to pay \$5 annually for a license to do business, but the sum to be exacted of the meek and lowly evangel of literature is five times as large. Whether this means that selling books is more of a crime than advocating life insurance or that the book agent is financially the more eligible to a municipal draft, we leave to others to determine. The singling out of these particular occupations for exceptional taxation represents, however, a mistaken view of expediency and it is to be hoped that it will not prevail.

On this general theme we desire to refer to what has previously been said on this page, that the need of the city is not so much a readjustment of license taxation for the purpose of swelling the city's income as it is a business-like and economical administration of the revenues already in sight. The city is hard up; we understand that. It needs new sewers, it needs new streets, it needs a viaduct; more urgent, perhaps, than anything else just at present, it needs the granting of liberal means to the board of health for the purpose of putting speedily to rights the city's disturbed sanitary condition. The temptation to open the door to increased taxation is very strong and may be increased taxation first there should be a careful plugging of leaks and a gathering together of the tangled threads of past negligence in municipal administration.

Let councils give to the public some concrete evidences of a desire to disburse the public's money prudently and with fidelity, and then the raising of taxes will be less strenuously opposed.

It begins to look as though General Kitchener will be the coming man in the South Africa campaign.

England's Critical Hour.

THE T. F. of greatness comes in emergencies. To do such times what is needful to be done and to leave undone what should not be done stamp a man or a nation as truly great. In the emergency now confronting the British empire radical steps were obviously necessary and they are being taken in what appears to be an intelligent as well as a determined manner. For reasons not at this time profitable to discuss, the campaign which General Buller had been instructed to prosecute in South Africa has failed at every vital point. General Buller, general, backed by the flower of the English army, has been not only out-generaled as to strategy, but completely licked in fair fight by the volunteer burghers of the Transvaal. Within a week three of Britain's best known column leaders—Gatacre, Methuen and Buller himself—have been defeated with humiliating loss; and a situation is presented before the English people involving not only the question of success or failure in their South African undertaking, but the very existence as a coherent force of the world-wide British empire. In such a crisis the decision to send not only Lord Roberts and Kitchener to the seat of war with paramount and permanent authority, but also to put into immediate requisition the empire's last available fighting man is typically Anglo-Saxon and we believe that it will move the undercurrents of American sympathy and admiration.

By their conduct in this extraordinary war the Boers have lifted themselves high in the world's estimation, and in this country especially they probably now command the moral support of a majority. With the sentiment which applauds the superb pluck and grit that they have shown we do not quarrel; on the contrary, we share it. But believing conscientiously that in the ultimate analysis the cause of England in South Africa is the cause of the best civilization; and that perpetuation of the Boer oligarchy along the repressive lines of the past would be an international misfortune, we cannot join in the chorus of jubilation over Britain's disasters nor view as other than lamentable that a task in its nature inevitable should have its necessary performance so badly embarrassed and prolonged. We cannot forget that the men who are dying in South Africa because of blunders not their own are men of our own kind and kin; that they stand for a common law, language and literature; that little more than a year ago they were cheering our soldiers and sailors and saluting our flag as these went forth along new paths amidst jealous spectators in a similar mission of human enfranchisement. Rascals there may be among them, and above them; lust of territory and arrogance of power may be among the factors which sent them to their doom, but it is an insult to their memory to say that they were

English race as a whole that it is selfish and corrupt, or that the good English blood which has so lately been poured out in the African mountain passes or upon the battle-stained veldt has been sacrificed in just retribution. It is a libel to official stupidity but not to criminal inspiration or intent.

As Americans we have not only sentimental but selfish reasons for wishing England well. The disappearance of English influence from international councils would put difficulty and doubt upon American statesmanship and complicate vastly the problems of our own future. In a large number of directions England's interests are our interests; England's humiliation our distinct and appreciable loss. We cannot afford to wish the ground to be cut from under our own feet. Much better might we await in calmness the working out of final English victory over the obstacles of preliminary defeat, and be ready to offer at the conclusion friendly offices in the composition of an honorable and a durable peace.

Boer sympathizers who intimate that the Irish soldiers in the British army in South Africa will desert and join the enemy put a slur upon those warriors that shows meagre knowledge of the race. While the Irish soldier might upon his own account in some instances rebel against British rule and fight for what he deems better conditions, it is not likely that save in rare instances he would be guilty of deserting his comrades in arms in front of a common enemy. On every field of battle in wars of the past the Irish soldier has been among the bravest in defending the flag under which he marched, and the imagination that he would desert at this time can scarcely be considered a compliment.

Old Age Pensions.

REPRESENTATIVE BROSIUS has re-introduced the bill, which was unsuccessful in the last congress, to provide a retirement fund from which employees in the civil service may be pensioned under certain conditions. The bill provides that, beginning with the first day of July, 1900, 2 per cent. of the salary of every employe in the classified civil service of the government shall be withheld and shall be deducted from his or her monthly pay, and shall be deposited in the treasury of the United States to the credit of the civil service retirement fund; and the money so deposited shall constitute a fund which shall be known as the civil service retirement fund, and which shall be held in trust by the secretary of the treasury to be expended for the retirement of employes in the classified civil service of the government and for certain expenses in connection therewith. Beginning July 1, 1904, employes in the classified service may be retired on 75 per cent. of their annual pay, as follows:

First—Every person who has been employed in the civil service for a period of twenty years and who shall have become physically or mentally disabled for the performance of his or her ordinary duty, may be retired upon his or her application, or may be compulsorily retired, and when retired shall be entitled to receive from the said fund the retired pay hereinbefore provided. Provided, That the said period of twenty years shall be computed from the original employment of such person in the civil service of the government, whether as a classified or unclassified employe, and may include service in one or more departments of the government; and periods of service at different times, with an interval during which such person was not in the service, may be computed together so as to constitute a total of twenty years. And provided further, That in cases of mental disability an application for retirement may be made by the next friend or guardian of any person who shall be declared non compos mentis.

Second—Every person in the classified civil service who shall attain the age of 60 years and shall have been employed in the civil service for a period of thirty years may be retired upon his or her application, and when retired shall be entitled to receive from the said fund the retired pay hereinbefore provided. Provided, That the said period of thirty years shall be computed in the same manner as herein provided for computing the period of twenty years in the preceding paragraph.

Third—Every person who shall have attained the age of 70 years, and shall have been employed thirty-five years, shall be compulsorily retired. It is not certain that the conditions are yet ripe for the enactment of such a law. One drawback consists in the temporary character of much of the employment of labor in the civil service, due to political influences or favoritism. Clerks not reasonably assured of steady tenure of place would hardly care to be mulcted in salary for the benefit of others. A more stable civil service conducted upon cleaner business principles is desirable before this experiment is made permanent. At the same time, the introduction of such a proposition at this time by an intelligent member of congress having considerable indorsement on this issue, is significant of the fact that the question of old age pensions, far advanced in some countries, is destined to figure largely in the future discussion of economics in the United States. The time may come, it certainly should come, when for every ton of coal mined, freight moved, or goods of any form produced, a charge will be made on the expense account of the production, payable by the consumer, for the purpose of providing disability insurance for faithful employes. It is a debt of humanity that each industry should care for its own victims; and the debt can be collected when public sentiment shall be better educated.

The action of the government in sending Marine Hospital officials abroad as consultants attaches to immigration in some countries, is destined to figure largely in the future discussion of economics in the United States. These officials will be located at the large ports and will go aboard vessels to examine steerage passengers. The knowledge that a systematized sending of cripples and sick people to the United States has been practiced, has decided this question of a means of preventing the evil. It is thought that the introduction of contagious

disease will frequently be obviated, and at any rate much additional tax upon the generosity of our charities will be avoided.

Just what character the new magazine to be published by two young women of Chicago, and to be devoted to the interests of bachelorhood, will take in the world of literature is difficult to predict. The somewhat universal opinion is that it will be devoted largely to advice advocating marriage, with a few recipes for woe and coziness and cozy corners thrown in. Later on it is suggested by sarcastic critics, envious of the vogue the new periodical will enjoy, that a matrimonial bureau will be established in connection with the publication. All of which intimations are probably far from the present intentions of the well meaning young editors.

A Cincinnati clergyman has made the statement that it is better to feed the poor starve to death than to feed them from the proceeds of charity balls and bazaars, a view of the situation with which the poor will scarcely agree. No doubt people should be willing to give to charitable causes without the inducements of a grab-bag, a chance on a big lamp or an opportunity to dance or play euchre, but there are those who, until they are reconstructed, must have these excuses for spending money to aid the unfortunate. The Cincinnati preacher may be right in theory, but we have not yet arrived at the millennium.

Fifteen states have by vote of the school children adopted state floral emblems. The rose, the peach and apple blossom, sunflower and rhododendron have already been appropriated. If Pennsylvania children do not get together soon and decide upon a flower they may be obliged to take up onion sprouts or celery tops.

No one appears to question the probable nomination and re-election of President McKinley. It is the original vice president men who will claim attention a few months hence.

Mr. Bryan did not care for an appointment to the senate. Talking in congress is not as profitable as on the lecture platform.

London stock jobbers appear to be the only ones who have thus far received benefit from the Transvaal trouble.

TOLD BY THE STARS.

Daily Horoscope Drawn by Ajacchus, The Tribune Astrologer. Astrological cast: 4:06 a. m., for Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1899.

A child born on this day in Scranton will probably be obliged to do his Christmas skating on rollers.

There is probably no more pitiable object on earth than the ambitious scribe who writes smart things for papers that are never read.

A mantle of "the beautiful" would indeed be a mantle of charity in covering up Scranton's dirty streets.

Misdirected ambition will often produce a bore.

Bluff is always noisy while courage is generally quiet.

A RECOGNIZED RIGHT.

From the Philadelphia Press. An exception that was taken by President W. W. Scranton, of the Scranton Water company, to several changes that had been made in one of his contributions to The Tribune of that city, brings forward a point that should be better understood by people generally, relative to the privileges of a newspaper and its duty to the public.

Incorporated in the communication of Mr. Scranton was a reference, for instance, to the private affairs of Mayor Moir. Very properly The Tribune editor eliminated this part of the article, and explaining the liberty taken by saying: "Free as The Tribune is to criticize Mayor Moir's public and official actions and

politics (and we don't owe him any mercy politically) it has never yet intentionally invaded the circle of his private life and it will not knowingly permit any contributor to do so."

Reputable newspapers never reflect upon any citizen unless he transgresses the laws or in an official or other capacity does or says things that are injurious to the public weal. The right of The Tribune or any journal to make editorial revision in the rejection of objectionable words, phrases or allegations made by a contributor can not be questioned.

PASSING SMILES.

Collecting Chestnuts. Society Editor—A great many people are getting up chestnutting parties this week.

For a While, Now. The football season opens up. And certain in opinion, thus, Who patronize the bull fight, Have now the laugh on us. Detroit Journal.

Maidenly Confusion. "Where did Frederick kiss you, my child?" "Twice on the cheek and once on the balcony, ramma."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Definition. Little Willie—Say, pa, what's a peace congress?

Love a la Tandem. 'Tong sylvan groves of sentiment We blithed and cooed; You were, sweetheart, more'er content To be thus wooed. The future then with rapture hung And blisses rare, While birdings sweetest songs they sung To court the air.

We courted them—we're married now, No more we string Fair pearls upon horizon's brow—I curse my ring. All, all is changed; with rain we soak; We're cast and down—Our tandem's smashed and we are broke ten miles from town. —H. S. Keller, in Boston Courier.

OUR YANKEE SANTA CLAUS. From wintry Maine to Dixie land, From Georgia to Guam, He goes, a quaint old gentleman, Who looks like Uncle Sam. A soldier's knapsack is his pack, His jolly presence thaws The frost on every window-pane, Our Yankee Santa Claus.

The nation hangs its stockings up The good old-fashioned way, The North of woolen ribbed and blue, The South of homespun gray. He fills them all from toe to top, His foaming broncos pause At every door in every state, Our Yankee Santa Claus.

Where in the smoky Philippines Old Glory proudly floats, The volunteers whose fathers went To war in different coats Like brothers attack their shining arms Beside the Maxim's jaws, And share the Christmas-box he sends, Our Yankee Santa Claus.

For Dewey's guns have healed the wounds That once so freely bled When Gettysburg and Malvern Hill Were fields that blossomed red, And love of country sweeps away Old feuds like windy straws. One great united nation greets Our Yankee Santa Claus. —Mina Irving in Leslie's Weekly.

Writing Desks, Dressing Tables, Toilet Tables, Cheval Glasses, Parlor Cabinets, Music Cabinets, Curio Cabinets, Book Cases, Waste Baskets, Lounges, Work Tables, Easy Chairs, Gilt Chairs, Inlaid Chairs, Rockers, Shaving Stands, Pedestals, Jardinieres.

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China Silks, new bright colors for fancy work..... 25c

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Elegant new assortment of Silks and Satins for Fine Dresses and Waists.

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Haskell's Black Silks, guaranteed, from..... \$1 to \$2

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Fine Black Crepons..... 75c

Very Fine Black Crepons..... \$1.25

Highest Grade Black Crepons..... 1.75

Fine Assortments of Armures, Plaids, Cheviots, etc., very desirable, at..... 75c

New Lines of Black and Colored Whipcords, Pebbles, Cheviots, etc., from..... 50c to \$2

A New Fabric Worsted Granite in black, royal, dahlia, russet and myrtle. 45 inches wide..... 75c

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415-417 Lackawanna Avenue.

FINLEY'S

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The largest and finest assortment ever shown in Scranton.

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Holiday Goods.....

Calendars, Booklets, Bibles, Prayer Books, Gold Pens, Gold Ink Stands, Leather Card Cases, Fountain Pens, Music Rolls; Pictures, Pocketbooks, Traveling Cases, Bill Books, Opera Bags, Typewriters, and a Handsome Assortment of 1900 Diaries in fancy bindings, suitable for Christmas Gifts.

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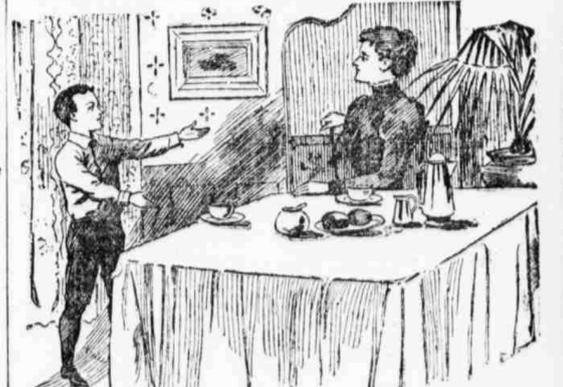
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IS YOUR HOUSE VACANT? IF SO, TRY A "FOR RENT" AD. IN THE TRIBUNE. ONE CENT A WORD.



A little boy of thirteen years, living in Lebanon, Conn., was badly troubled with indigestion and could only eat certain kinds of food without causing him the greatest distress. Seeing the advertisement of Ripans Tabules, his mother purchased a box at the drug store, and in a very short time after the boy was entirely cured. Both the mother and boy look upon Ripans Tabules as a very excellent remedy.

A new style jacket containing THE RIPANS TABLETS in a paper carton (without glass) is now for sale at some drug stores—50c per box. This low priced work is intended for the poor and the economical. One dozen of the five-cent cartons (or thirty) can be had by mail by sending forty-eight cents to the Ripans Chemical Company, No. 109 Spring Street, New York—or a single carton (5c) may be sent for five cents.