

STATE CAPITAL GOSSIP.

HARRISBURG, May 28, 1891.

The last week has seen the usual busy scenes of the last days of Legislative bodies, both Houses being in session from 10 a. m. until midnight, and into the morning, and on Wednesday from 10 a. m. until noon Thursday, with only brief intermissions for meals or lunch. Of the State legislation it can be fairly said, that party pledges have been fulfilled. There has been relief to local taxation through the \$5,000,000 to common schools, and as stated before in these letters, it outlines a policy that will eventually wipe out local taxation for schools, leaving the expense to be borne by the State. The ballot reform bill has passed both Houses and is in the hands of the Governor. It is true that it is not all that it should be nor as the House passed it, but the Senate receded from some of its amendments and sooner than kill the bill or remain all summer, the House concurred, both political parties voting for the bill. The bill was not in any shape a necessity for the rural districts, the present law being good enough for them, but it is needed in the large cities where the ward-heeler and political bum needs to be cut out of a job. The system is now law in 21 States and gives general satisfaction. The next Legislature will be able to judge of any defects in the new law, that is, if it becomes a law through the Governor's signature, and remedy them.

The Judicial apportionment bill passed finally, as did also the Congressional; if the latter is vetoed by the Governor, no level headed man will blame him, it is substantially just what we have now, with a new Congressman for Allegheny and one for Philadelphia. The House Senatorial bill was doctored in the Senate, to make districts for particular individuals. The House Legislative apportionment committee refused to accept the Senate's amendments, some of the Senators then intimated that they would not talk any longer about it to the House committee, and that the latter must come to the Senate's terms. This got up the "Scotch-Irish" of Chairman Hays, and he refused to yield. The committee of the House stood to a man with Hays, and the consequence was no Senatorial apportionment bill was passed finally. Chairman Hays and the House committee were right, the terms of the Senate were unreasonable and unjust, and the House didn't "have to" when they didn't "want to."

Under what is known as the Boyer bill the tax on the market value of corporations is raised from 4 to 5 mills making an increase of revenue from that source alone about \$2,500,000. The tax on personal property is now 4 mills, an increase from that source of about \$570,000 per year; three-fourths of this tax now goes back to the counties. Under this bill nearly \$100,000,000 of invested capital that has not before paid any tax has now to come down with its quota of taxation. Under the bill the tax on banks is increased and will pay out some \$150,000 more. So that for one whack the bill hits them pretty hard, with the prospect of more to follow.

The usual presents were made to the Speaker and clerks just before adjournment, and it is only just to say that from the Speaker down, they deserved the commendations as well as the presents they received. Of the Legislature as a body it can be said that it will compare favorably with any of its predecessors, but as to individuality it will not, for the General Assembly of this State has had many great men in its make up in days gone by; while the present body, neither in Senate or House, has even one that can be so called. The present Legislature, however, has many men of more than average intelligence, and they have done their work fairly well. It is always to be remembered that every session there are many new men, and, at least half the session is gone before they, to use a slang phrase, "catch on," and then it is too late for them to do much. Of the House of Representatives this much can be truly said: They kept faith with the people, and this regard of party. It was an honest House, not a taint of corruption rests upon it. It was a House that was not "bossed" on either side; the Republicans would not yield one inch to dictation, and it is well known that even when parties high in authority tried to run the Democrats in a machine groove that the rank and file of the party in the House wouldn't be run that way. No vicious or bad legislation has been passed, while many bad bills have been killed. From time to time you have had in these columns a brief synopsis of what was passing in the legislature of interest to the country. It has been a pleasure to write them for

the information of your readers, as it also has been a pleasure and an honor to represent this county in that body. For the many kind letters received and suggestions made, your representative returns his hearty thanks to your readers and his constituents, and now to them and Harrisburg, goodbye!

PRESIDENT HARRISON'S tour has effectually squelched the "grand father's hat" business, by proving that Mr. Harrison has ability enough of his own without having to depend either upon his ancestors or upon the statistics of the encyclopedia to make himself popular with the people. There are few men who could make as many or as able a set of speeches as those he delivered while on his memorable tour, and his ability is now conceded on all sides.

THE free trade democratic press has at last been forced to admit that we are manufacturing tin-plate in this country. The New York Times, which is a king bee in that class of papers, said recently in an editorial: "No doubt Mr. Laufman can, and does make tin-plate. No doubt other American manufacturers are making it in limited quantities." Well, they couldn't very well be expected to be making it in large quantities when the tin-plate schedule of the McKinley tariff act doesn't go into effect until the first of July, could they? Before the McKinley bill was passed not a pound of tin plate was made in America. Isn't it a strong argument in favor of that bill that we are making it, even in "limited quantities," so soon after the passage of that measure?

THE shutting down of the tin plate factories in England because of the McKinley bill means that the tin plate factories of the United States are in operation. And it means a great deal to the American workman.

"We will sweep the country," says Senator Peffer, "as the cyclone sweeps the Western prairies." Ruin and devastation mark the path of the cyclone. It sweeps life and property away in its dreadful progress.

ABOUT \$26,000,000 will be due on account of Pensions June 4, and the Democratic press has been laboring to create an impression that the cash in the Treasury would be short of this amount, and the veteran's claims allowed to go to protest. Secretary Foster has contradicted these mischievous statements, and assured the public that the Treasury will be amply provided to not only pay all pensions but all current claims against the Government.

A WASHINGTON correspondent has discovered that Mr. Blaine is losing his mind, and, in fact, has for some time been in a state of mental collapse. The Marquis di Rudini, Lord Salisbury and others who have recently been grappling with Mr. Blaine, will now be relieved. They have all along been undoubtedly of the opinion that something was wrong, and after each set-to with Mr. Blaine have pondered deeply on the question of what had hit them. Now they know. It was Mr. Blaine's weak mind. The correspondent who made this great discovery conclusively proves his case when he asserts that on several well authenticated occasions Mr. Blaine has appeared bored by the conversation of attaches of legations who have called upon him, and did not remember all that they had said when he met them again. Now, this is most serious, as any one familiar with the Washington attaché will allow. But the most pitiable thing about it all is the statement that when the last embryo diplomat took leave of Mr. Blaine, the Secretary "looked as if he could not have stood the pressure many minutes longer."—New York Tribune.

THE Boring Sea troubles have progressed so far toward settlement that England issues a blue book on the subject. This is interesting; but it is pertinent to inquire if the book is called blue because it reflects Lord Salisbury's feelings when he contemplates the ruins of his former policy regarding the seals.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

THE tendency among those newspapers who don't know anything about it is to abuse the Legislature. They don't know what they are talking about, and they simply write themselves down a set of ignoramuses when they assail men who for months labor for the good of the people, and at best get only curses and kicks. Some of the men who write glibly about the legislators and their short-comings ought to get elected and come to Harrisburg for just one session. Along about the time of adjournment they would eat humble pie and declare by all the gods that they never did such hard work in their lives, and nothing could induce them to stand for re-election.—Harrisburg Telegraph.

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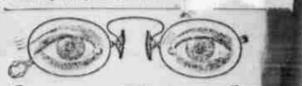
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