THE HOUSTON DAILY POST.

BY THE

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THE ELECTION OF SENATORS.

The recent deadlocks existing at one time in eight State legislatures and the fact that bribery has been notoriously resorted to in at least three of them, has caused the press to renew discussion of the proposition to so amend the constitution as to provide for the election of United States senators by a direct vote of the people.

In California one of the leading candidates for senator admitted in his testimony before an investigating committee that he provided his campaign manager with funds to be used in behalf of his election, and the grand jury of the county stated that money had been corruptly used, but the guilty persons had been artful enough to avoid identification. In Montana a member of the legislature produced and turned over to the presiding officer the sum of $20,000, which he claimed had been paid to him with which to buy votes and subsequently declared in open session that every member who voted for the successful candidate for senator had been bought. In Pennsylvania, while there have been no specific charges of bribery made it has been so flagrantly practiced that it was deemed necessary by those who are conducting the opposition to the re-election of the present senator to offer a reward of $10,000 for satisfactory evidence of any attempt at bribery committed in connection with the senatorial election. Allegations of attempts to bribe legislators in the Delaware senatorial election are also freely made, but whether successfully or unsuccessfully has not been shown.

These disgraceful transactions and the tie-ups in other legislatures in efforts to elect senators are pointed to as object lessons showing the evils of the present method of choosing United States senators, and the necessity of leaving the people to elect them at the ballot box. Other points made are the delay of public business resulting from deadlocks and the influence of official patronage in affecting the choice of senators.

Of course there is much to be said upon the other side of the proposition, but the practical illustrations afforded by the States in which the deadlocks have occurred and the shameful accounts of bribery and corruption involved in some of the contests will certainly increase the already very potent sentiment in favor of popular elections for choosing United States senators.

LEGISLATIVE JUNKETINGS.

The Michigan legislature has been enduring one of the most painful trials that ever besets such a body of the people's representatives—a conflict between its inclination for pleasure and its sense of duty.

A resolution was introduced providing for a visit by the legislature in a body to the public institutions located away from the capital. Here was a chance for a free ride over a considerable portion of the State with all the incidental inducements, such as public receptions at all the places visited, sumptuous dinners at the institutions—indeed, everything needed to satisfy and gratify the soul of a statesman overburdened with the cares and perplexities of law-making and seeking both recreation and knowledge on a tour of inspection. The resolution was adopted by both houses, but the action was not clinched by a motion to reconsider the vote by which it passed and to lay the motion to reconsider on the table. When the resolution came to the attention of the governor, the immortal Pingree, he proceeded to issue an emphatic protest against the proposed journey of the legislators at public expense. The resolution was reconsidered and killed and the statesmen were deprived of the anticipated junket and the incidental pleasures.

Commenting upon the incident the Detroit Journal pertinently remarks:

> Such a trip resolves itself into one of pleasure, largely, and few if any compensating returns are realized in the way of added information. It gives the members a good time at the expense of the State. The committees which have jurisdiction of the several State institutions visit them to acquaint themselves with the conditions and needs of each. Such visits are uniformly converted into more or less formal social functions and the members are feted and made much of by the officers of the institutions visited, and by the residents of the towns in which they are situated. All that inures to the membership of the committees and goes to make membership desirable. It would seem as if the administrative boards of our State institutions ought to be able to report on their needs and conditions in a conservative, intelligent and business-like manner, but against this is an established precedent that can not be easily set aside.

While the Texas legislature has heretofore indulged in the delights of railroad excursions to the gulf coast, the western border and other points of interest away from the capital, it has never been at the public expense, further than in the loss of time and the sum of money involved in the payment of salaries and other costs of a session during the time when business was suspended. As in Michigan, the Texas legislature has joint committees to visit and inspect the various public institutions, and as in Michigan, their visits result in very little benefit in the way of general information as to their condition and needs. The reports made by them are much like the average grand jury report, a mere detail of what was done and a general statement that in the institution visited everything was in apple-pie order, the inmates well fed, the clothing and bedding comfortable and clean and the superintendent an exceedingly efficient and proper man in his place. As the Journal suggests, all such information could as well be furnished by the State board having supervision of the institutions, but the boards are composed of business men whose personal affairs too often preclude them from giving close attention to these public matters.

The governor's recommendation that the authority of the State revenue agent be extended so as to enable him to inspect and report upon the manner in which the public institutions are conducted, as well as upon the disbursements of the revenues, would probably meet all requirements and, besides obviating the necessity for legislative junketing expeditions, would provide the legislature with much more thorough and accurate information upon which to act.

REPUBLICAN REPRESENTATION.

Although the presidential election is nearly two years in the future and it is something more than a year before the two great parties will begin to elect delegates to National conventions, the republican press has already commenced a discussion upon the question of Southern representation in the National convention.

In republican, as well as in democratic conventions, the representation of a State has been based upon population. Thus Texas has been given in republican conventions equal representation in proportion to its population with Massachusetts or Illinois, although it can not contribute a vote for the election of a republican presidential candidate. The New York Press, which has opened the discussion, suggests the absurdity of admitting "Texas and Georgia into a republican convention on equal terms with Massachusetts and Iowa."

The point is a good one, but if the policy of changing the basis and allowing representation only in proportion to the numerical strength of the party in each State is adopted, it will be a hard blow at the political officeholders and bosses in the South, who exchange votes for influence and for places in the public service, as well as to the "cullud" leaders to whom the market for traffic in votes will thereby be entirely closed.

Colonel William Jennings Bryan is one of the few volunteer officers who returned from the army without the conviction that a regular military establishment should take the place of the little-regular-army-volunteer-militia-military-system.—Kansas City Star.

And he is likewise about the only one of them who has not been striving ever since the peace protocol was signed to get a commission—any kind of an old commission—to that regular military establishment of which they are so enthusiastically in favor. Very naturally, since the volunteer army is being gradually disorganized they want a larger regular army. The larger the army the more room there will be for shoulder straps. They view it from the standpoint of men who want offices in the army. Mr. Bryan views it from the standpoint of a patriot and a statesman

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The bill abolishing the right of district attorneys to stand aside among men summoned as possible jurors those whom they think would not render a just verdict has passed the lower house of the Pennsylvania legislature and is said to be sure of passage in the senate when it comes up for consideration in that body. The advocates of the bill were virtually forced to admit, while it was under consideration in the house, that the bill was intended in the interest of Senator Quay in the trial of the criminal cases now pending against him in the courts. It is said that in Philadelphia, owing to the large element of vagabonds among those liable to jury service, it would be quite easy to pack a jury in behalf of the defendant if the district attorney were not allowed the privilege of which the bill in question seeks to deprive him.

There are several industrial enterprises in Houston, but for every one there should be a dozen.

The New York World wisely suggests that before the army is increased the president should be called upon to choose a new secretary of war and to get rid of the inefficient and insubordinate officers who have wrought so much harm and brought so much discredit upon the army. These are both essential reforms, but the latter would be hard upon the political pets and congressmen's sons for whom the late war provided soft places in the military service.

It requires manufacturing enterprises to make a large city. Houston must expand on this line.

The State senate of Montana has expelled Senator Whiteside, who exposed the bribery practiced in the election of a United States senator by the legislature and exhibited $30,000 that he had received to influence his vote in favor of Senator Clarke, the successful candidate. Whiteside deposited the money with the grand jury and disclaims its ownership. He was evidently expelled because of giving away the snap.

The fire insurance companies are the latest to form a trust. The fire-bugs should now organize in self-protection.

While struggling to regain his seat in the United States senate, Senator Quay is not overlooking the contingency that may land him elsewhere. As a side issue he is exceedingly interested in the passage of the bill to enable his friends to pack a jury.

Senator Butler of North Carolina appears to belong to that class of ambitious politicians who, not having the ability to win distinction by talking ably on any subject, satisfy themselves with gaining notoriety by surpassing all competition in saying silly things.

There is every reason why Houston should be a city of 200,000 souls, and with the proper effort upon the part of home capitalists this population can be reached inside of ten years.

There will be scarcely any surprise created by the fact that the war investigating commission has rendered a white-washing report. If defendants in courts of justice were permitted to select their own jury it would be a very great fool who was ever convicted.

The ladies of the Faith Home association are doing a noble work. Show your appreciation of their efforts by responding to the appeal published elsewhere in The Post.

Secretary Alger is at last completely exonerated from the charge of having profited pecuniarily by supplying soldiers with decayed or poisoned meats. We have it from his own testimony before the war investigating committee that he didn't do it.

Houston is now the greatest cotton market in the South. It should also be the largest tobacco market, and the largest live stock market.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

The administration's expansion policy threatens to cause as serious a division in the republican party as was created in the democratic ranks by free silverism in 1896. Some of the ablest republican leaders in both houses of congress are in open hostility to the president on this issue and it is hard to see how the differences between them are to be reconciled. Speaker Reed, in his conversation with his fellow-members, does not hesitate to turn the rapid-fire guns of his wit and sarcasm upon the imperialists, and Senator Hoar grows more and more severe in his attacks upon them. Yesterday Mr. Johnson of Indiana, who is probably the brightest republican on the floor of the house, made a very bitter attack upon the president and created such a scene as is seldom witnessed in congress. There are many other prominent republicans in congress and out of it who are hostile to the administration and appear to be in no mood for pacification. The republicans used to taunt President Cleveland with having a team of wild horses to drive. It seems that President McKinley is afflicted with a similar, if not a worse, misfortune. If the republicans are to go into next year's campaign with a solid front and a united purpose, they will have a good deal of "making up" to do in the meantime.—Atlanta Journal.

And what is worrying the administration managers worse than anything else is the fact that many of the wealthy class, those whom Mark Hanna bled for funds with which to debauch the country in 1896, are liable to be on the "other side." That is the alarming feature of the situation to Mr. Hanna and his associates—and well it may be.

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There is considerable talk of a constitutional convention to revise the State constitution of Texas, over which the leading thought of the State is divided. What the people want is a calm, dispassionate discussion of the subject. When the evidence is all presented the people can be relied on to act for their own best interests.—Bowie Cross Timbers.

This is in line with what The Post has been suggesting—a calm and fair discussion and then leave it to the people. But there be those who think the people can not be trusted to say what they do or do not want.

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Governor Culberson, the outgoing governor of Texas, has sent to the legislature of that State a document which may be termed a review of his administration. Briefly, it is that in four years prize fighting has been abolished in Texas; the anti-trust law has been sustained by the State supreme court; the railway commission, while being fair to the roads, has greatly reduced the burdens of shippers and benefited the ports of Texas; there is at present over $2,000,000 in the State treasury; the appropriations have been cut down more than $1,000,000 below those of four years ago, and the total bonded debt is but $3,304,530, all of which, save $730,000, is held by the permanent school fund, the university and other special funds. Great State is that same Texas.—Salt Lake Tribune.

Yes, great is Texas; but what is best about it is that the State has been blessed with good government and wise executive direction.

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Some Texas newspapers say the State is without a libel law. Fact is, they don't know what they are talking about. The Houston Post recently paid $2500 for a violation of what purports to be a libel law. What the Texas press really wants is a law that gives it protection for telling the truth.—Morgan News.

Now you've got it right. You state the whole thing in a very few lines when you say that what the responsible newspapers want is a law to protect them when they tell the truth in good faith and without malice. Just this, and nothing more.

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The Houston Post as a paper for the people is one of the best in the South, but the maker-up, sometimes becomes ludicrous. We notice in Tuesday's Post, immediately after the governor's message, an advertisement of Chamberlain's colic cure, etc. Of course The Post don't mean to infer that these remedies would be needed after reading the governor's message.—Hearne Democrat.

Of course it don't. The truth is, the business manager has got into the habit of helping to edit The Post.

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Eighty-one pages of The Houston Post of last Wednesday were filled with the delinquent tax list of Harris county. That tells a sad story of exploded booms.—Calhoun County News.

Not at all; Houston has never had a boom to be exploded. The advertisements referred to were for unpaid taxes running back some thirteen years. If they indicate any particular thing it is a faulty system of collecting taxes.

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If Sayers will give us as good an administration as Culberson did we will have no room for complaint.—Halletsville Herald.

It matters not how good an executive a man may make there is always room for improvement by his successor which opportunity comes with the experience of time and progress.

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The Post will do exceedingly well if it should decide to hereafter blue pencil Mr. Edwards' disparaging remarks concerning the idol of the great masses of the American people, Colonel William Jennings Bryan, being acknowledged by the heaviest and best men on both sides to be one of the most conservative, careful men our Nation has ever known. Mr. Bryan can probably be depended on to know and do that which is best for his party and himself. Let's help him—not try to pull him down.—Caldwell News-Chronicle.

In noting the fact that some democrats at Washington disagree with Mr. Bryan in the matter of confirming the Paris treaty, The Post correspondent is not attempting to pull Mr. Bryan down. He would be the last man to engage in such an effort. Our Caldwell contemporary mistakes the man and his purpose.

SOME POSTSCRIPTS.

Eight asteroids were discovered in 1898.

Cork pavement in London is a success.

Vienna is constructing a system of bicycle paths.

Aluminum telegraph wire is to be erected in the Philippines.

The microphone is being utilized for the education of deaf mutes.

It was 300 years ago, in Florence, that the first grand opera was produced.

Electric power for machinery will be transmitted forty miles from Visalia, Cal.

Rats and mice of the Himalayas are the greatest disseminators of the black plague.

At Biniomi the volume of the warm water of the gulf stream is sixty times as great as the combined volume of all the rivers in the world at their mouths.

The longest canal in the world is the Erie in New York, extending from Albany to Buffalo, a distance of 351 miles. The cost of construction was $52,540,800.

Practically the whole business of Samoa is based today upon the cocoanut, and the export of copra, the dried meat of the cocoanut, represents nearly all the exports of the islands.

Ghent, Belgium, is built on twenty-six islands, which are connected with one another by eighty bridges. Three hundred streets and thirty public squares are contained in these islands.

THE EVIL EFFECTS OF USURY.

Chicago, January 28.—(Staff Special.)—There is an old sage living on Loomis street in this city who has drunk deep of the wisdom of human philosophy. No one knows anything as to his history, nor can any information on that subject be obtained from him. But when properly approached he will talk freely about political economy and kindred subjects. No one can be in his presence long without being impressed that he is no ordinary man. He is of full figure, a florid complexion, and long, flowing white beard, having the appearance of youthfulness combined with ripened knowledge.

He lays all our troubles to usury. He thinks that if usury had not been reintroduced into the affairs of mankind in the past three centuries that all our troubles would have been solved wisely.

"The commonly accepted idea," he said to me, "is that usury as mentioned and condemned in the bible has reference to excessive interest on money. It, however, meant interest on money for any amount. One per cent per annum was regarded as usury. It is only recently that a different definition has been given to the word. It is now used to mean interest in excess of the legal rate.

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"Usury," he continued, "has crucified the people of the world twice, and it was so recognized by the people at the two periods I refer to. It tore down their civilizations. But, in time, coming generations failed to profit by the experience of their fathers, and are now about to learn it all over again by the painful process of experience. As the son, too often, fails to glean knowledge by informing himself of the experience of his father, so have the people of the past three hundred years overlooked, if they ever knew, of the past misery of their progenitors."

He took down from a shelf of the Encyclopedia Britannica and read me the sentence under the title of "Usury:" "Cicero mentions that Cato, being asked what he thought of usury, made no other answer to the question than by asking the person who spoke to him what he thought of murder."

The sage then selected from a dusty shelf, filled with old books, a volume entitled "Capital and Interest," by Bohm-Bawerk, a translation from an old German edition, published by McMillan & Co. of New York City. From it he read several passages. Here is one of them: "In the Seventeenth century it was publicly proclaimed that lenders at interest should be punished by criminal law like thieves."

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These were startling words that might arouse strife and deep seated prejudice if dragged from the tomb of the past and displayed in print in this day of universal usury and, out of excessive caution, I took the book into my hands. There, sure enough, staring up at me out of the depths of the long distant centuries, were these hot, blistering words. Had it not been for what he said to me later I doubt if I would be writing this interview with him.

It appears from the writings of that period that all the religious denominations were against the practice of loaning money for interest, and that for at least the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era interest on money was forbidden by law. It seemed that the religious orders could not give the philosophy of it, but believed from bible teaching that somewhere in the practice of loaning for interest lurked a danger fatal to civilization.

It was as late as the Eighteenth century when money lending again became common under protection of law.

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I said to the old sage and philosopher: "Were your views laid before the public the money lenders of today, grown fat and numerous, would crush those who opposed them as I could crush an egg shell in my hand."

"No," he replied, "if the danger is seen in time and properly treated, we would escape the appalling results that ensued from this cause two thousand years ago."

"What do you mean," I asked, "as to the question being properly treated?"

"The men now engaged in money lending," he replied, "are not responsible for what they are doing. It has only been a short time since, when infants, they opened their eyes in this world, and as they grew up to manhood they found certain things were fixed customs, respectable and legal; and one of these things they found existing was money lending. They naturally drifted into it and are in no wise to blame. If they are treated with charity, are handled right, are not abused, or held responsible, prejudice can be held in check, while unselfish wisdom eradicates this error from civilization."

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"Tell me," I said, "what the philosophy of it is? Why is money lending a danger to civilization?"

"There are two things to understand," he said, "and when you understand those you comprehend the whole question. A money lender reduces his risk to a minimum. It is the borrower who takes chances against fire, storms, floods, drouths, failure of crops and other misfortunes; and in the end the results are that the average profits from money lending are in excess of all other business. In time the money lending class became the wealthy and dominant class—without having produced or made anything to eat, drink or wear. The second proposition to comprehend is that when money accumulates in the hands of the usurers, as it inevitably will when the people are debt-ridden, it remains there hoarded, as they are not investors. The effect is to paralyze civilization—for money is the blood of civilization. Prices of all useful things fall—those things on the sale of which the people depend wherewith to pay their debts."

"And why," I asked, "does the money hoarded in the hands of the money lenders make prices fall?"

"Price," he replied, "is made by the relative quantity of property in the market in search of money, and the quantity of money in the market in search of property. The money in the hands of money lenders is not money in the market in search of property, it is in search of a borrower, and until a borrower gets it, it is not in search of property. In the last hundred years, since money lending has again become universally sanctioned, it has gradually accumulated like a rolling snow ball in the hands of our modern usurers till they now practically own it all. Instead of its flowing in healthy circulation, whereby people could get it in exchange for their property, our people have had to go to usurers to get it in the way of a loan, to be returned with an increase greater than they can earn by using the money in legitimate business. The result is that all our towns and cities and most of our people are mortgaged to the money lenders, till those who would borrow have not the security wherewith to get it. Hence, when you compute the money in circulation, that goes to effect prices, you must deduct the money in the hands of the usurers—I use the word in its ancient sense. There are thousands of persons in this city who want to sell real estate; there is an abnormal quantity of real estate in the market in search of money, but there is very little money in the market in search of real estate. Why? Because most of the money is money to lend and not money to invest in anything. And under stagnant conditions usury has produced, there is no encouragement for any one to borrow money to invest in real estate, or scarcely anything else. The continued practice of usury will cause the snowball to keep getting bigger till more and more money is taken out of the channels of trade—and prices will continue to fall."

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"Are you sure of your position?" I asked.

"It is an axiom," he said. "It crucified the human race four thousand years ago and the writers of the old bible proclaim against it. The money lenders of England and their agents in this country, and our own money lenders unconsciously aiding them, are thus engaged in enslaving the people of the United States. Again, two thousand years ago it destoryed civilization, leaving such an impression on the minds of the people that for seventeen hundred years afterward a money lender was looked upon as a criminal."

"But," I said, "has not one as much right to hire out his money, as his farm or his horse?"

"It looks so," he said, "but the effect is different. When all the farms are rented there are no more farms to rent. The practice stops there. When all the horses are hired out there are no more horses to hire. But when all the money is hired out and bringing in an income to its owners, the practice does not stop there. There is about $1,700,000,000 of money, all told, in the United States. But there is $30,000,000,000 to $40,000,000,000 drawing interest, till the annual income from it is more than the $1,700,000,000 of money in existence. There is no such thing as farms or horses being loaned out till the annual income is as great as the value of all farms and horses in existence."

"Is it posible," I remarked, "that the people have walked into such a death trap for the third time in the history of the world?"

"They have," he replied.

"And will it end in such devastation and misery as it did each time before?"

"No. Not if they are charitable and abstain from abusing each other. It will be eradicated from civilization before the people are again driven into hopeless poverty, ignorance and another dark age."

Gretts.

Constitutional Convention.

Parker County News (Weatherford).

That there is a strong sentiment in both the house and the senate in favor of calling a constitution convention and submitting that call to a vote, is apparent, but how strong that sentiment may be—whether it amounts to a majority sufficient to pass a joint resolution of that nature or not, is quite another question—one that not even the wiseacres profess to be able to solve yet.

That our present constitution is saturated with agrarianism, no statesman who reads it will dispute, aside from the fact that it was drafted and adopted when the political grange was at its zenith of power, which means at a time when the grange dominated the politics of many of the strongest counties in the State. Even Parker county's member in the constitutional convention ran as a granger against a democrat, and afterward donned an old flop hat, a seedy short sack coat and other hayseed make-up, and ran against Mr. Lanham for congress on the union labor ticket in 1888.

The present constitution, aside from its agrarianism, is in many of its articles a back number—a last year's bird's nest. This is specially true of the judicial system, which makes a court of one kind or another a perpetual affair in every county seat in the State, and has five courts of civil appeals, each of whose decisions are independent of the other, and which are, instead of settling property rights, rendering them more uncertain every day.

It has long been known that a constitutional convention was only a matter of such time as the political sea was placid, and that time has arrived as nearly as it can ever be hoped for. The republicans have the most meager following, and populism has been reduced to such an insignificant minority as to make it only useful to keep the democrats alert. If a new constitution is needed (and it is) there will hardly arrive a better time to make it than now.

Certain opponents of the calling of a convention, urge as a reason that they fear the homestead exemptions will be swept away. Of this there is scarcely a remote possibility. As we have said previously, there are two political bugaboos in Texas against which no candidate dare run, one is the idea of dividing the State, and the other any abridgement of the salutary provisions of the homestead law. No man would dare to run as a candidate for delegate to the convention on a platform proposing to abolish homestead exemptions, and if he made the canvass and failed to announce that he favored that clause as it is, the chances are that he would be defeated. The truth is, this matter is sprung by the opponents of a convention as a scare crow, and the people see it.

Farmer Shaw's recent newspaper interview to the effect that our present constitution was made by the grangers and ought to be let alone, coming from a man in whom the canker worm of agrarianism has so often almost wholly swallowed up his democracy, will be an argument in favor of a convention, and will tend toward spreading the sentiment for a new organic law among the common people.

One thing we regard as certain, if a resolution proposing a convention passes both houses, it will be approved by a popular vote, by an overwhelming majority.

COLONEL HOGG'S MANIFESTO.

From the Austin Statesman.

Yesterday ex-Governor Hogg issued a pronunciamento to the people of Texas warning them against a constitutional convention. Behind the movement, and urging it forward with malevolent subtlety, the distorted vision of the great patriot beholds the terrifying devil of corporate design and greed. Stranger than fiction it is that other watchful guardians of the rights of the people have been so stupid as not to share with the genial ex-governor the glory of this marvelous discovery. But the governor should be a trifle more specific in his charges. What corporation is behind the movement for a constitutional convention? This precipitate defender of the cause of the people should designate. The time has happily passed in Texas when declarations against individuals or corporations, that appear to be self-invented or unsupported by statements of fact, can control the judgment of its citizenship. In no other respect has the capacity of the people for self-government been so thoroughly established. Their prejudices, if they exist at all, have become enlightened and it requires something more than the hideous clatter of a Chinese tom-tom manipulated by the hand of a clever politician to startle them from a serene study and settlement of public questions. Name the corporations who stand to ruin the people, through this effort to bring about a revision of the present State constitution, to the end that the people may know by whom and from whence they are menaced. Back up charges with facts and designate the skulking enemy with his business title. Then the Statesman will not hesitate to lend a willing hand to the work of dragging the "subtle corporate spirit" from out the shadows of Stygian darkness to the broad light of an honest day.

The poor fellow who stands on the street corner with nerves shattered by dissipation, or not yet recovered from the horrifying consequences of some frightful nightmare and mistakes for the forerunner of a mighty conflagration the lazy smoke of a passing locomotive, is to be pitied, but the full-grown man who plants himself in the middle of the mighty thoroughfare of the people's thought and shouts the alarm of fire merely to hear the clangor of deep-toned bells or to see the horses, all flecked with foam, leaping in frantic strides to the point of danger, is guilty of malicious mischief and a menace to the public peace.

Who are these "representatives of the special classes" who are bent on the "sinister" work of moulding public opinion to the demand for a constitutional convention? Charges submitted by inuendo or insinuation do not rise to the dignity of argument. Name them or let the public peace be maintained.

Mr. R. M. Johnston, whose great paper was the first and only Texas daily, the Statesman believes, to swing promptly into line in support of Bryan and the platform of 1896, is in Austin with the hope of securing some amendments to the present libel law. His paper with its accustomed boldness and honesty declares for a constitutional convention. Is his paper so entangled in corporate influence that it unconsciously serves an unknown master? Is he a "sinister" representative of a special class? The Statesman might mention a dozen gentlemen grown old and respected in the cause of the people whom the ex-governor's scattering fire brings within inferential range.

No resolution, so far as we know, has received any favor at the hands of any member of the legislature that did not propose the submission of the question of holding a constitutional convention to the decision of the peple. Representative Henderson's resolution is distinctly in point. No man is trying to circumvent the people by intrigue or conspiracy. Besides, these people whom the ex-governor feels called upon to protect from spooks and hobgoblins, conjured into life by his absurdly sensitive imaginations, are quite capable of passing on the question at the ballot box without danger to themselves or to the State. As for the Statesman, it is not afraid of the people, nor is it afraid of the Texas legislature. Either can be relied upon to protect the organic law of the State against the machinations of a "subtle corporate spirit" however cunning it may prove. In all candor, the Statesman is not vitally concerned one way or the other. It does not care a snap of its editorial finger whether the constitutional convention be held or not. Some of the best and most thoughtful lawyers of Texas, many of whom have held, and now hold, positions of trust, honor and distinction fresh from the hands of the people, say that our judiciary system should be divested of intricacy, clumsiness and expense by changes in the constitution. Perhaps they are unacquainted with the "intangible subtlety of the corporate spirit." Many representatives of the people, in and out of the legislative body, who are just as intelligently alive to the interests of Texas as any man who may accuse them, inferentially or otherwise, of ignorantly abetting the "invisible corporate spirit" in its diabolical conspiracy to destroy the rights of the people, are in favor of submitting the question of a constitutional convention without unnecessary delay to the judgment of the voters of Texas. The Statesman will be pardoned if it declines to lay the charge of imbecility against these patriotic gentlemen.

"The railroads want the commission destroyed," croaks the ex-governor. Suppose they do? What delegate to a constitutional convention would dare lay his hand in violence on the railroad commission? Not one, and the people know it. Down goes bogey number one!

"The stock jobbers want the railway bond and stock law abrogated." Now this law is a monument to Mr. Hogg's courage and acumen when he was a real and not an ex-governor of Texas. No delegate elected by the people would dare attempt its abrogation and no man knows it any better than Citizen Hogg. The law stands approved by the best judgment of the people and of the legitimate investor everywhere. It's as safe from the "subtle corporate spirit" as the rock of Gibraltar from the swirling seas that beat eternally against its granite sides. Thus vanishes bogey number two!

"The land speculators want the alien land law repealed," gravely mutters the Delphic oracle. Do they? That's awful! Well, what of it? It won't be repealed. Down goes bogey number three!

"The monopolists want the corporation land law changed." Perhaps so, but they won't attempt it and the ex-governor knows this, too. So bogey number four turns up his impotent toes to the daisies.

"The boomers want the municipal bond law modified and the limitation on the power of taxation in cities removed," soberly exclaims the ex-governor. Suppose they do? There isn't a city in Texas that wants it and it is sheer nonsense to seriously raise so foolish a bugaboo. Skip away bogey number five!

"The money changers want the homestead exemptions left out," solemnly asserts Mr. Hogg. Whether they do or not makes not one iota of difference so far as a constitutional convention can be considered. Mr. Hogg knows, as does every other citizen of Texas, that the man who would attempt to strike down homestead exemptions would fall under the blighting fire of public indignation, as did Cataline under the terrific excoriations of Cicero. The govenor points out other dangers attendant upon a constitutional convention, but they are on a par with those discussed and no more entitled than these to the serious attention of people whose capacity for self-government is the admiration of the world.

As the Statesman has indicated, it believes Texas can get along with the present constitution, although a new one might relieve her of a few hands. But in the discussion of the question the Statesman believes that the motives of men should not be assailed, that the poison of prejudice should not be put by unwitting hands in the judgment seats of consciences of a strong and self-reliant people, and that the scare crows and alarms, with which Texas whiled away her time during her infancy, be discarded now that she has grown a very Minerva in strength capable of standing alone and by her sister States, the imitator of none but a splendid, incomparable model, inspiring the emulation of all the proud States that walk in her train.

AS TO A NEW CONSTITUTION.

San Antonio Light: The constitution of the State of Texas is much like the garment mentioned in the Scripture parable. Every time the patching process is attempted it takes away from it and the garment is made worse.

Garrison Enterprise: If there are needed changes in the constitution, they should be done by "amendment" and not by making a new document. The Enterprise is afraid of a new constitution. We know what the old ones are and we know what the new ones might contain.

Madisonville Meteor: There is much talk of a new constitution and the up-to-date people of the State seem to think the present constitution worn out and threadbare and hardly in keeping with the dignity of the State. Perhaps so, but before we adopt a new one let's be sure it fits and will wear well.

Rockwall Success: The advocates of a new constitution cite what they phrase as the term our clumsy judicial system. The courts are multifarious and expensive, it is true, but the fault is not a constitutional one. It is rather a condition brought about by contention and the disposition of too freely indulged to regulate everything by law. As numerous as courts are, they are hard pressed and overrun with business, and just what sort of a constitutional provision that will relieve this has not been suggested yet.

Beeville Bee: The proposition to have a convention for the construction of a new or other constitution seems to meet with little favor with thinking persons throughout the State. Those who advance the idea urge no specific reason why a new constitution should be adopted. They simply say that the present constitution was adopted soon after the State emerged from the thralldom of carpetbagism, was made by a convention composed largely of the "granger" element, and was shaped to meet entirely different conditions than now exist. This is too vague to admit of consideration as a reason why the people should be taxed with the expense of a new constitution. There is no reason why the present constitution could not be amended from time to time (as it has) to meet new conditions that might arise. Surely a better legal talent should compose a convention than has been represented in the legislature for the past ten years, or there would be little hope for an improvement on the constitution in force.

Hearne Democrat: It is a leading question why the State of Texas needs a new constitution and it is doubtful if one-half of the people who advocate a new constitution can tell why they do so. The only inference we can draw from this is that some fellow has heard some other fellow say that Texas ought to have a new constitution and produce as an argument that people need new clothes because they grow them or wear them out. We don't want to expose any one's ignorance but by way of inference, how many people of Texas have read the State constitution? The subject is open for discussion and before any change is made the people should know just what is the matter with the present constitution and what are the objectionable parts. They have a right to know that they may decide whether it is necessary to go to a half-million dollars expense to make a new one. It costs money to make such a new article as a constitution and then possibly when done it may be rejected by the people, thereby making it a very expensive experiment.

Abilene Reporter: We advise the legislature that the people will vote down almost any kind of an amendment to the constitution it may propose. Even the Confederate pension amendment would have gone down in defeat had it been acted upon at the general election, but as it came along its friends rallied to its support, while its opponents mostly remained away from the polls. As it was it barely went through. The Texas constitution binds the people in a most tyrannical manner, allowing them the least liberty possible, and it is most unfortunate for a State that has all its development to come. One glaring fault in the present enormity called a constitution is that the people can not use their credit for any kind of local development and corporations are reaping a harvest in consequence. So diverse are the resources and necessities of the different sections of this great empire State that the people should be given local option in the use of their credit, if we are to be able to develop our resources. Nothing which the session of the legislature has before it equals in importance the question of the adoption of a modern constitution.

POINTS ABOUT PEOPLE.

Chief Justice James P. Sterrett, who delivered the opinion of the Pennsylvania supreme court in the Quay certiorari case, once had Matthew Stanley Quay as his office as student-at-law.

Chauncey M. Depew received a salary of $50,000 a year when president of the New York Central, and as chairman of the board of directors of the Vanderbilt consolidations may have additional compensation.

A university fellowship in English literature has been established by Charles Scribner of New York City, in memory of his father, the late Charles Scribner. The fellowship will yield the sum of $500 annually, and will be awarded for the first time this year.

Tesla thinks a man has just as many hours to be awake, and the fewer he sleeps the more he uses up each day the more days he lives. "I believe that a man should live 200 years if he would sleep not at the time. That is why negroes live such an advanced age, because they sleep so much."

M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire, the French jurist who quit the court of cassation on account of his anti-Dreyfus sentiments, by profession a magistrate, by nation a politician and in his leisure moments a novelist. He is the author of a half dozen of novels issued under the pseudonym of Jules de Glouvet.

Jules Cambon, the newly appointed French ambassador to the United States, is an indefatigable worker and a brilliant conversationalist, and his sympathetic qualities make him a most acceptable addition to Washington society. He is not a stranger to his own country M. Jules Cambon has the reputation of being one of the most accomplished and intelligent of those who have held prominent positions under the French republican regime. M. Cambon has served in this capacity for the past fifteen years.

President McKinley's signature is simple in form, is considered a difficult one to imitate. He is considered a careful buyer. He served President Cleveland eight years, and Mr. Cleveland recommended him to Mr. McKinley, his successor, for the position of secretary, fixed by law at $1800 per annum. It is said that Mr. McKinley, in the beginning of his first term, lived with his family in a house for which he paid $50 a month, a few blocks distant. He has never been out of the White House long enough for all the family to visit their home in Canton, Ohio. He has never been within the executive mansion since he was first inaugurated for $120,000 a year, the salary attached to the position, and the property belonging to the office has been allowed to go to ruin. Some of the furniture purchased for the executive mansion, and the property belonging to the office, has been taken from a hiding place in the attic of the building and placed in the rooms occupied by the family. The furniture in question was purchased during the administration of President Arthur, and has been in the attic since the McKinleys came to the White House.