

disappointed man, are to a measure correct. He was postmaster general under President Harrison and aspired to be United States senator from Pennsylvania, but was defeated in the recent contest there. It is quite likely this made him bitter and his language sharper. But it cannot be said that this accounts altogether for his utterances, for they voice the impressions of a great many people, and declare a broadly recognized truth concerning the looseness of party affiliations.

The political parties in this country can no more escape the grinding that comes from popular unrest and discontent than they can bring to imperfect man a millennium of perfect peace. One trouble is that politicians promise more than they could perform if honest, and in too many instances are so full of trickery that they do not honestly try to accomplish that good which is in their power. It is a fact that in the present condition of affairs, political parties, no matter what are their fundamental principles as declared, are found to be wanting to practical results, and hence are subjected to the disintegrating process which can be checked only by some operation favorable to them and which does not appear in sight at present.

LIGHTING THE CITY.

A few weeks ago, when there appeared a tumbling in the prices of electric lighting for the city, there was considerable pressure brought on the municipal officers to accept proposed terms that were considered favorable, and certainly were not of an opposite character. At that time the NEWS stood alone among the newspapers in advising the city administration to wait till prices for street lighting had settled down to a minimum before entering upon a new contract. Our view was that the interests of the public would be better served by not being in a hurry. The City Council looked at the matter in the same light, and the outcome shows the wisdom of that course. Now the city has a bid for an all-night service at \$72 a year for each street lamp—this being the lowest contract price of any city in the country, we understand, for such service, St. Louis coming next with \$74 per lamp. It now appears that this is the most favorable offer that will be made, and is the city's opportunity.

There can be no question as to the proposition of \$6 per month being a very low rate for the contract proposed. By the most careful estimates, with the city getting its power at a reduced figure, it was calculated that the municipality could purchase wires and lamps, and provide lights at \$5.92 per month each. This was under the most economical administration, so it is easily seen that a ten per cent increase above that, or about \$6.50 per lamp, caused by incidental expenses, would not have been a surprise with municipal lighting. The present offer, coming so near the estimate named, and giving assurance against a possible excess, shows that it is about the minimum price at which a good service can be anticipated. Certainly the city is to be congratulated on reaching its present

stage in the matter of cost for street lighting.

There is one feature in connection with this business which it would not be just to overlook, for it is a guaranty of the good faith of the Pioneer Electric company in its relations with the people of this city and State. During the past few days the circumstances were such that a higher rate could have been named, and an effort made—with some prospect of success—to crowd the city into its acceptance. But the Pioneer company adhered to its policy of giving the service at the lowest figures it could afford, and thus to do the fair thing by the people. If it had been practicable to have made the price still lower, doubtless this would have been done, but the cost of production would not allow of it. Thus to its first dealings with the public the Pioneer company has proved its aim to be harmonious with the general welfare.

A comparison of the present figures for street lighting with those which were discussed only about a year ago shows a remarkable transformation to the city's advantage. Remembering that an all night service is about twenty-five per cent more than a moonlight schedule, and therefore that \$8 per lamp per month on the former is equivalent to about \$4.50 per month for the limited service, it may be recalled that a year or so ago a contract for the moonlight service at \$8.50 per month came to an end. The company which had been doing the lighting asserted that it could not afford to continue at less than \$10.50 per lamp. The City Council declined to pay that figure, and the city was plunged into darkness. Then another lighting company made for one year an arrangement reasonable at that time. Now the figure offered is but little more than half for an all night service, what it was declared impossible to give on a moonlight schedule. Under the new proposition, 400 lamps per year, all night, will cost \$28,800; whereas a year ago it was asserted that 300 on a moonlight schedule could not be furnished for less than \$37,800, and a contract under which 300 lamps on a moonlight schedule cost \$30,800 was refused. Now the city will have 100 more lamps than in March, 1898, and have them going all night, at a cost of \$1,800 less than \$30 called for then.

In the matter of lighting, the present City Council certainly has made a most excellent record in the reduced rates it has been able to secure; and it is only right to say that the Council improvement committee, especially Chairman Callister, is deserving of high praise for taking the lead and bearing the brunt of a hard contest on the lighting proposition, which has resulted in such a great advantage to the public as is now achieved. The City Council has done well in this lighting business.

A CONGRESS OF HEBREWS.

Concerning the conference of Hebrews to be held at Munich on June 28th—an event to which reference previously has been made in these

columns—the following additional information may prove interesting.

The gathering is to be held under the auspices of an organization known as Lovers of Zion, and will be presided over by the editor of the Neue Freie Presse, Dr. Herzl. The society was formed in Russia twenty years ago for the purpose of laboring for the restoration of Palestine to the Jews, and it now has branches all over the world. Among its supporters are the Rothschilds, Goldsmiths and other bankers. At the coming congress it is expected that 400 delegates will be present.

There are, it appears, different opinions regarding the first steps to be taken towards the recovery of the Holy Land. Some hold that the religious rites of the Mosaic covenant must first be restored. They favor the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of sacrifices, and urge that this would at once make Palestine a point of centralization to the scattered people. Others advocate an agitation for the political regeneration of the country as the first step. They believe that the country could be made a principality under conditions similar to those existing in Bulgaria. It is believed that the European powers would look with favor on such a project and that the Sublime Porte would, for a suitable consideration, give the necessary consent to the arrangement.

It is not without reason that the Lovers of Zion feel confident that the time is approaching for the rebuilding of the cities of David. The country has passed through a wonderful transformation during the past twenty years. Jerusalem has at least 50,000 Jewish inhabitants at present and to the traveler it looks as if they were quickly becoming the dominant element. Jewish colonies are springing up all over the country. There are now twenty-one of them, five of which were founded by the Lovers of Zion. Jaffa, where twenty years ago were ten Jewish families, now has 1,000 families of Hebrew faith. Jewish schools are being established and the children are made familiar with the ancient languages of their fathers.

It is stated that lately Baroness de Hirsch has joined the society, and that she will devote some of her millions to the colonization of Palestine. The congress at Munich is looked forward to with much interest, as it is believed its deliberations will lead to the adoption of some practical plan for the gathering of the children of Israel to the land of promise.

CHICAGO, June 8.—A match dropped carelessly by one of the workmen in the fireworks factory of M. Spure, at West Van Buren and Halstead streets, caused a terrific explosion a few minutes after six o'clock tonight. It was shortly after the closing time of the factory and many of the workmen had gone home, otherwise the loss of life must have been very heavy. As it was, a number of employees were badly hurt, and flying rockets and canules struck several people who were passing in street cars and on the sidewalks.

Mrs. Maggie Kenny, one of the injured, died at the county hospital from injuries to her spine.