

The Columbian.

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Scott Recitals Friday Nov. 6th. Secure tickets at Dentler's.

Frank Lafountain raised a beet this season that weighed 16 pounds.

S. C. Creasy has purchased the Krug planing mill of I. W. McKelvey.

M. C. McCollum has opened a coal yard at the Esby depot.

"Casper, the Yodler" at the Opera House next Wednesday.

"Little Nugget" at the Opera House Monday night was one of the funniest plays seen here in a long time.

The appeal of Superintendent Waller was argued in the Supreme Court at Pittsburg last Monday.

Senator Herring addressed a large Democratic meeting in Philadelphia last week.

A. W. Day has a bush on his lot on Fourth street, well covered with ripe red raspberries, for the second time this year.

Cards announcing the marriage of Mr. Fred G. Thorn to Miss Annie H. Buckman both of Philadelphia have been sent out. Mr. Thorn is well known here.

Don't fail to hear Mr. and Mrs. Scott at the Opera House, Nov. 6th. This is the second of the Y. M. C. A. course, and is sure to be a grand entertainment.

A new trial has been refused by Judge Reed in the United States District Court, in the case of H. E. Sutherland, convicted of sending obscene matter through the mails.

Taylor Beagle of Mt. Pleasant township sold a six weeks old calf to E. A. Rawlings on Tuesday, that weighed 295 pounds. It was the largest for its age we have ever seen. The ordinary weight of a calf six weeks old is about 150 pounds.

Miss Marie Holmes Bishop of Williamsport, Pa., will open a Dancing Academy in Bloomsburg, Thursday, November 5th in Grangers' Hall. Children from 4 years old upwards at 4:15 to 6. Advanced class for the German etc., 8 to 10. Afternoon class \$5 a term, evening class \$4; reduction to families. Seven years experience. Miss Bishop is just from New York with the novelties.

Benjamin Lewis, proprietor of the City Hotel at Jamison City, was killed while at work at the splash dam, about two miles above that place, last week Wednesday. He was driving logs, and in endeavoring to loosen a jam, he in some way was carried over the dam, and his foot being caught between two logs, he was held under the water until he drowned. He was not alone at the time, but those present were powerless to render assistance.

The two greatest events in the history of the world are the Advent of Christ and the Reformation. Christ gave the Gospel to the World, and Martin Luther restored it to the Common people.

Oct 31 is the 374th Anniversary of the Great Protestant Reformation. Rev. P. A. Heilman will preach on "The 95 Theses or the causes that led to the Reformation," next Sabbath morning and the Third Commandment in the Evening, "Thou shalt not swear."

Mr. Charles White of Ohio, and Miss Luccetta M. Moyer, daughter of Albert Moyer, were married at the home of the bride, on Tuesday at 12 o'clock, by Rev. S. W. Sears, in the presence of a number of relatives.

The bride received many handsome gifts, among them being a case of solid silver forks, teaspoons and tablespoons from her uncles, Moyer Bros. Mr. and Mrs. White started for Ohio where they will reside, on the afternoon train. The bridegroom is a son of A. M. White, formerly of Orange township, this county.

May prosperity and happiness attend them.

The entertainment at the Opera House last Saturday night was one of the most enjoyable amateur affairs ever given here. Its preparation was under the supervision of Mrs. H. H. Grotz, Mrs. Dr. Arment, and Miss Mary Leverett. The costumes were pretty, the singing was good, and the entire programme was well carried out by all who took part. Miss Maud Runyon played the piano, and Dr. Arment was general manager.

So good a thing ought not to be lost after only one presentation, and strong influences are being brought to bear on the management to induce them to repeat it.

Shall We Have a Constitutional Convention In Pennsylvania?

In 1874 the people of this Commonwealth ordained and established a new Constitution. Since then the Legislature has, with more or less earnestness, been engaged in remodeling our laws to conform to its requirements. Seventeen years have passed, however, without any very serious efforts to enforce many of its most important provisions. The judiciary of the State has expended much time on its interpretation, and it is only within the past few years that its meaning has been so definitely determined by the highest Courts as to partially end the chaotic conflict between the statutory laws and the Constitution.

On the 19th of June, 1891, the Governor approved an act requiring the electors of the Commonwealth to vote at the November election for or against holding a Convention to amend the Constitution. The title of the act is misleading. It is called "an act to provide for a Convention to amend the Constitution," but the sixth section gives the Convention "power to propose to the citizens of this Commonwealth, for their approval or rejection, a new Constitution or amendments to the present one, or specific amendments to be voted for separately." In other words, a convention is to be created possessing and representing the sovereign power of the people, with power to destroy, alter and amend the whole structure of Government, and all the laws of this Commonwealth, and without any limitation on the exercise of this power, save the Constitution of the United States, which "guarantees to every State in this Union a republican form of government."

The Constitution provides an orderly method of amending its provisions without resorting to the extraordinary means of a new convention. To make its provisions more stable, and to protect it from sudden changes by every "wind of doctrine," it wisely provides that amendments shall be agreed to by a majority of the members elected to each House, then published for three months before the next election in two newspapers in every county, and then if another and a new Legislature agrees to the amendments they shall be again published for three months and submitted to the qualified electors of the Commonwealth at an election. Each amendment is to be voted upon separately, and no amendment is to be submitted oftener than once in five years.

In utter disregard of the great conservative principles regulating future amendments embodied in the provisions of the Constitution itself, the Legislature proposes a new Constitutional Convention. It is not called in the usual way, by first submitting the call of a Convention to a vote of the people, and afterward selecting at another election proper persons as delegates; but, with marked cunning, the delegates are to be voted for at the same election at which the people pass upon the necessity for a Convention. The object is plain. One hundred and seventy-seven members are to be elected; twenty-seven in each Senatorial district. If the people vote for a Constitutional Convention these gentlemen will all be elected to office and receive \$1500. In every district, therefore, there are at least three men whose activity and personal influence are secured by the prospect of an honor of so high an office and its emoluments to persuade the people to vote for this new Convention. Without such machinery the people would be indifferent and the whole scheme defeated. We are not confronted with such a serious condition of public affairs as to justify a new Constitutional Convention and the expenditure of \$265,400 to pay the salaries of the delegates, plus at least \$235,000 more to pay mileage, incidentals and general expenses, making a total cost of half a million dollars. No one should begrudge the expenditure of so large a sum if necessary to secure the best possible form of government; but, under existing conditions, the chances are that the money would be wasted and the end not attained. This is a most inopportune time to undertake the formation of a new or a general revision of the old Constitution. The electors will be required to vote on the adoption or rejection next year, when there is a Presidential election. National politics, involving most important issues, will engross public attention to the exclusion of State issues. The Convention may submit a new Constitution to be voted for as a whole, or it may submit "specific amendments to be voted for separately." If a new Constitution, or many amendments are submitted, an intelligent judgment by the average voter will, by reason of excitement and interest in general politics, be rendered impracticable. It is always hazardous to remodel a great organic law. There are many provisions of the present Constitution which are so favorable to the general public that powerful influences have for seventeen years successfully delayed their enforcement. Will we act wisely if we offer a tempting opportunity for their repeal?

The advocates of the Convention tell us that the amendment of the Constitution is necessary to secure a "secret ballot," and without it we can never have the Australian system. When the new Constitution was adopted the provision for numbering ballots was to be the panacea for all illegal voting. Now this very provision is said to stand in the way of honest election laws. The unwisdom of incorporating such provisions (which should be left to legislative control) in the Constitution has become apparent. But is the question so vital as to take it outside the provisions of the Constitution for its amendment? It was quite possible to substantially adopt the Australian system, notwithstanding the constitutional provision for numbering ballots. The "new election law" is the work of astute politicians. Its evasion of the best provisions of the Australian system was not because of constitutional limitations. The law will not be one whit better when, under its own provisions a constitutional amendment shall repeal the section relating to a numbered ballot. The work of the hour is to create a public sentiment which will elect legislators who will give us a new ballot law with all the essential features of the Australian system, leaving the numbered ballot to remain until, by amendment submitted by the Legislature, this requirement of the Constitution can be repealed. A little delay can work no great harm. This great old Commonwealth can safely endure the present Constitution a few more years. If we fail to adopt needed reforms the fault will not be in our organic law, but in ourselves.

It is the misfortune of our political system that mere politicians can seize upon popular reforms and pervert them to their own advancement. Desirable as the Australian system in its best form may be, there is more demagogism than statesmanship in the willingness of many of its advocates to risk the overthrow of the present Constitution merely to do away with numbered ballots, when the same can be reached by an amendment expressed in a dozen words. There are times in the life of every nation when it is simpler to overthrow an existing order of things and to frame a new form of government than to attempt by amendment and reform to patch up the old. The rapid development of our country and the enormous advancement in political, social and practical sciences call for frequent changes in our laws. But surely the present Constitution is not so bad as to be incapable of amendment to meet all these requirements. I think the fatal error of the past thirty years has been to make Constitutions a compendium of statutory laws instead of a mere declaration of fundamental principles to secure stability of government, to preserve the liberties of the people, and to confine and restrain within safe limits the general powers of Legislatures. All this has been done on the plea that the legislative bodies cannot safely be trusted with power. The answer is plain: The members of the Legislature are elected by the same people who elect delegates to Constitutional Conventions, and if, through carelessness, they see fit to elect incompetent men, it is their own fault, and not the fault of the government under which they live. Indeed, I think that many of the constitutional limitations on legislative power are reflections on the whole system of free government, and tend to embarrass legitimate development, as well as to encourage electors to disregard their obligation as citizens to see that only worthy men are sent to the Legislature. Every time a great reform is proposed we are called upon to amend the Constitution to give it a trial. A constitution of a great people should be as sacred as the "sacred books of the law." Its provisions, when once ascertained and defined by judicial decision, should never be changed, unless from some overruling necessity. The people should be taught to revere it and to look with mistrust upon every effort to destroy, evade or change it. In the past history of this country constitutions were regarded with great reverence, but, latterly, there has been so much constitutional tinkering that they are no longer the people's talismans, and he who now raises constitutional questions is looked upon as an enemy to the advancement of society.

If we are to have a new Constitution every twenty years in the State of Pennsylvania, with all the uncertainty and confusion which its adjustment to existing laws will create, we may well apply Judge Black's language and declare that: "A French constitution, or a South American republic, or a Mexican administration, would be an immortal thing in comparison with the short-lived principles of Pennsylvania law. The rule of property, which ought to be as steadfast as the hills, will become as unstable as the waves."

The present Constitution as a whole is a most admirable one. The error of its framers was in incorporating many things which at the time seemed good, but which had not stood the test of practical application, and were, therefore, only tentative, and fit subjects for legislative experiment. The experience of seventeen years has developed its defects. It needs amendment particularly, I think, in three subjects, viz: The suffrage and election article, to enable us to experiment with the Australian ballot; the judiciary article, to repeal the foolish provision that "whenever a county shall contain 40,000 inhabitants it shall constitute a separate judicial district," and the provisions relating to cities and counties must be remodeled to overcome the muddle about classification, and to permit fuller local autonomy, without reopening the doors to the vicious system of special legislation which existed prior to 1874.

When the people are fully aroused to the necessity for these changes, they can all be brought about by amendments submitted in the ordinary way under the Amendment clause of the Constitution. The amendments required will present single subjects in clear and concise language, so that any man of ordinary intelligence can comprehend their meaning and vote intelligently. Let the politicians and overzealous reformers "sprinkle cool patience" on their "skipping spirits" and wait the consummation in an orderly way of the reforms they have so much at heart.

Let the politicians and overzealous reformers "sprinkle cool patience" on their "skipping spirits" and wait the consummation in an orderly way of the reforms they have so much at heart. GEO. F. BAER. Reading, Pa., Oct. 10, 1891.

Hon. Chauncey F. Black's Address to the People of Pennsylvania Favoring a Constitutional Convention. The following is printed by request: YORK PA., October 15, 1891. The bill submitting the question was passed through the legislature by the concurring votes of all parties. Such was the universal sentiment in favor of Ballot Reform, without distinction to party, that it could not safely be resisted, and even those most unfriendly to the reform and most interested in its defeat were compelled to assent to this bill. They did, so, however, it now appears, with the secret determination to try to deceive and confuse the people and thus to defeat the proposition and the reform at the polls. A Constitutional Convention is the people of Pennsylvania in convention assembled. It can revise the entire instrument if it sees fit, subject only to the approval of the people at the polls. In this case, however, the primary object is Ballot Reform, and should the convention be called it would establish at once, without awaiting the uncertain action of future legislatures, the secret Australian ballot, the most perfect system known to men— which has absolutely restored purity and freedom of elections wherever adopted, which Ex-President Cleveland declares "is essential to the maintenance of our free institutions," and which Governor Pattison said in his inaugural "is the one thing which the people of Pennsylvania most want and are most determined to have."

You are aware there is no way under heaven by which the secret ballot can be given to the people of Pennsylvania except by an alteration of the present article in the constitution on suffrage and elections. That article requires ballots to be numbered for the very purpose of their identification. It also permits each elector to write his name upon his ballot and to have it attested by the signature of any citizen of the district. These two provisions, which no law of the legislature can defeat or evade, make it possible, indeed, easy, for the contents of every ballot to be known, so that the bribe giver, the political boss, and the industrial boss, may buy and intimidate at will. Until these provisions are removed there can be no ballot reform in Pennsylvania worthy the name.

There are two ways of amending the constitution. Once in five years an amendment may be submitted to the people by the legislature. Such an amendment must be approved by two successive legislatures and then submitted to a vote of the people, having been advertised between legislatures and before submission. You will perceive that this is a long, tedious, and dangerous method, requiring years for its completion and encountering many obstacles. It is also expensive, costing possibly quite as much as a convention, without any assurance of the desired result at the end. The other method is by Constitutional Convention, the one recommended by the Governor and approved by both parties in the late legislature. It need not be much, if any more, expensive than the other plan, and it brings the reform with absolute certainty and without delay.

We say that by means of a convention Ballot Reform would certainly be achieved. We say this without any regard to the composition of the convention. Whether a majority of the delegates chosen to that convention shall be known by one party name or the other, they would have no choice whatever in the matter. They would be elected for this purpose. Nine-tenths, possibly even a greater proportion, of the people of Pennsylvania demand the reform, and the man or the party who should, in this convention, called for that very purpose, venture to oppose it, would simply invite destruction. Those who fear that the bosses, the rings, and the corporations may control the people's convention and defeat this reform, indulge a vain and silly fancy. Neither this nor any other harm can be done in the convention. The party which should propose to do harm in it would succeed only in ruining itself and its representatives without accomplishing even momentarily its corrupt object, since the people would reject promptly their work at the polls in November and we would be just where we were at the start.

What does Ballot Reform mean to the people of Pennsylvania? It means legislatures and public officials of all kinds responsible to the people and not to the political machines. It means emancipation from the rule of rings, bosses and monopolies. It means taxes honestly laid and equally distributed. It means lighter taxes and frugal expenditures. It means pure elections, and thereby pure government. It means, as Mr. Cleveland puts it, "the perpetuation of free institutions" now threatened by the use of money in elections and by the intimidation of vast masses of dependent voters. In this state two hundred thousand workmen alone signed petitions to the late legislature for the passage of a Constitutional Convention bill with a view to securing the secret, free and pure ballot. With the emancipation from evil influences and tyrannical power of the multitude of dependent electors, whose votes are now used to kill the votes of independent farmers and other citizens, there will come an instant change in the legislation and administration of Pennsylvania. The beneficent provisions of our fundamental law will be enforced. Taxes will be equalized. Discriminations against the industries of our Commonwealth will cease. And government by the people and for the people will take the place of government by the bosses and for the bosses.

We ask the people of Pennsylvania, without distinction of party, to vote for a Constitutional Convention and for such delegates as they know will respect their will. We believe that no harm can possibly be done, and that the good proposed and practically assured is beyond all estimation.

RESOLUTIONS ON CONVENTION. The following resolution was passed by the Democratic Convention of Columbia county on the 11th of August last, to-wit: "Resolved, By the Democrats of Columbia County this day in Convention met. That we are in favor of a Constitutional Convention with a special request that a secret ballot provision be made."

On the 2nd of September last the Democratic State Convention assembled at Harrisburg and passed a resolution favoring a Constitutional Convention. That Chas. T. Ellis is becoming a favorite here was demonstrated by the large audience which greeted "Casper, the Yodler," last night. Mr. Ellis is a most unique and excellent comedian and his songs have a peculiar beauty, characterized by richness and sweetness of voice that place him at once in a distinctive place as a star on the American stage. The play abounds in picturesque situations, has an interesting plot and enough romance and pathos in it to enlist the constant attention of the audience. Mr. Ellis' support of the cause was very good.—The Sun, Williamsport, Pa., Sept. 23. Bloomsburg Opera House, Nov. 4.

The services of Prof. L. M. Newcomb have been secured by Morris & Harkins at the Columbia College of Commerce. He is a fine penman, and expert accountant, and a graduate of the Zanerian Art School, and Lexington Business University. Joseph May desires to inform the public that he will do butchering during the winter, and will take hogs away and return them all done up in good shape.

PERSONAL. Miss Annie Ent is in Philadelphia this week. Mr. and Mrs. William Chrisman were in Philadelphia this week. W. H. Brooke went to New York on Tuesday to purchase new goods. J. K. Bittenbender spent a couple of days in New York this week. Judge Krickbaum was in town last Saturday on business. W. R. Tubbs and Capt. H. J. Connor went to Philadelphia on Thursday. A ten pound boy came to the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Wells on Monday. R. C. Rishel spent the past few days in town. He is a graduate of this office, and is now Foreman in the office of the Nanticoke Sun. Charles White, son of A. M. White, formerly of Orange township, now of Wood county, Ohio, has been visiting relatives here the past three weeks. DEATH'S HARVEST. Sylvester Pursel died at his home in Hemlock township, on Sunday last, aged 73 years. He had been ill for more than two years, from the effects of a paralytic stroke, which rendered him almost helpless. He was the youngest of a large family, but one of whom now survives, a brother, Isaac, of Buckhorn. Two other brothers have died within the past year. The late Mrs. E. F. Hartman was a sister of Mr. Pursel. He was born in the house where he died, and always lived there. The farm belonged to his father, and the deposits of iron ore made it valuable, and brought to Mr. Pursel a snug fortune. He was a man of kindly disposition and good judgment, and an excellent citizen. His wife survives him, also a daughter, Mrs. F. D. Dentler, and one son, D. Clark Pursel. The funeral took place on Wednesday morning, the services being conducted by Rev. W. R. Mulford of Danville, in the absence of Rev. W. C. Leverett. John Penman, another old citizen, died at his residence on Iron street, on Sunday, after a lingering illness. He was born in Scotland in 1824, and came to America with his parents when a boy. Most of his life was passed in Bloomsburg. He was a member of the Presbyterian church, and of the Masons and Odd Fellows. He was an industrious and respected citizen. Six sons and two daughters survive. His wife died last December. She was a daughter of Mrs. Mary Clayton, who died on the same day as Mr. Penman. The funeral took place on Wednesday and was conducted by Rev. D. J. Waller, Sr. The Masons attended in a body. Mrs. Mary Clayton died at her home on Iron street on Sunday, aged 78 years. She was a faithful member of the M. E. Church. She was buried on Tuesday, Rev. Sears conducting the services. The Democratic meeting announced for last Monday evening at Berwick was postponed on account of the inability of the speakers to get there. Mr. Buckalew was indisposed, Mr. Tewksbury was detained in Tioga county by meeting with an accident, and Col. Freeze's voice was not in condition to make a long speech, and as no other speakers could be secured on such short notice, Chairman Townsend was obliged to telegraph that the meeting would not take place. The Y. M. C. A. course opened with the "New York Stars and Meeklems," one of the finest entertainments ever given in our Opera House, and a good earnest of what the course will be. There remains five entertainments: "Scotts recitals," Friday evening of next week, Nov. 6th; Col. J. P. Sanford, Dec. 4th; Hon. George R. Wendling, January 26th; Ladies' Schubert Quartette, February 19th, and J. William Macy, March 25th. All this talent is offered in a course ticket with reserved seat for \$1.50. Tickets at Dentler's. Mrs. B. F. Savits received a check for \$1500 from the New York Life Insurance Company on Thursday, the full amount of the policy held by her husband. Miss Jane Hughes of Lime Ridge has opened a fashionable dress-making establishment in Mrs. Ent's building, Main St., and is prepared to cut and fit by the "Tailor system." Hon. F. M. Tewksbury was severely bruised while in Tioga county making speeches. He was thrown from a carriage, and hurt in the shoulder, arm, and side. He writes that he is sore, but not seriously injured, and is making speeches.