

HARRISBURG LETTER.

The Legislators at Home on a Ten Days' Vacation.

THE NECESSITY FOR ECONOMY.

Governor Hastings Will Send in a Message Calling a Halt on Lavish Appropriations. A Bill to Provide a State Home for Convicts—For a County of Quay.

HARRISBURG, Feb. 18.—The legislature has taken a recess for ten days in order that the lawmakers may attend the municipal elections and spend Washington's birthday at home. Both bodies will reconvene next Monday evening, and it is thought will buckle down to business in earnest. Beginning Tuesday the house will hold two sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 10 a. m. to 1 p. m., and from 3 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

The house two years ago did not begin to hold two sessions until the middle of March. The senate is ahead of the house with its work and will continue to hold one session a day for at least a month yet. Old members say they have never seen in their legislative experience so many bills on the house calendar as at present. These will nearly all be given careful consideration, with the result that the session will probably be extended far into May.

The governor has signed the resolution introduced by Mr. Focht, of Union, providing for an investigation of the state institutions to ascertain how many of their inmates are aliens. The resolution provides that the inquiry shall be made by a committee from the house and senate and two disinterested persons to be appointed by the governor. The committee is to make its report to the next legislature.

The committee to investigate the management of the insane hospitals at Wernersville and Norristown have been appointed and will go to work next Thursday. Senator Gobin, of Lebanon, will conduct the investigation. The governor has not yet acted upon the bill providing for an additional law judge for Westmoreland county. The ten days' limit expires next Friday. It is believed, though, that he will sign the measure before that time.

Colonel Gilkeson's Appointment. Colonel Gilkeson, chairman of the state Republican committee, has been rewarded for the admirable manner in which he conducted the campaign which resulted in the election of Governor Hastings with the appointment of commissioner of banking, at a salary of \$9,000 a year. The colonel has qualified and announced the appointment of Colonel F. Asbury Aul, of this city, as deputy commissioner. Colonel Aul was appointed by Colonel Gilkeson's predecessor. He is a Democrat and a protégé of ex-Governor Wolf.

Governor and Mrs. Hastings have issued invitations for a reception at the executive mansion on next Tuesday evening, the 20th, on the occasion of the fifty-sixth anniversary of the governor's birth. The reception will be the most brilliant social affair ever given at the old fashioned mansion, and will be attended by the United States senators from Pennsylvania, the congressmen and congressmen-elect, state judiciary, Major General Snowden and staff, the governor's staff, the three brigadier generals and their respective staffs and other state dignitaries. The mansion will be brilliantly decorated and illuminated. An addition is being built to the dining room for the occasion. Mrs. Hastings will be assisted in receiving by the wife of Lieutenant Governor Lyon and the ladies of the cabinet. This will be the third and final reception at the mansion this season.

Senator Kauffman, of Lancaster, the leader of the anti-Cameron senators, started the senate last Thursday with a vigorous protest against the creation of new offices in general and against the bill allowing the superintendent of public instruction a stenographer in particular. The bill originally provided for a salary of \$1,500 a year, but the amount was reduced to \$1,200, and then the measure passed finally. The extravagance of the legislature has alarmed the governor, and he has concluded to call a halt. The members have shown a disposition to create new offices galore and pass all manner of appropriations and throw the responsibility of disposing of them upon the governor. General Hastings doesn't propose to stand this, and after the recess he will send a message to the legislature calling attention to the fact that the hard times have impaired the state revenues and that greater economy must be practiced with the people's money.

To Investigate Philadelphia Politics. When the senate reconvenes a resolution will be offered for a committee to investigate the municipal affairs of Philadelphia. Senator Quay is credited with being behind the proposed investigation, his purpose being to crush his former lieutenants, Senator Porter and David Martin. It has not yet been determined who will be chairman of the committee, but it is thought the honor will go to Senator Kennedy, of Allegheny, a warm personal friend of Senator Quay. There is a unanimous sentiment among the Quay people to have Senator Penrose conduct the investigation, but he has declined. He will be a member of the committee.

Chairman Niles, of the house general judiciary committee, has introduced a local taxation bill similar to the New York law, which he will press in preference to the new revenue bill drafted by the state tax conference, of which he is a member. Mr. Niles' bill provides that all lands and personal estate, except property used for public purposes, actual places of religious worship, places for burial not used for private or corporate profit, and institutions of purely public charity, whether owned by corporations or individuals, shall be liable to taxation, and that all laws exempting property from taxation other than that enumerated shall be void. The word "land" is defined to mean everything within the common parlance that may be so designated. The bill puts a construction on the words "personal estate" to include furniture, money, goods, debts due from solvent debtors, whether on stock, note, bond or mortgage, and stock in moneyed corporations, as well as capital stock not invested in real estate. It provides further that the taxes on all property shall be levied and assessed under existing laws.

A bill creating a department of agriculture has passed the house and is on the senate calendar for second reading next Tuesday. The measure provides for a secretary of agriculture, at a salary of \$4,000 a year; a deputy secretary, who shall be paid \$3,500; an economic zoologist, a commissioner of forestry, a dairy and food commissioner and state veteri-

arian, who shall receive a salary of \$2,500 each. They are to be appointed by the governor and serve for four years. The governor is also authorized to appoint a chief clerk at a salary of \$1,800 a year and one messenger, whose salary shall be \$600. The other officers, except the state veterinarian, are allowed a clerk each at a salary of \$1,500. Governor Hastings is urging the speedy passage of the bill, and it is likely that it will reach him before the close of the month.

The forestry bill has also passed the house and is well advanced in the senate. This is one of the most important measures introduced this session and will, if it becomes a law, tend to protect the forests of the state from destruction by fire. The bill provides for special fire wardens in remote and thinly populated forest districts who are to be residents of such districts, their compensation to be fixed by the forestry commission and paid by the state. The supervisors of roads of the respective townships, by virtue of their office, are district fire wardens. In case of fire they are to go to the ground at once and hire such help as they may deem necessary. Anyone desiring to burn brush or other combustible matter in or near forest land must first apply for permission from the fire warden. Violators of this provision may be arrested and taken before a magistrate without a warrant. The bill defines the word "forest" to include scrub brush, sprouts, briars and all woody growth apt to feed or spread fire.

For the County of Quay. The senate has passed finally a bill creating the county of Quay out of portions of Luzerne and Schuylkill counties. In the house the measure will not have the easy time that it did in the other body. In the lower branch the friends of Martin and Porter are opposing the measure and have succeeded so far in keeping it in committee. The Cox Brothers, the large coal operators in Pennsylvania, are opposing it also. The bill takes in three townships of Schuylkill county and two in Luzerne, including the city of Hazleton. It is claimed that within the territory there is a population of 60,000, with the Democrats in a majority.

The house committee on education has reported the Douthett bill aimed at the school book trust. The bill provides for a school book board, to consist of the governor, secretary of the commonwealth and state superintendent of public instruction. Within sixty days after the passage of the act the state superintendent is expected to have gathered required information and prepared a list of text books with the publishers' prices attached. The board will fix the price for each school book not to exceed 75 per cent. of the wholesale rate now quoted. After the list of books is prepared the publishers will be asked for proposals at prices not exceeding the new ones fixed by the board to furnish the school boards to pay the freight. For every failure to fill orders the publishers will be fined \$500. The books adopted cannot be changed for five years without a three-fourths vote of the board. The board can order the books from the publishers at the prices stipulated by the school book board or if they can secure the same books for less money they are at liberty to do so.

The house has under consideration a liquor license bill to protect the retailer, the wholesaler and bottler. It provides that if a bottler bottles spirituous liquors and malt liquors both he shall pay the same license as a retailer and a wholesaler pays, but if he bottles malt liquor only then he pays the same license that he now pays. The bill provides further that no wagon shall be used by a bottler unless it is his absolute property. This is to prevent the peddling of beer by parties who have no license, but who put some one's name and number on the side of their wagon and sell for a brewer on commission. The bill was introduced by Mr. Fow by request of the Retail Liquor Dealers' association of Philadelphia.

The Marshall bill repealing the law prohibiting the consolidation of competing pipe line companies went through the house on final passage as if lubricated, only fifty-six votes being recorded against it. The measure is before the senate corporations committee and will be reported after the recess. It is likely to go through that body with as much ease as characterized its passage by the house.

Want the Winter Registry Abolished. The country members in the house are urging the passage of the Wilcox bill, abolishing the December registry of voters and changing the time of the spring registry from May to June. They contend that one registry a year answers all practical purposes, and that the winter registry is expensive and useless. The city members oppose the bill on the ground that in June many persons in the cities are at the seashore and the mountains, and that it would put them to a great inconvenience to return home and register. The bill has been read the second time in the house.

A bill for a hospital for consumptives has found its way into the house. The measure has been endorsed by the state board of health and public charities, as well as the leading physicians of the state. It recites that the governor shall appoint five commissioners, who shall serve without compensation, to select the site and build the hospital, where none but residents of the state shall be treated. The commissioners are to select within four months after the date of appointment a tract of land not less than 2,000 feet above the sea level, and shall be well adapted for successfully carrying out the climatic treatment of consumption, and shall be approved by the governor and board of public charities. The cost of the site and buildings shall not exceed \$150,000, which is to be appropriated to the commissioners for this purpose.

Lynched in a Prison Cell. KINGSTON, Mo., Feb. 18.—About 2 o'clock yesterday morning a mob of masked men, supposed to be negroes from Hamilton, surrounded the sheriff's house and jail here, caught and bound Sheriff Golds-worthy, whose deputy was away, took the keys from him and gained entrance to the jail corridor, with the avowed purpose of taking out and hanging George Tracey, a negro, who shot and killed his wife at Hamilton, in this county, last month. The mob was unable to get into the steel cell, but began shooting through the bars of the cell door and succeeded in putting six bullets into his body, killing him instantly.

GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

The pickle crop is reported short all over the world. Chicago has shipped 250 carloads of pickles to the East and Europe, and pickles, before they grow again, will be marked among the scarce luxuries.

Some of the best known varieties of blackberries were introduced by transplanting from the woods. Many a large fruited sort is met with which would, if transplanted to the garden, be as good as any of the cultivated sorts now in use.

Some sorts of pears, notably the Bartlett, Clapp's Favorite and Lucretia, never fail of a crop, and by using care varieties may be planted so as to come in one after another. The pear is a sure crop all the time, and the wonder is that more of them are not to be seen about our farm houses.

There is little difference in varieties of asparagus. Rich soil and good culture will make good shoots from any kind. The Palmetto is now the most popular sort. Seed sown in the spring and well cared for in good soil will make good roots for setting next fall, and the second year after setting there will be a fine crop.

The only advantage of kohlrabi over the ordinary rutabaga turnip is that its flavor is less pronounced and therefore less liable to affect the flavor of the milk of cows fed on it. The Giant White is usually raised for stock food, but the smaller kinds pay well for feeding, while there is sometimes a chance to sell a part of the crop in market. Kohlrabi is a peculiar vegetable combining the texture of the turnip with the flavor of the cabbage. When fully matured it is tough and indigestible and not fit for the table. When young and tender, and if cooked like turnip, it makes a not bad table vegetable.

Small fruit growers ought to fertilize their land thoroughly, and when this is done they should keep it always producing something. If the strawberry patch is running out, either the red or black raspberry can be planted between the rows. In this way the year after the strawberry plantation is cultivated under the raspberry canes will be in full bearing. It is the same with the larger fruits. A young apple or pear orchard will grow strawberries, raspberries and blackberries nearly as well as if the orchard were not planted until it gets fully into bearing.

When the Ground is Frozen.

There are good reasons for doing as much hauling as possible about the farm during the winter. There is time for the work at this season and it is always good policy to do during the winter all the work that can be done to as good advantage as in the spring. At the best work will crowd in the spring. Then if the hauling is done over the fields while the ground is frozen, clods and ruts will not be made, as will be if the hauling is done when the ground is wet and soft. Clods are always to be avoided and ruts are prone to develop into gullies. Yet another reason is that larger loads can be hauled while the ground is frozen cold than when the frost is out and he tires sink into spongy, sticky ground, as they do in the spring.

Another reason is that the exercise given the horses during the winter is kept by them in good health and to keep their muscles from losing hardness and strength. If the horses are allowed to be idle during the winter, the sudden violent change to hard work in the spring is too severe; neither their muscles nor their digestive organs are equal to the demands made upon them, and the animals are worn down at the very beginning. This is not the case when the animals are put to some work during the winter.

Yet another reason for doing luring about the farm that can be done is that generally it can be done on a sled. Inasmuch as the box of the sled is lower down than the box of the wagon, a load can be put on or taken off the sled more easily than the wagon. Using the sled saves labor. The saving is quite an item, especially in the hauling of heavy posts or timbers. And, in fact, a man may be able to load on a sled, logs, stones, stumps, etc., that he could not load on a wagon.

Very likely posts and rails for fencing can be hauled in place, ready to be used in the spring. An old fence, that is to be replaced or repaired, can be torn down, and the stuff not to be used in the new fence be hauled away. Logs, stumps, stones and other rubbish can be cleared off the land. Gravel can be hauled from the bank and placed where it will be needed for drives and walks in the spring. Certainly one should get near the wood house a supply of wood sufficient not only for the winter, but for the next spring and summer. When one can work in the fields he should not be compelled to haul and cut store wood. Gullies and hollows can be filled now. It will not be hard to find hauling to do, and it should be done.—American Agriculturist.

The Right Kind of Boar.

The boar should be fine boned, and have a tendency to fatten easily, though for breeding uses he should be kept as thin in flesh as he can be without injury. With such a combination the farmer will have next spring a litter of thrifty pigs that will gain much more in the first ten months of their life than pigs sired by a scrub, 10-breed boar. If he does so he will acknowledge a year hence that it is the best small investment that he ever made. Good pigs are more quickly bred than any other stock except poultry, and like poultry they deteriorate more quickly when they are neglected.

Hedge Fences.

If a hedge fence is too weak to turn stock do not cut it away, as hedges are ornamental, but run three or four strands of barbed wire through it, which will preserve it from being broken by stock and also be as serviceable as a post and wire fence. Barbed wire is the best of fence to confine r-ruly stock, as boards will be broken. If hidden in the hedge the animals will not be so liable to injury, as they soon learn that the hedge is proof against them.

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