

A CHAPTER OF STATISTICS.

The indebtedness of Pennsylvania Counties Over \$62,000,000—Secretary Latta Calls Down Assessors for Neglect of Duty—Some Remarkable Discrepancies as Shown by the Returns to the Internal Affairs Department.

The returns to the department of internal affairs show the total indebtedness of the counties of Pennsylvania to be \$62,601,583.91. Philadelphia's debt is \$53,910,338.98 and that of Allegheny county \$3,659,053.77. The counties reporting no debt are Bradford, Bucks, Butler, Centre, Clarion, Cumberland, Erie, Franklin, Greene, Lackawanna, Lawrence, Lehigh, McKean, Northampton, Somerset, Susquehanna, Venango, Washington and Wyoming. Lackawanna county, which reported no debt this year, had a debt of \$160,000 last year. Somerset and McKean counties make no return this year.

The counties that have increased their indebtedness during the year are Bedford, Cameron, Carbon, Crawford, Elk, Fulton, Jefferson, Juniata, Lancaster, Lycoming, Mercer, Northumberland, Perry, Potter, Tioga and Union. All the other counties either maintain the same indebtedness or have reduced the amount. The total amount of county indebtedness reported in 1891 was \$84,773,192.42; in 1892, \$63,602,502.42; in 1893, \$63,982,537.24; in 1894, \$63,743,363.40; in 1895, \$62,601,583.91.

The aggregate amount of taxes assessed in 1895 is \$20,387,168.08, as against \$18,250,660.87 in 1891. Marked increases are found in the counties of Armstrong, Beaver, Bradford, Clearfield, Cambria, Dauphin, Erie, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lawrence, Luzerne, Mercer, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, Somerset, Tioga and Westmoreland. Large decreases are found in Berks, Bucks, Butler, Chester, Clarion, Columbia, Cumberland, Greene, Lycoming, Northampton, Union, Washington and York.

The amount of money at interest, including mortgages, judgments, bonds, notes, stocks, &c., in Pennsylvania, is \$620,020,507. What percentage this amount bears to the actual amount at interest and upon which the state should receive four mills annually as taxation, cannot be ascertained, but that many millions of dollars of this species of property escapes taxation is beyond the slightest doubt.

Secretary Latta says severe terms are required to characterize acts of the assessors in regard to their returns of the value of stages, omnibuses, hacks, &c., in use. This species of personal property is made the subject of taxation for state purposes. There is a large amount of money invested in this property, and yet the amount returned in some counties is so trifling as to be hardly worthy of mention. In 1891 the total amount returned was \$636,667; in 1892, \$627,179; in 1893, \$508,204; in 1894, \$570,061; in 1895, \$554,467.

These figures show that the value of this kind of property was several thousand dollars less in 1895 than it was in 1891, but it is not believed that this is a true representation of the facts. In the county of Allegheny, where there are hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in this species of property, less than one hundred thousand dollars were returned. In Berks no return was made for 1894, and \$7,040 returned in 1895. Cameron county, while it had several stage lines, makes no return at all.

Dauphin county in 1894, with its numerous stages, hacks, &c., returned only \$685, but there seems to have been something of a gain as the returns for 1895 show \$4,945. Huntingdon county returns only \$520. This class of property seems to have largely disappeared from Lackawanna county between the years 1894 and 1895, as in the former year the returns showed \$21,536, and in the latter but \$11,379.

Snyder county in 1894 returned \$150, but in 1895 the assessors failed to find a vehicle upon which to make a return. Sullivan county in 1894 seems to have had no property of this kind, but in 1895 makes a return of \$60. There can be scarcely a comment made on this subject of taxation as returned by the several boards of county commissioners, that does not reflect in a most unfavorable manner on the assessors, and shows shiftless execution of the tax laws. Recklessness, shiftlessness and disregard of duty seems to characterize the assessors and the commissioner in making returns, so far at least as they relate to this species of property.

The money at interest in Pennsylvania aggregates \$2,482,507.52. A great increase is shown in the counties of Carbon, Centre, Chester, Cumberland, Lackawanna, Lawrence, Northampton and Philadelphia. Large decreases are shown in the counties of Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Bucks, Blair, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Dauphin, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, Perry, Schuylkill, Warren and Westmoreland. The increase in state taxes from 1894 to 1895 on this class of property is \$16,056.21. Of the total amount of taxes paid on this class of property in 1895, to wit, \$2,482,507.52, \$1,238,527.93 was paid by the county of Philadelphia. In 1891 the total amount returned to the department under the head of

values of salaries, emoluments of office, posts of profit, professions, trades and occupations, was \$79,204,079; in 1892, \$104,881,902; in 1893, \$111,014,967; in 1894, \$114,414,918; in 1895, \$112,827,751. While there appears to be a marked decrease in the valuations from 1894 to 1895, there is a noticeable increase from 1891 to 1895, the increase in that time being about \$32,000,000. These figures no doubt, fall far short of giving the actual valuation existing under this classification, owing to under valuations and to the fact that for none of the years has either Lancaster or Philadelphia county made any return.

In addition to the real estate assessed for taxation, which amounts to something over two billions of dollars there are other species of property subject to county taxation. The total value of property taxable for county purposes in 1891 was \$2,216,993,213; in 1892, \$2,459,538,840; in 1893, \$2,507,066,937; in 1894, \$2,545,500,738; in 1895, \$2,621,047,521. There has been a gradual increase from 1891 to 1895. All the counties appear to have made complete returns under this heading.

Distress After Eating.

"I was troubled with dyspepsia and could not eat anything without terrible pain. The doctors gave me medicine but nothing seemed to help me and my brother told me to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. I did so and to-day I am entirely cured and can eat anything I wish without distress." —Mrs. Clara B. Ryan, Johnsonburg, Pa.

Hood's Pills cure all liver ills.

Beauties of Reminiscence.

The Most Natural Years of Our Lives are Those of Childhood.

In January *Ladies' Home Journal* Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D. D., in an admirable article on "The Memories of Our Childhood Homes," writes that, "Reminiscence makes us little even when we are old, and helps to keep us pure and fresh with the springtime that was in us a score or a generation of years ago. A boy can never become utterly bad so long as there remains with him a memory of his father and mother in the act and attitude of prayer. The time may come with the hardening and chilling process of the years when he will himself cease to pray, but from the canvas long ago painted there will never fade the figures of those, now asleep, whose heads were seen day by day bent in humble, confiding worship, and who in inspired priestliness laid the morning sacrifice upon the family altar; and the memory of father's and mother's prayer helps, at any rate, to keep alive in us our own possibilities of prayer."

"The most natural years of our lives we live while we are children, and there is always rest and purification in getting back into touch with them. When the burdens press a little heavily, and the future is thick with uncertainties, the wish will sometimes shape itself that we might be back again among our free, fresh, childhood days. We do not understand it very well, but there is something gone that we would dearly love to have back. Those may seem to have been rather unproductive afternoons that we used to spend up in the garret, listening, in the pures of our merry-making, to the rain pattering on the roof, and we so dry and sheltered underneath, but our life means more even to-day because of them and because of our memory of them.

Sittser Loses His Case.

Sullivan-Wyoming Judicial Contest Decided in Favor of Judge Dunham.

The commission to try the Sittser-Dunham judicial contest in the Sullivan-Wyoming district last week made its return to Governor Hastings. The contest is decided in favor of Judge Dunham, the sitting Republican judge, who is returned elected by 177 majority. On the face of the returns Dunham was elected over ex-Judge Sittser, Democrat, by a majority of only seventeen.

The commission threw out the votes in the First ward of Tunkhannock and several votes in Sullivan county, thereby increasing by 150 Dunham's majority. The report is signed by Judge Archibald, of Scranton, and Judge Searle, of Montrose. Judge Woodward, of Wilkes-Barre, was called into the trial of the case after the retirement of Judge Rice to go on the superior court bench, and did not sign the report for this reason. Proceedings have been commenced at Tunkhannock to compel the petitioners for the contest to pay the expenses.

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Eggs per dozen.....	.24
Lard per lb.....	.10
Pork per pound.....	.12 1/2
Pork, whole, per pound.....	.06
Beef, quarter, per pound.....	.07
Wheat per bushel.....	.65
Oats " ".....	.28
Rye " ".....	.50
Wheat flour per bbl.....	3.50
Hay per ton.....	12.10
Potatoes per bushel.....	.30
Turnips " ".....	.25
Onions " ".....	.50
Sweet potatoes per peck.....	25 to .30
Tallow per lb.....	.41
Shoulder " ".....	.11
Side meat " ".....	.07
Vinegar, per qt.....	.07
Dried apples per lb.....	.05
Dried cherries, pitted.....	.10
Raspberries.....	.12
Cow Hides per lb.....	3 1/2
Steer " ".....	.05
Calf Skin.....	.80
Sheep pelts.....	.75
Shelled corn per bus.....	.60
Corn meal, cwt.....	2.00
Bran.....	1.10
Chop.....	1.10
Middlings.....	1.10
Chickens per lb new.....	.08
" " " old.....	.10
Turkeys " ".....	.10
Geese " ".....	.10
Ducks " ".....	.08

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No. 6, delivered.....	2.40
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