

THE COLUMBIAN.

BLOOMSBURG, PA.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 1903.

Proposed New County.

To Be Formed from Parts of Columbia, Northumberland and Schuylkill.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY.

One Finds Constitutional Obstacles to the Movement.

Concerning the proposed erection of a new county from parts of Columbia and Northumberland, the *Ashtland Advocate* of last week says:

"The proposed transferring of Centralia borough and Conyngham township from Columbia to Northumberland county, has caused considerable comment since the project was first spoken of some weeks ago. The people of both districts favor the transfer and are soliciting every assistance to bring it about. Their principal reason for changing is the inconvenience in getting to court at Bloomsburg, being compelled to leave Centralia at 6:00 a. m., and arriving at Bloomsburg at 11 o'clock.

Edward J. Flynn, Esq. one of Centralia's leading citizens, when interviewed, said that he is heartily in favor of the transfer, and said he voiced the sentiment of the people of Centralia, when he said the transfer would be gratifying to them. From a legal aspect he said he did not know whether it is possible for such a transferral, and from a political standpoint he thinks it would make no material change, as during the past few years the voters have been about evenly divided in politics.

The change that would be the most beneficial to all concerned, Mr. Flynn added, would be the formation of a new county, including the upper end of Northumberland county and portions of Schuylkill county, making Shamokin the county seat and naming the county after that town.

This is a move that would no doubt meet with instant favor at Shamokin, which has long objected to the fact that Sunbury is the seat of Northumberland county, while that town (Shamokin) is the center of the great business and legal interests of the county.

Just what is going to be the outcome of the present agitation is hard to determine. Time alone can tell."

The *Milton Record* of last week says:

"The proposition to create a new county out of Shamokin and Coal township and Mt. Carmel and Mt. Carmel township, from Northumberland county, the Conyngham townships and Centralia from Columbia and a strip from the northern end of Schuylkill, would, we apprehend, find very little opposition in the upper end of this county. The four districts named from Northumberland comprise about one-half the county's population. They supply about four fifths of the quarter sessions business at our courts get about three-fourths of the costs paid in dismissed cases and pay about two sevenths of the taxes. From a commercial standpoint the interests of the coal regions and those of agricultural and manufacturing portions of the county are not identical. The townships noted above belong to the same coal producing districts, so that in their formation into a separate county there would be a unity of interests.

Viewed from a political standpoint it would not effect any material change in this county. The two boroughs are strongly Republican and the two townships largely Democratic. On the whole the Republicans have perhaps several hundred majority. In the new county this would be overcome by the Democratic majority in the Columbia section, but the North-

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umberland end of the combination would have the same advantage under the proposed arrangement that they have now. Party lines are lost sight of when home men are nominated, and their large vote gives them a decided advantage and secures them more than their just proportion of the offices. In this county today the coal regions have the sheriff, mine inspector, county treasurer, prothonotary, two members of the legislature, two commissioners and two auditors, about equally divided politically. Shamokin would gain the county seat and would have to pay for it in the way of increased taxation."

The Mt. Carmel *Item* finds constitutional objections, and thinks there is not sufficient territory in the old counties to make three counties of proper size and proportion. The *Item* says:

"Since the growth of the new county idea there has been considerable discussion concerning the project. With a view of getting a clear idea of the matter from all sides it has been decided to look up the constitution covering the case. The exact wording of the constitution on the subject of new counties is found in Article XIII, Section I, and is as follows: 'No new county shall be established which shall reduce any county to less than four hundred square miles, or to less than twenty thousand inhabitants; nor shall any county be formed of less area, or containing a less population; nor shall the line thereof pass within ten miles of the county seat of any county proposed to be divided.'"

Northumberland and Columbia counties have a combined area of about 959 square miles. It is therefore obvious that according to the express provision of the constitution no new county having 400 square miles could be formed out of these two, leaving the original counties within the constitutional limit. The only way to get around this difficulty would be to take a part of Schuylkill county, but the citizens of that county don't seem to entuse over the proposition.

Another point has been made and seems to be very well taken. The actual value of the land in Conyngham township decreases every year. It is valuable only for its mineral wealth, and the depletion of that wealth inevitably reduces its value. This must naturally continue until the coal is exhausted. In the meantime there is no guarantee that the township's expenses will decrease, on the contrary, they are tolerably certain to go the other way. When a new territory is taken on by a county the expenses from that section are compared with its income, and this is where Conyngham would fall short. It will blast many fond hopes but the new county project, viewed from all sides, looks like a dead one."

It is a great scheme—that of the cigarette manufacturers—to give presents to those who will bring to them a certain number of wrappers of cigarette packages. You can get a piano for 20,000 wrappers. A little calculation will show you that it will be necessary to smoke 400,000 cigarettes in order to get the required number of wrappers. If the "best" are used they will cost 25 cents for two packs, and you will spend \$5,000 to get that piano, and the chances are that you will need a harp more than a piano when you get through with those 400,000 cigarettes.

BALLOT REFORM BILL

Drafted by Committee Appointed By Senator Quay.

PENNYPACKER'S NEW SECRETARY

How Bromley Wharton Came to Be Appointed—Liquor Bills to Be Introduced in the Legislature—Other Items of Interest at Harrisburg.

[Special Correspondence.]

Harrisburg, Pa., Jan. 28.—The first practical working week of the present session of the legislature closed with alarmist rumors in the air. The inauguration of Governor Pennypacker was disposed of amid picturesque display, a snowstorm, and somewhat mild enthusiasm; both branches of the assembly settled down to workmanlike business—the senate particularly; several bills were messaged over to the house from the upper body; the cabinet and other appointments were confirmed.

Senator Quay, as chairman of the state committee, appointed a sub-committee, with ex-Senator Hertzler as chairman, to draft a ballot-reform bill. This task has been performed. The measure is understood to eliminate the party circle at the head of the columns, do away with the practice of instructing voters in the polling place, and generally return to a modification of the old method, thus enabling party organizations to distribute tickets ahead of election.

But to Penrose, Elkin, Durham, Senator Focht, and other party leaders such a bill as this is highly distasteful. One thing they say they will not consent to—the elimination of the party circle. No such bill, they insist, can pass. The Quay bill has not yet been introduced, nor is it likely to be until the state committee has had an opportunity to pass upon it.

But meanwhile the Focht bill of last session, which retains the party circle, was reintroduced to-night by the senator from Union, and thus this phase of the question would seem to be on. Nothing, however, is likely to be done with it until Durham returns from Bermuda about the beginning of February. The Democrats have a bill of their own, and this may be introduced this week.

Should a difference occur between Quay and the state leaders on a ballot bill, it is problematical how it would end, assuming, of course, that Quay presses his bill.

The New Private Secretary.

It had all along been supposed that the selection of Bromley Wharton, of Philadelphia, as his private secretary was Governor Pennypacker's personal choice. So in a sense he was, but not in the way generally understood. It is said that Governor Pennypacker had no personal acquaintance with Mr. Wharton until a short time before his appointment. The story in its brief details is as follows: J. Granville Leach, of Philadelphia, and Judge Pennypacker have been lifelong friends. Soon after his election the ex-judge asked Leach if he would become his private secretary. Leach thought it over and finally said "No." The governor-elect then suggested that he should accept the post of state librarian. Again Leach thought it over and again said "No."

At this stage the judge fell back upon Mr. Dotterer as his private secretary—Mr. Dotterer also being a lifelong friend—and this gentleman accepted. But unhappily Mr. Dotterer fell sick and died, and again Judge Pennypacker appealed to Mr. Leach. Mr. Leach was still averse to taking the position, but he had a friend—Mr. Bromley Wharton—a gentleman belonging to Philadelphia's exclusive set. Mr. Wharton had been Mr. Leach's assistant when Mr. Leach was appraiser of the port of Philadelphia, and he could recommend him highly. Judge Pennypacker took Mr. Leach's word for it, and that is how Mr. Wharton's name was the first sent in to the senate by the new governor, and the first confirmed. He is a bright, clean-cut, active young man, and resembles very much in appearance his predecessor, Mr. Gerwig.

Among the visitors to the inauguration was Amos Mylin, of Lancaster, ex-auditor-general. He hadn't been to Harrisburg for a long while, and a good deal of his time was taken up in greeting old friends and swapping reminiscences. "Uncle Amos," as he is popularly known, told me that Senator Quay is developing into an extensive landed proprietor in Lancaster county. Since he purchased his Mountville property he has been adding to it little by little, and he is now negotiating for the possession of a slice of rich land a hundred acres in extent, adjoining his own and belonging to Jonas Garber. The senior senator may be a busy man at Washington these days, endeavoring to increase the number of states in the union, but he is not neglectful, nevertheless, in increasing the number of his own acres.

Speaking of Lancaster, a bill will be introduced in the legislature this session to encourage the growing of Sumatra tobacco in that county. Successful experiments have been made in cultivating shade-grown Sumatra, a half acre at Marietta yielding 855 pounds of an excellent grade. It is desired by the Lancaster tobacco growers to continue these experiments and they think that another year's work in this direction will attain absolute perfection. But a state appropriation will be necessary.

The gallant and chivalrous Judge Harry White, of Indiana, has come to the rescue of the widows. He has drawn up a bill, which was introduced by Senator Fisher last week, and for

which every widow should rise up and call him blessed. His bill gives the widow of a husband who dies intestate a life interest in his entire estate. At present, where there is issue, she has only her widow's rights. This latter condition, Judge White thinks, is a remnant of old common law that should be done away with—a relic of ancient times when the woman was regarded as inferior to the man. "The trend of modern legislation," says the judge, "is toward the emancipation of woman." Hence the bill.

Liquor Legislation. I mentioned in this correspondence some time ago that some sweeping legislation regarding the liquor traffic in the state would be attempted, and a number of bills in this connection will be introduced within the next week or ten days. Most of them will probably emanate from Philadelphia. One of these measures will place a penalty on tavern keepers who sell beer or liquor in "growlers" or bottles to women to be carried from the premises. A similar bill passed the house last session but fell by the wayside in the senate.

The other measures will be in the interest of the retail dealers. They include the compulsory abolition of the free lunch, trial by jury in cases involving the revocation of licenses, restricting bottlers and wholesalers to the sale of not less than a gallon of spirits, and prohibiting grocers altogether from engaging in the sale of liquor as a part of their business. It is more than likely that the last two bills will be fought by the wholesalers and grocers, but the liquor associations back of the measures believe that on lofty moral grounds alone all such legislation, tending to confine the traffic to its legitimate sphere and discouraging home tipping, can and should be successfully enacted.

An effort is being made to give the judicial district composed of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Mifflin counties an additional law judge. Senator Miller, of Bedford, has introduced a bill to that effect. At present there is only one judge in the district—Judge Bailey, of Huntingdon—and it is claimed that he is very much overworked. Bedford alone, according to Senator Miller, has population enough under the constitution to entitle it to a separate judge.

Representative Snyder, of Schuylkill county, who is an ex-county attorney, has a bill providing that three overseers of the poor be appointed by the county judges instead of elected as under the existing law. His colleagues in the house, Palmer, Gardner, Littler, Crone, and Reed, he says, are with him on the bill.

Of Interest to Veterans.

The bill prepared by Col. A. K. McClure and sponsored in the house by Mr. Cooper, of Delaware, providing for the erection on Gettysburg battlefield of a \$30,000 monument to General Robert E. Lee, is expected to lead to debate on the floor of the house if not in committee. Virginia is to join Pennsylvania in the expense. Colonel McClure, who was here a day or two ago, says the thought of erecting the monument was not inspired so much by a sentiment for the South or admiration for General Lee as by a desire to adorn the battlefield. Such a monument, he added, would not only efface sectional feeling, but would be a beautiful acquisition to the park. Colonel McClure will appear before the house and senate committees when the bill comes up for discussion and urge that it be favorably reported.

But there is certain to be something said on the other side of the question. Senator Cumings, of Warren, has voiced the sentiments of the opposition by vigorously disapproving of the bill, and it is more than likely that Grand Army posts in various parts of the state will be heard from. Action has already been taken by the Colonel Fred Taylor post, of Philadelphia, which, after a heated discussion, opposed the proposed statue by a vote of 17 to 9. The majority of the veterans, however, did not vote at all. Colonel McClure himself does not think the bill will pass this session, but he regards it as an entering wedge for further movements of this kind in the future.

This is not the only pending measure of interest to veterans. "Farmer" Creasy, of Columbia, has introduced a bill providing for a monument in Capitol Park to the soldiers and marines who served in the war of the rebellion and appropriating \$150,000 for the purpose, while still another piece of legislation of the same class is a bill for an appropriation of \$35,000 to erect monuments to the Pennsylvania commands that fought on the battlefield of Antietam—\$2,500 for each command. Colonel W. J. Bolton, in speaking of the projected measure, says: "We do not ask these monuments as a tramp begs at the door, but as a right to the gallant men who fell in the battle."

Senator Heidelberg, of Lancaster, has introduced a bill making it a misdemeanor for persons not entitled as members to wear insignia or buttons of the Spanish-American war veterans or of the Spanish-American or Philippine societies. The penalty, if the bill passes, will be a \$100 fine or in default 60 days in jail.

A bill providing for a reduction of the poll tax in Philadelphia from 50 cents to 10 cents is in preparation. This is intended to save much expense to the party organizations, which are compelled to pay out piles of money to equip their voters with tax receipts, but it will also result in a heavy loss of revenue to the Philadelphia city treasury.

Representative Weaver, of Allegheny, has the credit of introducing the first of the labor bills—an elaborate arbitration measure regulating the relations between employer and employed in cases of disputes.

HUGH DONNELLY.

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CURRENT COMMENT.

PEOPLE WILL TALK, AND THIS IS WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY.

That a miss is better than a mile. She only has to purchase hosiery for two feet instead of for 5,280.

That women stand before a mirror while dressing because they want to see everything that goes on.

That the demand for dwelling houses in Bloomsburg will be greater this spring than it has been for many years.

That the frank manner in which a sixteen year old girl of the lower end of town refers to herself as an old maid is certainly amusing.

That the construction of the new switch by the D. L. & W. Railroad Company, is going to give the several industries on the south side of the canal first class shipping facilities. The Harman-Coggar Company, founders and machinists, are getting ready to start the plant immediately upon the completion of the switch.

That coasting on the leading streets of town, now so much indulged in by children, should be stopped before any fatalities are recorded. Doubtly dangerous is it after night. A team might be crossing the street, when the coasting goes down, and he would in all probability be killed. We have frequently alluded to the danger attending this practice, but it seems as though an accident is all that will stop it.

That the movement for a new play house in Bloomsburg has fallen into a state of relapse. There is no apparent reason, other than a suitable location, why the town should not have a new and modern Opera House. Since it was first mentioned in these columns, a few weeks ago, several citizens have expressed a willingness to give the project substantial support, providing a stock company can be formed. As we have already stated, a new house, with the right kind of management, will pay here and there is no doubt about it. We could then have good shows, say, once a week. Not the "Maloney's Wedding Day," "Muldoon's Picnic" or McFadden's Row of Flats" variety, but attractions of known merit. Get together gentlemen, lets have a new house.

That an amusing incident occurred to two young men of town the other morning. They reached Sunbury from Lewisburg at one o'clock a. m. They registered at the Central Hotel and were assigned to room No. 12. They told the clerk to put down a call for 5.30, as they desired to catch the first motor car for Northumberland, to make the Lackawanna train for Bloomsburg. They impressed upon the clerk that it would be necessary to ring until they answered, as they were both sound sleepers. After everything was arranged, the clerk led the way to No. 12. The door was locked, and he was about to peep over the transom, when a voice from within shouted, "What in the mischief do you fellows want." Without making any answer the trio moved on to room 36. In bidding the clerk good night, they again told him to be sure to call them at 5.30. When he reached

the office something else challenged his attention, and he neglected to transfer the call from No. 12 to No. 36. At six o'clock in the morning, the young men awoke, and jumping into their clothes hurried down stairs, but they were too late, the car had left the square 15 minutes before. The clerk, who was a new man, was asked for an explanation. He knew nothing about it, and turning around, he asked the porter, who was pushing away for dear life at an enunciator on the wall, if he could tell how the mistake had occurred. The mystery was explained when the occupant of No. 12 appeared at the head of the stairs and shouted "What in the devil is the matter with the bell in my room, it has been ringing continuously for the last twenty minutes." The boys were very sore but the situation was so comical they were forced to laugh. The clerk tried to repair the wrong by giving them a free breakfast, and they reached Bloomsburg over the Penna. Railroad at 7.20.

TAILOR-MADE SUITS.

N. S. Tingley has accepted the agency for Reinach, Ullman & Co. of Chicago, merchant tailors, and is ready to supply made-to-measure clothing at prices lower than can be obtained elsewhere. He has a large line of samples to select from. His place of business is the third floor of the COLUMBIAN building. 4t.

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