

THE COLUMBIAN. BLOOMSBURG, PA. THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1905.

TESTIMONIAL. (Continued from 1st page.)

a deceased lawyer, and the other is—a good, square meal.

"If you will indulge me for a moment, I desire at this time to say a word in the nature of a personal explanation.

"I am presiding here tonight by the selection and courtesy of my brethren who have so kindly conferred upon me this great honor and privilege. Surely it is not because of my present standing at the bar, because for some years past I have been serving another mistress than the law, and one equally as jealous, and which has made me far more familiar with a printer's case than I am with 'The rule in Shelly's case.' But I am grateful to still be recognized as one of the fraternity, and I accept my task with pleasure. If in the performance of my duties I shall cast a gloom over this assemblage to such an extent as to give you a chill, please bear in mind that before the session is ended there is an abundance of 'hot air' in reserve which will be turned loose at the proper time, and which, I hope, will be sufficient to counteract any frosty effects which my inefficiency may have produced.

"The banquet of sixteen years ago to which I have alluded, was given by the Bar in honor of a man of blessed memory, upon his retirement from the Bench, after a service of twenty-seven years. It is a singular coincidence that at that time he had been a lawyer for fifty-six years. The toastmaster and leading spirit of that occasion was the gentleman in whose honor we meet tonight to commemorate the fact that he has completed a service of fifty-six years at the Bar, and to celebrate the fifty-seventh anniversary of his admission as an attorney-at-law.

"We are here tonight to show our esteem for a man who for all those years has been a lawyer in this community, and who is still in active practice, and in the full possession of mental and physical vigor, though he has almost reached the age of four score years, Col. John G. Freeze. He was admitted to the Bar on the 19th day of April, 1848. For many years he was an acknowledged leader in his profession. Scarcely a case of any importance was tried in our courts in which he was not concerned on one side or the other. His contemporaries were Hurler and Comly and Baldy and Clark and Jackson and Bucklew and many other legal giants of those days, all of whom have made their last arguments, settled their final accounts, and passed beyond the dark river. In that period there was much litigation concerning land titles, involving large sums of money, especially titles to coal lands in the lower part of the county, and in many of these Col. Freeze was one of the leading counsel. Such suits are scarcely heard of here now, the titles having been fully established.

"In the Mollie Maguire trial of Hester, Tully and McHugh, in 1877 Col. Freeze was one of the counsel for the defendants. This trial, which lasted three weeks, was the most important murder trial that ever occurred in this county, and one of the 'causes celebres' of the state. Many new points of homicide law and evidence were ruled, and affirmed by the Supreme Court. Of the fifteen lawyers who were concerned on both sides of that case, only four are living, and they are Col. Freeze, Hon. S. P. Wolverton, of Sunbury, John M. Clark, who was then District Attorney, and myself. Franklin B. Gowen, Franklin P. Hughes, Charles R. Buckalew, John W. Ryan, Charles B. Brockway, William Bryson, Linn Bartholomew, Warren J. Buckalew and the others have passed away.

"A large number of cases argued by Col. Freeze in the Supreme

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Court are recorded in the State Reports, and there was scarcely a session of that tribunal for many years that his business did not require him to be present. As a lawyer his success has been due to his extensive knowledge of the law, and his ability to apply it; and to his being a safe advisor, a strong advocate, a most desirable colleague, an honorable opponent, and his unswerving fidelity to his client. He has relied upon the strength of the law to win his cases, and has never taken an unfair advantage through a technicality. Always the affable and courteous gentleman, to the younger members of the Bar he has especially shown a most kindly disposition, ever ready and willing to advise and assist them.

"As a citizen Bloomsburg holds him as one of her foremost residents. He has been one of the promoters of her welfare in the matters of education, religion, politics and general improvements. The inception of the Normal School was the beginning of progress here. Soon followed the incorporation of the town, and the consequent betterments. Col. Freeze was one of the organizers of the school, a trustee in the days when it cost money to hold the position, as the trustees were obliged to pay bills out of their own pockets in order to keep the school from the hands of the sheriff; still a trustee when the school is the pride of the town, and one of the best in the state. He is also a warm supporter of the Public Library and vice president of its Board of Directors.

"As a churchman, he has for twenty years or more been the legal advisor to the Bishop in the position of chancellor of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, and a vestryman. The tower on St. Paul's church is a monument to his liberality. "With all his busy life and large practice, he has been a constant student of literature, and the productions of his pen are 'The History of Columbia County' several volumes of poems, and numerous pamphlets on various subjects.

"Other positions which he has filled are: Member of the Constitutional Convention of 1874; President of Bloomsburg Bridge Co.; Historian of the Bloomsburg Centennial 1902; and he is now the President of the Columbia County Bar Association, and President of Rosemont Cemetery Co.

"It is to such a busy and well spent life that we come to do honor tonight.

"But some one may say, 'All this is fulsome flattery.' I say it is not flattery, because it is all true. I believe in taffy. I believe an ounce of taffy given to a man while he is able to hear and understand and appreciate and enjoy it, is worth a ton of epitaphs served up after the cold clods have rattled on his casket. I believe a few words of commendation spoken to a man's living face are better than columns of obituary in the newspapers.

"And now, to you, sir, on behalf of the Bench and Bar of Columbia and Montour Counties, I extend a most cordial welcome. We offer you the hands of admiring sons, and express the hope that all your latter days may be full of peace, and joy, and comfort.

"I propose that we drink to the health of our distinguished guest, our venerated friend, the lawyer, citizen, churchman, scholar, and poet, the Father of our Bar, Colonel John Gosse Freeze."

When Col. Freeze arose to respond he was greeted with long continued applause. He said that he wished he had such command of the English language as would enable him to fully express the happiness that this occasion has given him. His remarks were full of interesting reminiscences of 40 years ago, and of the time when Judge Elwell was upon the bench, when more important cases were tried here than in any other county in

the state except Philadelphia and Pittsburg. He paid a beautiful tribute to the memory of Judge Elwell, and said that when such men as Judge Jeremiah S. Black, Chief Justice Woodward, P. Carroll Brewster, and many others of the greatest lawyers this state has ever had, came here to practice before him, they found in him a man who was in every respect their equal. In closing he again thanked the bar for the great honor they had done him, and spoke of the occasion as one of the happiest in his life.

The next speaker was Judge Marr of Schuylkill County, who said that up to six years ago he had been a regular attendant at the court in this county looking after the interests of his clients, the coal operators in the lower end. He had been associated with Col. Freeze as counsel for many years, and some times as opposing counsel, but he always found him the same affable gentleman, and keen lawyer. He spoke feelingly of the life and character of Col. Freeze, and said that the bar and the world were better for such men. In speaking of the Mollie Maguire cases Judge Marr said that he was counsel for one of them at the first trial, in which the defendants were acquitted and although his client was afterwards shown to have had nothing to do with the Rea murder, he had since thought that 'perhaps a little hanging would not have hurt him any.' His speech was a good one, and was frequently applauded.

Judge Herring next responded to "The Bench," and paid a beautiful tribute to Col. Freeze, closing with the poem, "Rosemont" written by the Col. on last Easter.

"The Law" was the toast assigned to James Scarlet Esq., and after a humorous introduction in which he described his first meeting with Col. Freeze, he gave an eloquent and learned disquisition on "the law."

Capt. J. B. Robison responded to "The Older Bar," and H. Mont. Smith to "The Younger Bar." Mr. Smith was introduced as a lawyer of the third generation, his father and grand father both having been members of this bar.

Paul E. Wirt Esq., was asked to speak on "What I don't Know About Law," but avoided the subject and after humorously talking about lawyers, he paid a beautiful tribute to Col. Freeze.

A. W. Duy Esq., was introduced as the first, and perhaps the last Republican District Attorney of Columbia county, and made a good speech.

John G. Harman responded to "The Law-makers," and H. A. McKillip made the closing speech.

James Scarlet then presented to Col. Freeze a parchment scroll on which every man present had written his name.

A rising vote of thanks was passed for the use of the Elk rooms, and then all joined in singing "Auld Lang Syne," and the meeting adjourned at 2:15 a. m.

It was a most delightful occasion and one that will be remembered through life by all that were present.

The floral decorations were presented to Mrs. Freeze on Saturday morning.

Those who tendered the banquet to Col. Freeze were: Robt. R. Little, H. A. McKillip, Clinton Herring, T. J. Vanderslice, A. J. Robbins, Andrew L. Fritz, Clyde Charles Yetter, C. M. Terwilliger, J. C. Rutter, Jr., Wm. C. Johnston, Robt. S. Howell, H. Mont. Smith, James L. Evans, J. G. Jayne, B. F. Zarr, Edward S. Gearhart, Ralph C. Kisner, Thomas G. Vincent, Wm. Krickbaum, J. Simpson Kline, Lewis C. Mensch, A. W. Duy, W. D. Beckley, John G. Harman, Wm. Chrisman, L. E. Waller, Guy Jacoby, N. U. Funk, Freeze Quick, C. W. Miller, Geo. E. Elwell, C. A. Small, W. H. Rhawn, R. O. Brockway, C. E. Kreischer, E. J. Flynn, Wm. Kase West, C. P. Gearhart, S. W. Dickson, Clem R. Weiss, A. N. Vost, J. Alexis Guie, James T. Fox, G. M. Tustin, Ralph R. John, Grant Herring, C. C. Peacock, Fred Ikeler, Frank Ikeler, J. H. Maize, Boyd F. Maize, J. B. Robison, C. J. Fisher, O. B. Mellick, Chas. C. Evans, Wm. E. Elmes, Paul E. Wirt, James Scarlet, R. S. Ammerman, S. B. Karns, Wm. L. Sidler, Wm. J. Baldy, Charles S. Kline, C. E. Guyer.

The Prize Plow and Intelligent Farmer

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SCHOOL DIRECTORS' CONVENTION. William W. Evans Re-Elected County Superintendent by a Unanimous Voice.

The school directors of Columbia County held their convention in court room No. 2, on Tuesday, convening at ten o'clock in the morning. There were present 131 members. Dr. F. W. Redeker, of Bloomsburg was elected chairman of the meeting and J. H. Eisenhower, of Millin and George A. Laub of West Berwick, secretaries.



WM. W. EVANS.

The first matter taken up after the organization had been effected was the salary of the County Superintendent. The general sentiment of the members favored an increase, but they appeared to be divided on the amount. J. O. Hills, of Jamison City, an earnest advocate of the cause of education, forcefully expressed his views and moved that the salary of the County Superintendent be fixed at \$2,500 a year. Jas. C. Brown spoke in favor of the increase and seconded Mr. Hill's motion. R. G. F. Kshinka, J. B. Nuss, Dr. L. B. Kline and George A. Laub, also supported the motion. Others expressed themselves agreeable to an increase but not to the extent of the motion. The question was fully discussed and a vote taken, resulting in the defeat of the motion, forty-five in favor of it and seventy-nine against it.

At this juncture, Geo. A. Laub, of West Berwick, moved that the salary be fixed at \$2,250 per year. This was amended to make the salary \$2000. The motion to make the salary \$2,250 was withdrawn and the amended motion was put to a vote. There were ninety votes in favor to twenty-three against it, and the salary was therefore fixed at \$2,000. This is an increase of \$400 a year. Those who voted against the amendment were the ones who were in favor of making the salary \$2500 a year.

That William W. Evans, who has filled the office of County Superintendent, so ably and conscientiously, has the confidence and support of every director in the County, was fully demonstrated when the time came for his re-election. His was the only name placed in nomination, and his re-election was unanimous. This hearty endorsement of Mr. Evans is as it should be. He has certainly accomplished a great work along educational lines. All too, by a persistent, untiring devotion to duty, and his re-election at an increased salary, comes as a fitting reward for his faithfulness and loyalty to the cause.

It is reported that there is a widespread and growing desire among the young men of this vicinity to rush away to Panama for the purpose of helping to dig the canal. We regard it as our duty to publicly announce that the walking on the way back from Panama is very poor in some places.

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