



THE CENTRE REPORTER.

By FRED KURTZ.

The whipping post bill, for wife-beaters, will be negatived by the House committee at Harrisburg.

Higbee now says he is sorry for what he did to obstruct the investigating committee. Higbee should have known better, but puts the blame on his lawyer, Pshaw!

The House has put its foot on Dukes, and voted to declare his seat vacant. Right.

Mt. Etna is on a spree again—spitting out hot lava and causing an earthquake.

M. de Lesseps has arrived at his destination, on his job to flood the Desert of Sahara.

Hon. S. J. Randall has our thanks for Comp. Census, 1880, 2 Vol's.

Dr. Higbee, State Superintendent of Schools, has placed himself in a bad position by trying to interfere with the senate committee appointed to investigate the State Orphan Schools, there being charges of fraud connected with these establishments. Dr. Higbee evidently did not seem to know that the Constitution gave the legislature power to look into the management of these institutions, creatures of the State, and see whether there is crookedness there; more, the Constitution even gives a citizen the right to examine into them if he believes there is fraud practiced. Why should Dr. Higbee try to block an investigation? This looks bad for Higbee; if all is right he need not fear an investigation, and if there is wrong the people have a right to know it.

Dr. Higbee is only a servant and very far from a boss. The senate, however, very properly, has ordered the committee to go ahead and investigate as it thinks proper, now Dr. Higbee will please stand aside.

The attitude Dr. Higbee has assumed in this matter is an unfortunate one and demands his removal from the School Dept.

The Clearfield Republican speaking of the B. C. C. & S. W. railroad, says: On Friday, the 16th instant, the stock-holders of the Susquehanna & South Western Railroad Company, the name of which has been changed to the Beech Creek, Clearfield and South Western Railroad, met at their office in Clearfield, and by action of its stockholders, increased the capital stock from \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000. This was necessary, owing to the branch lines required for its use and the large cost of mountain work.

Gen. George J. Magee, Gen. C. J. Langdon, S. D. F. Slee, Daniel Beach, Senator Peale, J. Harrison, Chief Engineer Nearing, Messrs. Platt, Kelley, Senator Wallace, and others, were present as stockholders and took part in the proceedings. A hearing was given to a delegation of business men from Philadelphia, who seek the building of a branch road to that borough. We understand that the chances for their success are favorable. Some of the delegation seem to be far more interested in another railroad coming to their town than they are in a new county.

The main line of the road, from Jersey Shore—where it connects with the Reading and Pine Creek roads—to the Moshannon Creek is now under contract, and about 800 men are at work thereon, and within the next sixty days more than 3,000 men will be digging on the new line that will cross our county. The line from Jersey Shore to Beech Creek has been let to Messrs. Hunter & Bros., of New York, and the mountain sections to the Messrs. Collins and Morrison. To show that things are lively, over eighty bids were put in for the work.

The Coal Company lately organized is actively at work on their lands in Morris township, getting ready to open their mines and build coke ovens, so as to be ready to ship as soon as the road is open. The locating engineers, who pilot the road, are busy at work running preliminary lines to Clearfield Creek.

The Democratic legislative apportionment bill was favorably reported in the house. Under it, taking the vote of 1880 as a basis, the Republicans would elect 23 senators and 112 members to the house, and the Democrats 23 senators and 93 members. The representation in Allegheny county is increased 2, Philadelphia, Northumberland and Delaware gain one each, and decrease 1 in Luzerne, making the house consist of 205 members instead of 201 as now.

This bill is fair, yet the Republicans are doing all in their power to prevent the passage of an apportionment bill as the Constitution requires, unless it is so framed as to insure them two-thirds of senatorial and assembly districts.

Judge Black was interviewed on the Dukes case, and said, relative to his taking his seat in the House:

"There is, however, a precedent for declaring Dukes' seat vacant."

"When was that?"

"Stevens, after he lied, he tried to get up the war that is known in the history of this state as the 'Buckshot war,' and the enterprise collapsed. He jumped out of a back window of the senate and ran off to Gettysburg, where he remained, without claiming his seat, for about a month. When he came in and offered to take the oath the house resolved, with great solemnity, that his seat was vacant. I do not believe this judgement of the house was founded upon the pure failure of Stevens to claim his seat, for others had been out nearly as long and were admitted without hesitation. The door was shut upon Stevens by a sentiment of indignation like that now felt against Dukes. He tried to perpetrate a gross fraud by the introduction of eleven members from Philadelphia, who were known not to be elected, and brought troops to Harrisburg with intent to force the bogus members upon the house that knew they had no right there. If the troops could have been used as he intended it would have produced a civil war and the whole state might have been covered with blood and ashes.

If that was the reason for declaring Stevens' seat vacant, it is the authority for a similar judgment against Dukes, but I doubt if it was right. Congress, in several cases, have turned men out of their places on the ground that they were improper persons, morally unfit to associate with members who voted against them. I think congress was wrong every time it did this, as the British parliament was wrong in refusing, for a similar reason, to seat Wilks. But what is to be done in a case like this? It is utterly impossible to let a man like Dukes take part in the legislation of the state. The house will exclude him even at the risk of taking some revolutionary measure to keep him out. If the thing is done lawlessly I would rather see it done outside the house than by the action of the members."

"And what method would you suggest, Mr. Black, as the most suitable to the case?"

"It would be better, I think, that somebody meet him at the depot and run him out of town before he has time to come up to the 'hill.' Probably, however, he will have too much regard for his health to make his appearance there at all."

An interview held with one of the jurors in the Dukes case by a reporter of a Philadelphia newspaper sets in a strong and lurid light not only the mental and moral outfit of this particular juror but the actual working of the palladium of our liberties. It is probable that the verdicts in very many if not in most criminal trials are arrived at by very much the same process of reasoning that actuated the jury which acquitted Dukes, only the verdicts are not in cases which have attracted so much attention, and they are not in so glaring defiance of common justice and common sense. Mr. George Washington Breakiron, the juror in question, relates that although there was no evidence that Nutt was armed with a pistol, and although the evidence which the jury accepted was that Dukes had possession of Nutt's cane, so that the man killed was unarmed, yet "the shooting was done pretty much in self-defense." The reporter having inquired how a man with a cane and a pistol could be required in self-defense to kill another who had neither, the candid Breakiron answered, "I don't remember just how we did fix up that point." And in an answer to a further inquiry what he would have done if the rest had agreed upon a verdict of murder in the first degree, this candid juror makes answer, "Well, then I would have done that too."

An important decision relative to the sale of tobacco was rendered the other day at Pittsburg. Judge Acheson, of the United States district court filed an opinion in the case of the United States vs. Wm. Jenkinson, which is of great importance to the tobacco trade. The defendant was indicted for selling tobacco contrary to section 3,363 of the revised statutes. His offense consisted in selling five pounds of plug tobacco from a broken package to a smaller dealer. The court says the government has no right to inquire whether or not Jenkinson sold the tobacco to be sold again, and the defendant is consequently discharged. This opinion is contrary to all recent ruling of the internal revenue department.

A dentist in New York had to pay a lady \$1,200 damages for breaking her jaw while extracting a tooth. It would be less risky to pull stumps in a field than out of a lady's jaw at that rate.

Dukes will not go to Harrisburg. Queen Victoria has a swollen knee from her late fall—this goes to prove that queens are human.

The Democrats and Independents, of Rhode Island, last week nominated Wm. Sprague for Governor.

The Harrisburg Morning Patriot, since its improvement, fills the bill of a first-class daily at the state capital—all the latest telegraphic intelligence and reaches this section at noon on day of issue.

By direction of Major General Hartman orders will be issued this week regarding the summer encampment of the National Guards. The troops will go into camp between the 11th and 13th of August next. The commander of each brigade will select such place as he deems best suited to the purpose, as the various brigades will encamp separately.

The old contention between the Danville, Hazelton and Wilkesbarre Railroad Company and the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, growing out of the lease of the former company to the latter in February, 1882, resulted in the filing of a declaration of suit on 23. The declaration, after reciting the terms of the lease, alleges that the Pennsylvania company failed to conduct the road properly, and on the contrary managed it in so careless and negligent a manner that it became ruinous and unproductive; that seventy-five per cent. more than the proper amount was charged against the leased road upon the expense account, and there was a total failure to meet the accruing interest coupons, according to the terms of the lease, and that the obligation to render just accounts was entirely disregarded. For these and a number of minor grievances, damages are asked to the amount of \$2,000,000. The case will now be pushed to a speedy trial.

It seems to us that the people of this side of the county have a clear case of breaking faith against the same company, and that damages might be recovered for lands spoiled and money taken in the shape of stock, on promises of giving our people a railroad. We have even been told that the railroad company at the same time gave the Bald Eagle R. R. company a written pledge not to complete a railroad thro' Pennsylv. If this is true it was not only infamous but a fraud of the basest kind against our people, for which there is certainly a remedy in law.

DIVORCE STATISTICS.

The Rev. S. W. Dike, who is secretary of the New England Divorce Reform League, in a recent address on the subject, in New Haven, Conn., made some startling statements in regard to the increase of divorces in the New England States. The whole number of divorces in Connecticut were in 1849 only ninety-one, and now the average is about four hundred and forty in each year, showing that, while the increase of population in that state in the last thirty years is less than seventy per cent., the increase of divorces is almost five hundred per cent. The ratio of divorces to marriages in Connecticut is at the rate of one divorce to about ten marriages; and the same ratio is found to exist in Rhode Island. In New Hampshire the ratio is one divorce for every nine marriages, and in Maine nearly the same proportion of divorces exists. Vermont presents better figures, where the ratio is one to thirteen; and Massachusetts is still better, where the ratio is that of one divorce to every twenty-one marriages. These are facts, according to the statement of the Rev. S. W. Dike, as they exist in New England; and New England is especially that part of the country to which we have been in the habit of looking for the best exhibit of good social order.

Since Dr. Higbee finds himself in a vice, he says he is very sorry. We look at his case thus: Since he can't prevent an investigation into frauds at the orphan schools, he will no longer interfere, i. e., if he could prevent it, he would. Let Dr. Higbee resign.

In the star-route matter damaging statements have been made against Brady. Mail contractor Joseph B. Price made an affidavit, now in possession of the government, wherein he alleges that he gave on one occasion to ex-Postmaster General Brady the sum of \$2,000 in postal drafts, together with \$5,500 in cash to corruptly influence Brady's official action. He also alleges, it is said, that on another occasion he gave the sum of \$15,000 in postal drafts drawn against his (Price's) pay as mail contractor on the mail route from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, and that in addition to the above mentioned \$15,000 of drafts he also gave to Senator Kellogg a note for \$5,000, all of which paper he deposits was paid at maturity.

There is a dead-letter law which provides that there shall be deducted from the salaries of Congressmen their pay for every day they are absent from legislative duties, unless such absence is caused by illness of themselves or their families. This law has been unheeded and neglected, but its existence is recalled by the fact that Roswell P. Flower, a member of the House from New York city—the gentleman who defeated young Aston in a memorable contest—seems to have discovered it, and as soon as he did set down and reckoned up the duration of his absence from the House on private business. And he forthwith forwarded to the Treasurer of the United States his check for \$458.80. We believe this is the only case of the kind on record.

SOLDIERS' ORPHANS' SCHOOLS.

Harrisburg, March 20.—Senator Coxe made disclosures to the Senate to-day concerning the Rev. Dr. E. E. Higbee, Superintendent of Public Instruction, that caused a stirring discussion. Obtaining permission to make a personal statement, Coxe proceeded to read an account of efforts made by him to get from the Educational Department information needed by the committee, of which he is chairman, to investigate the alleged fraud in the admission of children to the soldiers' orphans' school. On the 8th instant Coxe wrote to Dr. Higbee informing him of the passage by Coxe's investigation committee of a resolution: "That the Superintendent of Public Instruction be asked to furnish the committee at once a list of all the pupils that have been admitted to the soldiers' orphans' schools during the life-time of their fathers since the law permitting such admissions went into force." In accordance therewith Coxe asked Dr. Higbee to furnish the information, and the reply received was that it would require the attention of the whole force for six months to get it. Dr. Higbee added that the information was on file and that the committee could have access to the files. After other attempts to get the information Senator Coxe sent his own private secretary and assistant to compile it, but on Friday they were ordered to stop by Dr. Higbee, on the ground that they were "irresponsible clerks." Mr. Coxe said that his counsel, Mr. James E. Gowen, had advised him that any citizen had a right to make the examination. He was not aware that he had done anything that had not been proper and he courted the fullest investigation into his acts in connection with the investigation. This started a debate which took a wide range. Biddis, Democrat, moved that a committee of five be appointed to ascertain if Coxe had done anything wrong. This was opposed by Kennedy, who did not believe that it would result in a thorough exposure of Higbee's "arrogant attempt" to impede the investigation, and after some discussion Biddis withdrew his motion. Sutton offered a resolution authorizing Coxe to go ahead. Greer hoped this would not pass, as it would show a desire by the Democrats to place Dr. Higbee in a bad light. "This is done," he declared, "to hurt Dr. Higbee."

Wallace ended the dispute by defending Coxe's action, criticizing Dr. Higbee's course and offering as an amendment to Sutton's motion a resolution to refer the whole matter to Coxe's investigation committee, with instructions to proceed with the investigation. This passed with out opposition and Coxe is satisfied. He says he will get what he wants.

THE FLOOD'S STRANGE FEARS.

A Farmer Loses Forty Acres of Land and a Neighbor Gains Ten Acres.

One of the strangest freaks of the flood is reported from Whitewater river, a few miles above Lawrenceburg, where Farmer Hunt lost forty acres of land and his neighbor, Fred Newhouse, had a barren and rocky mill-site covered into ten acres of rich land as the fertile valley affords. The land along the Whitewater is as rich as any in the West, and has only to be tickled with a hoe to make it laugh with a harvest. An acre of ground here is an independence for a gardener, and ten acres are a little less than a banana. During the flood the Whitewater bottoms were overflowed for miles along the stream, and the extraordinary height of water created currents that had never been known before. Since the subsidence of the flood it has been found that forty acres of Farmer Hunt's richest soil has been carried away, leaving that portion of his farm practically worthless until restored by a system of tillage and fertilizing. Fred Newhouse, who recently moved to the Whitewater bottoms from Aurora, owned a mill-site just below Hunt's farm. Newhouse's property consisted of ten acres of rocky and barren land, unfit for farming purposes. A portion of this was a large mill pond. This mill pond is now filled to the level of the breast of the dam with the richest soil in the valley, and Mr. Newhouse's remaining acres of unproductive rocks are nowhere to be seen, but are covered to the depth of several feet with the same rich deposit. Instead of being a loser by the flood he is ahead the value of ten acres of Water Valley land, which, when there is any of it in the market, commands from \$200 to \$500 an acre. Mr. Newhouse is a fine practical miller, and the whole neighborhood just now is put to great inconvenience by the temporary shutting down of his mill. "If it were not for the annoyance and delay of changing my mill from water power to steam power—for I am left without a dam," said Mr. Newhouse, "I would laugh at my loss."

DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.

London, March 26.—A dispatch to the Daily Telegraph from Vienna says that several localities at the foot of Mount Ararat have been destroyed by snow avalanches. It is stated that 150 persons have been killed and 100 injured.

INNOCENT PUNISHED.

Pardon of a Convict After Twenty-Seven Years' Imprisonment.

One of the most remarkable cases ever recorded—that of a pardon of a man on the ground of his innocence after an imprisonment for more than a quarter of a century—is now reported from Michigan.

In November, 1853, an elderly bachelor, from Vermont named Estabrook arrived at Burr Oak, Michigan, on his way to St. Joseph county, where he was to be married to a Miss Wood. Before leaving the East he had sold his property, and he took the money with him. The next day the stranger drove to Leonidas, a town within a few miles of the residence of his intended bride. There he took dinner and was to go on in the afternoon, but for some reason dismissed the vehicle. The next morning the tavern-keeper paid a teamster to carry Estabrook's trunk to Miss Wood, with a message that the Vermontier would follow in a few days.

Estabrook, however, did not appear and nothing was heard about him until a long time after, when a man named Giles Harding, who was in jail for stealing, made a pretended confession to the effect that Estabrook had been murdered, and that he was privy to the crime. He said that he saw the stranger at the tavern at Leonidas, but did not speak to him. Afterward, when Estabrook was on the road two miles from Leonidas, a wagon in which were two men named Umm and White, approached the Vermontier, and they offered to give him a lift to Miss Wood's house, which they said they would pass. He accordingly got into the vehicle, and two or three miles further on the wagon was turned off from the proper road and driven into the woods, where the stranger was murdered. Harding, who had followed, then jumped into the wagon with Umm and White.

That was the story told by Giles Harding, and in consequence of it, Harding, Umm and White were indicted for the murder of Estabrook. Harding, of course was the principal witness for the State, and the tavern-keeper testified that Estabrook left the house about dark on foot, with a stranger who was to show him the way. Harding was proved to be a notorious liar, and it was shown that he had a grudge against Umm and White. Neither the boy nor the man named Estabrook could be found, and none of the testimony except Harding's really implicated the accused.

Yet Harding, White and Umm were convicted and all three sentenced for life. The first two died in prison, White protesting his innocence of the crime on his death bed; and Harding made an affidavit before the agent of the prison that neither White nor Umm had anything to do with the murder; that his pretended confession was an entire falsehood, and that the real murderer was the tavern-keeper. On his death-bed Harding again declared the innocence of White and Umm. He died several years ago, but nothing was done in behalf of the only survivor of the three, Umm, until the 6th of March, when he was pardoned by Governor B-geio, of Michigan.

Samuel Ulna now leaves prison after a confinement of twenty-seven years, a broken-down man. The inference from the Governor's pardon is that he never ought to have been punished at all, but is an innocent victim of perjury and malice and the carelessness of the jury which found him guilty on evidence which, so far as it is now recalled, was not entitled to credence, or at least ought to have done more than raise a suspicion in the minds of an intelligent and fair-minded jury.

NOVEL BATTING MATCH.

A Negro Fails to Pick up a Hundred Rats with His Naked Hands in One Hour.

Philadelphia, March 18.—The feat of picking up a hundred live rats with the naked hands in an hour's time was attempted last night by a negro named Wm. H. Lewis. The attempt was made for a wager of \$200, and the scene of the contest was in a saloon in Frankford, a suburb of this city. It was stipulated that if Lewis would have to transfer the rats from a pit to a barrel. In the centre of the room where the contest took place a space eight feet square was surrounded by a light board fence four feet high. The floor was covered an inch deep with sawdust, and in the centre of the pen stood an empty whiskey barrel, the upper head of which was covered with a piece of canvas with a hole in its centre. When Lewis appeared in the pit a little under the influence of liquor he wore a sleeveless undershirt, check pantaloons and brogans. The legs of his trousers were tied around his ankles so as to prevent rats from taking refuge therein, and his hands and arms were covered with musk, which he believes will prevent rats from biting him. Forty rats were then dumped from the cage into the pit. The rats dashed wildly around through the sawdust and made vain endeavors to scale the fence. Finally they huddled in a wriggling mass in one corner and the judges gave Lewis the word to begin. He moved over to the pile of rats, and without an instant's hesitation thrust his naked hands and arms among them. He caught five fat fellows and dropped them into the barrel. He next picked up three, then four, then two, and so on until six minutes had expired, when he had placed twenty-one of the rodents in the barrel. The rats that remained in the pit were wild, and he was compelled to catch them one at a time. The first single rat he picked up bit one of his fingers through the nail to the bone and hung there until Lewis jerked his hand and sent the vicious "vermin" against the ceiling. The finger which was wounded was then dipped in whiskey and the chase resumed. Seven rats were picked up and deftly tossed in

to the barrel, and Lewis was bitten twice on the right arm. He received four more wounds before the fourth rat was imprisoned, which was done in 23 minutes. Lewis worked with great agility, and at rat after rat was picked up and dropped into the barrel with amazing rapidity. The fifty-seventh rat he attempted to touch sprang at his face as he stooped and bit through the man's lower lip. Without flinching he grabbed the little brute and tossed it through the canvas cover. He lost five minutes stanching the blood that flowed from his lip. In picking up the other twenty-three rats he was bitten slightly five times. Eighty rats were in the barrel and Lewis had but twenty minutes to pick up the remaining twenty. The time was too limited, so Lewis gave up the job and got out of the pit. The spectators were satisfied with his efforts, and a collection amounting to \$22 was taken up for his benefit.

STORM IN NOVA SCOTIA.

Halifax, March 21.—The thaw of the past few days was followed by a severe rain-storm last night and to-day. Rivers have overflowed, bridges have been washed away, and the lowlands have been flooded and much property has been destroyed. Railway communication is interrupted.

Quebec, March 21.—The train on the North Shore road which left Montreal at 3 p. m., on Monday arrived here this morning. The snow is packed solidly over the track to a depth of five feet.

AN IMPENDING STRIKE.

The Clearfield County Laborers Object to the Importation of Labor.

Altoona, March 25.—No little excitement has been caused by the importation of colored laborers to operate the coal mines and iron works in the Broad Top and Huntington coal and iron districts. They were brought from Virginia by Robert Hare Powell, colliery operator and iron master, at Saxton, to work in that region. There are the same kind of complaints among the miners and iron workers that there were on the Pac.ific coast against the Chinese. It is maintained that extensive arrangements have been made to supply the labor market from Virginia, and the white colliers and laborers are terribly excited over the matter. The miners at Osceola have determined to strike, and as the miners throughout the entire coal country are rising in rebellion against the movement, there is a fair prospect of serious and sanguinary trouble at no distant date. The operators originating the colored importation state that they are determined to run their works as they please, and will call up the authorities to protect the negroes, collieries, iron works and furnace buildings. The coal and iron police are preparing themselves for any emergency that may arise.—Patriot.

HOME, SWEET HOME.

Reception of John Howard Payne's Remains in New York.

New York, March 22.—The steamship Burgundian, from Marsailles, with the body of John Howard Payne on board, was signaled off the Neversink highlands at ten o'clock this morning. Arrangements have been perfected for the reception of the remains. The body will lie in state in the Governor's room in City Hall to-day and to-morrow. The hall will be draped in mourning. The body will be placed on a catafalque, so that visitors may readily view the remains as they pass through the room. On Saturday the remains will be taken to Washington on a special car furnished by the Pennsylvania Railroad and delivered to the authorities of the Oakhill Cemetery, to be held until the 9th of June, the 9th anniversary of the poet's birth, when the final funeral ceremonies will take place.

A dispatch from Muskogee, I. T., says:—On the border of the territory of the Seminole Nation, Brady Bretney, Eli Perryman, Billy Grinnitt and an Indian were engaged in a game of cards, which afterwards ended in a free fight, during which the Indian killed Bretney and Perryman. Grinnitt, who took no active part in the fight, was accidentally killed during the shooting of one of the others. The next morning two brothers, who were friends of the dead men, followed the Indian and coming up with him ridged his body with bullets.

—Lewis & Co. intend to take Centre county by storm with their new stock of clothing. Their room has been refitted and much improved, and arranged for the better convenience of customers. They have purchased the largest, finest and best assortment of clothing ever before brought to this section of the state. They intend also to offer better bargains than ever before in men's and boys' clothing, underwear and other gentlemen's goods. Call and see their new stock by all means before purchasing elsewhere.

Byer's Station, Ohio, March 21.—The house of Dunca Doles, a mile north of here, was burned on Monday night. Mr. Doles, who was ninety-eight years old, occupied the house alone. When the fire had partly subsided the neighbors found the dead body of Doles under a bed with a rope around the neck. This not being his usual bed room, it is thought he was strangled by robbers and hid under the bed and the house then set on fire. A considerable quantity of gold and silver coin and some melted money were found in the ashes. M. Doles had a large sum of money about the house and leaves a large estate.

Higbee evidently thought he was a bigger man than old Pennsylvania. The largest line and finest assortment of body and tapestry brussels carpet ever brought to Bellefonte, just received at the Beehive one price stores.