



CAPITOL GOSSIP

NEWS OF A WEEK AT THE NATION'S CAPITOL.

Democrats Displeased With the Financial Outlook. Mr. Harrison to Rush the Annexation of Hawaii.

WASHINGTON, FEB. 13.—Democrats in Congress are far from being pleased with the financial outlook. The House Ways and Means committee made a favorable report of Representative Bynum's resolution authorizing an investigation of the charge publicly made that Secretary Foster had made a deal with certain New York bankers whereby he was to exchange at par for gold \$50,000,000 of U. S. bonds. The fact that New York bankers are seldom philanthropists, and that they are known to be furnishing the treasury with gold caused many people to believe this charge; hence the necessity for an investigation. The public wants no secret juggling with the finances of the country. It is only fair to Secretary Foster and the present administration to say that they deny the charge of issuing or of having promised to issue bonds for gold. Still it is believed by some that Secretary Foster who is now in New York, is there to break up the deal, because of the proposed investigation.

"Silver week" in the house and senate amounted to nothing more substantial than to make it certain that no silver legislation would take place at the present session. It has been repeatedly stated here within the last ten days that President-elect Cleveland had said he would call an immediate extra session of the next congress if the present failed to take some action that would stop the purchase of silver by the government, but now that congress has by votes in both house and senate given notice of its failure to take such action no one seems to be certain that an early session will be called, and there appears to be a doubt in the minds of quite a number of democrats as to whether Mr. Cleveland ever authorized those statements.

If Mr. Harrison's influence be strong enough to accomplish it the legislation necessary to the annexation of Hawaii is to be rushed through Congress. Mr. Harrison decided to send a message to Congress recommending annexation and suggesting the terms to be contained in the legislation. To many this appears to be as hasty as was the action of Minister Stevens in establishing a protectorate, and it is certainly going to be done with much less to excuse it. It is assumed to be necessary for this government to endorse the action of Stevens, and that being done what occasion is there for hurrying annexation? It is well known that so long as Hawaii is under the protection of the American flag no European government will dare to interfere. There is a great big nigger concealed somewhere in this Hawaiian wood pile, and his feet will be exposed if there be no undue haste in the matter.

The talk of the republicans on the floors of congress and in private, on the pension question, is very different. Privately they admit that if something is not done to reduce them the payments will soon bankrupt the country, but on the floors of Congress they bitterly resist every attempt to reduce the amount paid. The house committee on appropriations after careful consideration has recommended some amendments to the general pension appropriation bills, now being considered by the house, which would if they became laws save \$30,000,000 a year, but the republicans are doing everything in their power to prevent the adoption of these amendments. One of the amendments provides for transferring the pension bureau to the War department and the detail of army officers to manage it, which would remove it from politics; others provide for a suspension of pensions paid to widows who were not married within five years after the close of the war; to those having a yearly income of \$900 or more, and, except in cases of total disability, to alien non-residents.

Unless the republican senate shall refuse to agree to amendments to the legislative and executive appropriation bills which have already been passed by the house there will be some radical changes made here on the first of July. The clerks in the departments will work eight hours instead of seven each day, and will have their annual leave of absence with pay cut down to 15 days. The departments will cease to close on account of the death of ex-officials, and congress will no longer pay the big prices it has paid in the past for funeral expenses of members who died. Whatever may be said of these amendments they are in the line of democratic economy, and for that very reason they will probably be defeated in the senate.

The difficulty the Panama investigation committee has had in getting witnesses to testify has caused the sus-

picion to be general that influences are at work to prevent the truth being found out. The committee has now gone to New York to see if anything can be got out of the bankers who disbursed the money. Later they will go to Indiana to get ex-secretary Thompson's statement of what he did to earn his salary of \$24,000 a year; also what he knows about other money spent.

AARONSBURG.

Severely Injured While out With a Coasting Party.

Mrs. Jacob Reed is ill with pneumonia.

Mr. and Mrs. Stambach are here on a visit from Red Lion, York county. Rev. Addams is suffering with a very bad cold and was unable on last Sunday to fill all his appointments.

A coasting party on Wert's hill were unable to control their sled a few evenings ago, and it ran down over the bank against the fence hurling the party in different directions. Miss Mollie Musser was thrown against the fence, injuring her head and knee so that she became unconscious.

Dr. Musser bought a colt from Jacob Winkleblech, coming two years old in May, that is cream in color with silver mane and tail. He also bought some time ago a part Hambletonian mare from Neph Weaver of Woodward, which under the care of Mr. Ira Gramley is developing into a most excellent roadster.

Besides his poultry, 'Squire Rote has gotten black fantail and white fantail pigeons. His silver duck wing game bantams are no larger than the pigeons. His light Brahmas are monsters in size.

Foster Bower has bought his brother Michael's interest in the stock and farming implements belonging to their father's estate and will begin farming in the spring. Michael goes to Brush Valley to Samuel Brungart.

A Telegraph Company's Rights.

Porter Skinner, of Huntingdon co., petitioned for the appointment of viewers to assess damages caused by the Postal Telegraph cable company locating their line on public roads through his farm. The viewers reported in his favor, fixing the damages at \$87 and costs.

The telegraph company excepted to the viewers' report, alleging irregularities in the proceedings and appealed from the assessment of damages as excessive. The whole proceedings were set aside by Judge Furst and Skinner was directed to pay the costs, amounting to \$40, it being clearly shown that if any injury was done to the lands of Skinner it was of so trifling a nature and inconsiderable amount as to warrant action at law.

Since the above was in type we learn that Judge Furst rendered no such quick decision.

Electricity For Cooking.

The use of electricity in the kitchen for cooking purposes will be a godsend to housekeepers and their help if the electrical fluid can really be made to render as good and sure service there as is rendered by coal, wood or gas. It is already used successfully and satisfactorily in some establishments, both Boston and elsewhere, and Edison is not the only person who can tell of its superior serviceability as a broiler, roaster boiler and baker, cheap, of course; why not?

The use of electricity in the kitchen may be disadvantageous to the coal-carriers, coal miners, coal dealers, coal trusts, coal lords, and gas companies; but we can't help that. These people must be willing to suffer their share of the disadvantages of progress in invention, science. The electricians are bound to prosper. We cannot surely run short of electricity.

The February number of the New York Musical Monthly has been published. It is one of the best journals published, and is also the cheapest for the money that can be had anywhere. There are 32 pages of large sized music in it. The February number contains the following vocal and instrumental music: "Sing Me to Sleep Again Mother," Parker; "Speak again That Last Sweet Word," Skelly; "Thou Art Like Unto a Flower," Rubinstein; "A Sea Love," Hatch; all good vocal pieces; "Album Leaf," Grieg; "Solid Comfort Schottische," Phelps; "Simple Aven," Thome; "Ye Lady Nance Dance," all instrumental. The price is 15 cts a copy or \$1.50 per year. Address Richard A. Scafield, 794, 796 and 798 Tenth Ave., New York.

The Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City is the most perfect whispering gallery in the world. It beats the domes of St. Paul's and the Washington Capitol. The dropping of a pin into a plug hat at one end of the huge structure is distinctly heard by persons at the other end.

THE WEATHER bureau has been making reliable predictions all winter.

REVISING THE GAME LAWS.

A Bill Endorsed by the State Sportsmen's Association.

A bill drafted by the State sportsmen's association revising the game laws of the state has been introduced in both branches of the legislature. It provides that no person shall kill elk or wild deer except from October 15 to December 14, inclusive. And no person shall have in his or her possession any wild deer, antelope or fresh venison except from October 15 to January 1. The penalty for violation of this section is fifty dollars for each animal killed. It is provided also that no deer, elk or fawns shall be pursued or killed by dogs. No person shall kill in one year more than three deer under penalty of fifty dollars. The open season for gray, black or fox squirrels is from October 15 to December 15, a penalty of five dollars is provided.

It is made unlawful to kill or expose for sale rabbits, except October 15 to December 15; penalty twenty-five dollars. The bill also prevents hunting with ferrets. Shooting wild ducks with a swivel or punt gun, or any other than guns that are habitually raised at arm's length and fired from the shoulder, is punishable by a fine of ten dollars. The open season for web-footed fowl is from September 1 to May 1.

In the section referring to wild turkeys the open season is from October 15 to December 15 inclusive. A fine of ten dollars is imposed for violation. For Woodcock, hunting is legal between October 15 and December 15.

Hunters are allowed to shoot quail or partridge from November 1 to December 15 inclusive. Penalty ten dollars. No person shall kill or expose for sale grouse or pheasant, except from October 15 to December 15. It is made unlawful to hunt pheasant or grouse during the night under the penalty of ten dollars for each offense. The legal season for rail or reed birds is from December 1 to December 31 inclusive, next following. The fine is five dollars for each bird killed.

Section eleven of the bill provides that no person shall kill or take any wild turkey, grouse, pheasant, quail, partridge, woodcock, rail or reed bird with any net, trap, snare, blind or torch light under penalty of ten dollars for each bird. This is provided that nothing in this section shall be so construed as to prevent individuals or associations from gathering live game for propagation or protection from December 20 until February 1 next following. Hunting or shooting on Sunday is prohibited under a penalty of twenty-five dollars.

Mongolian pheasants and prairie chickens are protected for two years under a fine of twenty-five dollars.

Any transportation company that ships and receives game contrary to the act is liable to a fine of twenty-five dollars for each shipment. Nothing in the act will prevent any person from killing any wild animal found destroying game, fruit or vegetables on his or her premises.

Bankrupt.

The startling fact has leaked out in Washington that Secretary of the Treasury Foster has completed arrangements to make a new issue of government bonds in order to replenish the depleted stock of gold in the treasury and avert a financial panic. It is said that the bonds are in readiness and that a big New York financial institution has agreed to take them, turning into the treasury in exchange the gold of which that institution stands in such need. The details of the plan have not yet developed. At this writing it is not known precisely how many millions of bonds will be sold, but it is said the total issue will be \$200,000,000, and under the resumption act they will have to bear 4 per cent interest.

The announcement will create a decided sensation in the financial world, as all the arrangements have been made with the utmost secrecy, nothing regarding this leaking out until lately. This tallies with what the Democrats predicted last campaign.

FIGURES given out by the Census Bureau show the combined State and local bonded indebtedness of Pennsylvania to be \$108,238,994. Ten years ago it was \$128,890,578. The State of New York has an indebtedness of \$225,540,154, and Massachusetts has \$128,729,811. Both New York and Massachusetts have increased their indebtedness in the past decade, while Pennsylvania has decreased hers.

After a burglar in a San Francisco clothing store had packed up two valises of goods he came face to face with his reflection in a large mirror, fired five bullets into the image, thinking it was the watchman. And barely escaped before the arrival of the policemen whom his shots summoned.

—All persons owing coal bills will please call and settle before Feb. 10. Coal is cash. KURTZ & SON.

AMEND THE LAW

PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE SECRET BALLOT LAW.

Senator Baker Offers a Bill Making Many and Important Amendments to the Act.

Senator Baker, of Delaware county, the framer of the present secret ballot law, introduced a bill into the senate making many and important amendments to the ballot law. The changes proposed are of the type which will meet with public approval and the amendments will be made. Under these changes any party polling one per cent. of the largest vote cast, for any state officer, is recognized as a political party, and may certify its nominations. The present law requires three per cent. Parties polling less than one per cent must present nomination papers. For state officers, congress and legislature, not more than 500 signatures are required, while for other officers there must be at least ten signers.

Certificates of nomination and nomination papers for the three highest classes of officers must be filed thirty-five and twenty-eight days respectively before election instead of fifty-six and forty-nine; county and municipal twenty-eight and twenty-one instead of forty-two and thirty-five. For boroughs and townships the limit is unchanged. The time for filing objections in the three classes is extended from thirty to thirty-nine, twenty to twenty-four and three to five respectively. The secretary of the commonwealth must certify nominations to the sheriffs and commissioners, twelve days before election, instead of ten, as now required.

The method of marking ballots is changed to require a cross mark opposite the name of each candidate voted for except presidential electors, where one mark opposite the party name votes for all. The number of official ballots furnished is unchanged, but only a sufficient number of specimen ballots are required, and the county commissioners may require the election judges to come to their office on the day before election and receive and receipt for all ballots for their districts.

One voting compartment is to be furnished for every seventy-five voters, instead of every fifty, and a certain door must be placed across the upper part to screen the voter from observation while making his ballot. The name and residence of the person vouching for an unregistered voter must be endorsed on the ballots' check list, opposite the voters' name. Reasonable compensation for party watchers shall be included in the proper election expenses of candidates and political committees.

The most important change is that relative to the "disability" of voters.

It reads as follows: If any voter, before receiving his ballot, declares to the judge of election that he cannot read it, or that for any physical cause he is unable to mark it, the judge shall require him (except in case of manifest physical disability) to make oath or affirmation to the fact, stating it specifically, and shall then permit him to select one qualified elector of the district as a helper, who shall be permitted to enter a voting compartment with him. The said helper shall first declare, on oath or affirmation, that he will not attempt to influence the vote of said voter, but will only give him the help he may desire, and that he will not disclose the contents of the ballot to any one except when required so to do in any legal proceeding. The inspector in charge of the voting check list shall in any such case note therein, opposite the name of the voter helped, the words helped by (naming the helper) on account of (stating the cause).

A public count is also specifically provided for. These amendments have been prepared by the Pennsylvania ballot reform association, which body drew up the old bill. C. C. Binney, of Philadelphia, its secretary, stated that the association thought these amendments would make Pennsylvania's ballot law the best in the country. The amendments requiring a cross mark opposite each name is made, not only to avoid confusion arising from the use of two ways of marking, but in view of a recent decision of the supreme court of California that to allow the voting of a whole ballot by one mark placed there by the voter is more burdensome conditions than others, and was contrary to that provision of the California constitution requiring uniform election laws. As Pennsylvania's constitution has a similar requirement, it was considered best to have a mark opposite each name, except presidential electors, which are usually voted for straight.

—Public sales and free grub are now getting ripe; johnny cakes and sausages are out of season.

OUR TOWN'S OPPORTUNITIES.

An Improvement—Lend Your Aid to All Beneficial Enterprises.

Centre Hall within a year is likely to manufacture as good flour again as it once was famous for, until a destructive fire destroyed the mill plant. If proper encouragement is given to the partially rebuilt enterprise, we look forward to a complete mill again in the near future. The plant destroyed was a credit to the valley and to itself, at home and abroad.

It was most beneficial to the farmers of the valley, causing a better price for their grain, on account of its manufacture into flour at home.

This benefit farmers can again expect to reap, as we confidently believe, in the near future. Farmers have admitted that the plant destroyed was worth as much as a hundred dollars to them annually, in increased prices, above what they would have had without such an enterprise.

With more sincere co-operation on the part of citizens of this town and locality, instead of opposition to enterprises, the whole community will be benefited. Throw jealousy aside, and offer your shoulder for a push where anything presents itself to build up a neighborhood—it will have its good effect down to the common day laborer and up to the farmer, merchant and mechanic.

This thing of throwing cold water on every enterprise of another, is a spirit in some to be regretted, and works to the injury of all.

Centre Hall, with its advantages, lovely location, healthfulness, and other good points, is a tempting spot for the location of industries, but the weeds of jealousy should not go to seed too much to scare away what should receive the warmest encouragement. All are aware of the harm that has been done by such a spirit. Let the good citizens of our town and vicinity, weigh these thoughts.

To Abolish Spring Elections.

In a recent issue of the REPORTER we urged the doing away with spring elections, and have local offices elected once in two or three years—saving great expense.

A bill has been introduced at Harrisburg, abolishing spring elections, providing for the holding of municipal and state elections at the same time, and so changing the term of State and other officials as to make it necessary to hold an election but once in two years. There are very many arguments in favor of this. We are obliged to devote entirely too much time to elections, and their constant recurrence twice a year tends more than anything else to keep the political machines in constant and pernicious activity. If two entire years elapsed between the elections, it would cut off just three fourths of the present number, and there wouldn't be, as there is at present, a lot of candidates constantly in the field and a new distribution of spoils always in sight.

Good Yet on Sunday.

The coasting and skating about the town which has been finer than ever before known, was still in excellent shape on Sunday. Some of the boys evidently thought the week not long enough and on Sunday forenoon a large bob, loaded with boys came thundering down the mountain into town, much to the surprise and astonishment of some of our Sabbath loving people. During the day when you saw a young lad walking the streets with a suspicious looking bulk under his overcoat, you would probably be led to believe that he had purloined some goods and was making his way to a "fence" to dispose of it. But you would be misled if such were your impressions. He had only a pair of skates and was on the way to a retired nook where he could glide over the glassy surface free from observation.

THE ALBANY bill to regulate the prices of coal in New York State is intended to do more in increasing the profits of legislators than in decreasing the price of coal. If an unreasonable price is being charged for coal in New York State through a combination, and an aggrieved person can go into court and get a reasonable price fixed, and if the price is not unreasonable, any attempt to change it will fail because it is taking property without due process of law. If a combination is really charging an unreasonable price for coal in New York State, it is a question not for the Legislature at Albany but for the Grand Jury and District Attorney in each county, exactly as has been done in Rochester by the Grand Jury and District Attorney of Monroe county.

Most people overlook the quality when looking out for low-priced articles now-a-days. Bull's-Head Flavoring Extracts maintain a high standard of excellence. Price 10 cents.

LUMBER OPERATIONS.

Forests Stripped of Their Fine Timber. New Ones Should Be Started.

The lumber operations in Pennsylvania Valley and the mountains surrounding it, have well nigh cleaned out all that was fit for manufactured lumber, within the past ten years. Thirty years ago we had many magnificent tracts of pine and hemlock, as well as oak and maple in the valley and the mountains bordering it, but the portable mills came, and multiplied so fast, that little is left of what was once No. 1 timberland. In a few years, if we must have lumber for houses and barns, it must be shipped in from other places, whereas we have been manufacturers of the commodity and shipped to other distant points.

Prop timber for the mines has also gone out by hundreds of car loads in the past ten years, and that commodity is likewise getting scarce, and scarce any of it to be found convenient to the railroad.

Centre county had some of the most majestic pines in the state; its oaks were of the finest, and also its maples—but now scrubs of other varieties of trees are growing where these giants of the forests reigned supreme.

The poet did not sing any too early, "Woodman Spare That Tree"—only the admonition was not heeded.

Walnuts planted for future trees will bring thousands of dollars inside of 25 years. A hundred acres planted now on land that cannot be farmed, will be worth \$25,000 to \$50,000 in twenty-five years. Walnut lumber always brought high prices, and is scarce now, and in 25 years a walnut grove will prove a bonanza.

It is an easy matter to start new forests by planting on land that has been denuded of timber, and cannot be cultivated, it will prove the richest legacy a man can leave to posterity. Germany and other European countries follow this method and as a result the timber supply is always adequate to the needs of the people over there.

NEW LEGISLATION.

A number of schemes are before the legislature of public interest—some wild and others that may have merit, if wisely framed. The apportionment is one important measure and to answer the public demand, it should be a fair one, devoid of gerrymander.

There are a number of road law schemes, some of which certainly will not meet public favor, being based upon crankiness. Any law that will compel the construction of better roads under the law as it now stands, will fill the bill.

A new game law the main features of which have already been given in the REPORTER will demand the attention of our legislators.

The tax question will come up again as in the past six years. There are some visionary and impracticable tax ideas, but tax reform is wanted and the wise heads that will reach it, will get the thanks of the masses. Our taxing system is not what it should be and it is a subject difficult to adjust satisfactorily to all the varied interests affected.

The fence law may receive some attention, but we do not look for a repeal of the repeal which abolished line fences, and we are inclined to think the law now will remain.

The legislative Record job may get an overhauling and the nuisance be abated, or the work ordered to be done decently and on time.

The above are about the main subjects that the wise men at Harrisburg will be called upon to deliberate this winter. May they show wisdom in all.

WHILE the people of the United States are seriously debating the best course to take in regard to the Sandwich islands, their minister at Honolulu seems to have set out to solve the problem on his own account. On the 1st of February he had a force paraded from the war vessels in the harbor, hoisted the American flag on the government building, and issued a proclamation to the people of Hawaii that he had assumed protection in the name of the American government. This looks like a movement to force the hand of our government on a matter of the gravest importance. Minister Stevens hardly had instructions justifying him in this course, and probably acted on his own responsibility. If there is a big speculation in this Sandwich island scheme he is likely to have a hand in it. The presumption of a third-rate minister committing this government on such an important question just as a change of administration at Washington is taking place is about the most extraordinary display of cheek and impudence in our diplomatic annals.

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