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HISTORICAL NOTES.

By MR. J. D. MURRAY.

Mr. Rothruff was now fully installed pastor of the Centre Hall Lutheran charge, which had just been reconstructed. The Bellefonte congregation was taken from this charge in 1852, at which time there was no church here of any kind. Rev. P. S. Fisher, the Reformed minister, who lived in Boalsburg, preached in the Loop, now called Tusseyville, in the union church. It was customary at that time for all church people of Reformed belief in this section to attend services in the Loop church. The same is true of the Lutherans of that day. Each denomination had their day for services. Half of the preaching by both Reformed and Lutheran ministers was in the German language, or rather Pennsylvania Dutch. This would seem very strange to-day, but at that time there were many Dutch people living in the neighborhood, which made preaching necessary in that language.

It is surprising how very rapidly this Dutch run out once it began to decline in popularity. It disappeared so rapidly that in some instances it divided families. The writer has knowledge of several families where two or three of the first born children were pretty well grown up before they pretended to speak a word of English, and the younger children, or second crop, as the parents saw fit to call them, never learned to talk in that dialect. When the writer came among these people in 1851, he found them to be an honest, hardworking, frugal and prosperous people; much inclined to hospitality and religion. The proof of this can be seen by the number of fine churches that have been erected in this place at a great expense. In addition to these present churches, three other churches have been built—one Reformed and two Lutheran. The Lutherans during 1862 and 1863 built their first church on the lot now owned by the McClenahan family, on Church street. The structure stood well back in the lot. The foundation proved faulty—sandy and soft, and soon the brick walls began to crack near the roof. The building was then pronounced unsafe, and the people grew afraid to meet in it.

About 1873, the first Lutheran church was built and the available material used in the construction of a larger and finer edifice across the street to the rear of the bank building, on the site now occupied by the dwelling house of Miller Goodhart. The dedication took place, November 16, 1875. This church only stood a short time. October 13, 1884, the church took fire and was totally destroyed from the burning of two stables nearby. June 20, 1886, the present Lutheran church was dedicated.

When the year 1894 came around the Reformed people, with perhaps a little more pride than piety, conceived the idea that their church was in a tumble-down condition. The old structure was accordingly razed and the very pretty brown stone church, dedicated Nov. 29, 1896, is the result.

It is fifty-five years since this town was started, and to-day there are five very good churches standing, and three were rebuilt—an average of one in five years every seventh year.

An old gentleman from New York, who used to visit this place frequently remarked that he could see no more thrifty enterprise going on in Centre Hall than church building. Well, remarked one, it is all right to build churches, even if the men and women get a little too enthusiastic and get to believe that a great effort on their part to bring the job to completion and liquidate the debt will cover a multitude of sins. A lady of our acquaintance was much attached to a large pet dog possessed of a vindictive spirit—a persistent fighter. He would fight at home and go away to punish some poor cur. One night when Major, for that was the dog's name, came home from a fighting expedition on three legs his mistress exclaimed: "Major, you didn't get that by building churches." The lady honestly thought that if it were possible for her dog to have been engaged in the meritorious work of helping to build churches, he would be standing on four legs in place of three. Now this lady evidently looked upon church building as a righteous act and a shield from danger.

Going back to the early history in church building in Centre Hall let me say that in 1851 and 1852 the few Reformed and Lutherans who lived on the north side of Penns Valley began to contemplate the erection of a place of worship, as all were tiring of going to the Loop to church. Mr. Witmer was at that time the bone and sinew of the town as well as of the Reformed church. Mr. Witmer was well prepared to go five miles every Sunday. He was a great horse fancier; he had a pair of carriage horses, also a very fine saddle horse, called Perry; he was almost as fleet as an antelope.

The writer at that time was a boarder at the hotel and he soon learned the rule in the Witmer family was to go over to the Loop five miles to the union church to hear Rev. Fisher or Rev. Rothruff preach either Dutch or English. Neither of them could speak anything like good English, but were evidently good German scholars. At times it was difficult to know which language they were using. The principal part of the hearers were hardworking people, and on a warm day after driving from one to five miles they could sleep no matter how the preaching was done. One member accused another of sleeping all the time. Oh, well, he replied, I feel our preacher will make it all right; I don't need to stay awake to watch him.

At this time the Reformed people were the strongest, both numerically and financially, on this side the valley, and when it came to building a church the most difficult question that arose was to decide whether to build a Reformed, a Lutheran or a union church. Rev. Fisher claimed it would not be best to build a union church and have it dedicated as such. He proposed to have it built a Reformed church and not a union church. But as he was feeling very kindly towards the Lutheran brethren he wanted them to be accommodating to them, yet he was opposed to a union, or as he called it, a comma shefflich a Kerich. It was finally settled to build it a Reformed church, be dedicated as such and owned by that congregation. But how were the Lutherans to be treated? A subscription was circulated among the members of both churches for the purpose of building a \$3000 church, and each member subscribed as much as they felt able to pay. It was counted that the Reformed people would subscribe largely in excess of the Lutherans, but there was then an agreement made between the two congregations so that each congregation would enjoy all the rights and privileges of the other as far as the use of the church was concerned. In summing up it was found the Lutherans had paid about one-third of the cost of the structure. It was then agreed that the Lutherans should pay a rental of \$8.00 a year and one-half the sexton's fee, each one to find their own light and fuel. Things turned out just as Rev. Fisher predicted—after they had a place to worship both congregations increased and later the Lutherans built their own church as stated above. So far as the writer knows there was never any trouble between these congregations.

Shortly after the writer made his appearance among these good people they called him the Irishman or that Irishman, because he could not speak the Pennsylvania Dutch. The appellation was accepted without a murmur. One lady remarked, well, he is Irish; I knew his mother and his two sisters; the mother can't speak a half dozen words until you can notice the Irish brogue, and besides he was born and raised in an Irish settlement. There was no use denying his nationality with this array of evidence—circumstantial, prima facie and direct—against him. The young Hibernian concluded that the best thing to do was to acquaint himself with the Pennsylvania Dutch, and thus become more like the people of the plains. When the writer thought he had mastered the language fairly well he was humiliated to hear a lady remark that she liked to hear him talk because it sounded so funny. There seemed to be a little prejudice against the Irish and their descendants. When any thing was done that did not show skill or good workmanship, the Dutch said it was Irish; when a horse showed the marks of a poor groom, that was Irish; a farmer who kept his fences in poor repair was designated an Irish farmer. When a woman was found to be a little negligent in her domestic affairs, talk English and read something outside of the Reformed Messenger or the Lutheran Observer, she was a Yankee. There was, however, no real antipathy existed between the Irish and the Dutch, the expression was only used to show disapproval of methods, etc.

When the writer came to Centre Hall he found the young people courting in Dutch, getting married in Dutch, and living happy together in Dutch. There was soon a great effort made on the part of the young people to learn to speak English plainly. Parents avoided speaking Dutch within the hearing of their children. The schools were English and Dutch talk among school children soon disappeared. It was not many years until the younger generation began to find fault with the two old preachers—Rothruff and Fisher. Old Mr. Fisher was a very long headed man, and saw the signs of the times very well, which meant that he must get out of the charge. He wisely concluded that the most opportune time to leave would be during the discussion incident to the building of the church just cited.

LUTHERAN SYNOD.

Cleric and Lay Delegates from All Parts of the Country Convened at Des Moines.

An event of more than ordinary interest to the Lutheran Church is the meeting of its general synod in session at Des Moines, Iowa, for about one week beginning Wednesday evening, May 29, when the opening sermon will be delivered by the president, Rev. S. F. Breckenridge, Sc. D., D. D., of Springfield, Ohio. The synod is composed of delegates from twenty-four districts covering virtually the whole United States. The number of delegates will be about 250, half of the number being laymen.

The officers of the synod are: President, Rev. S. F. Breckenridge, D. D., of Springfield, O.; secretary, Rev. W. E. Fisher, D. D., of Shamokin, Pa.; treasurer, Mr. Louis Mans, of Cincinnati, O. These officers will probably be reelected with the exception of the president, the custom being to elect a new president for each convention. There is always great interest in this election and no little correspondence is involved in the matter before any ballot is held. Among the persons now mentioned for the honor are Rev. Drs. L. E. Albert, Philadelphia; S. W. Owen, Hagerstown; W. S. Fress, Baltimore; G. W. Enders, York, Pa.; and D. H. Bauslin, Springfield, O. While no one can certainly predict the result, the indication now is that Dr. Albert will be chosen. The strength of the synod is in Pennsylvania, and the delegates from this State make up one-third of the convention. Dr. Albert will therefore have the hearty support of the large part of these delegates, and will have support of the entire delegation from the East Pennsylvania Synod. He has been in the ministry more than half a century, his single pastorate being Trinity Lutheran Church of Germantown.

The delegates to represent the Synod of Central Pa. at the above convention are, clerical: Revs. M. S. Cressman, Lewistown; W. H. Fahs, Millintown; J. M. Bearick, Centre Hall; J. B. Law, Blaine; G. W. Leisher, Boalsburg. Lay delegates: Messrs. Charles A. Widle, Loysville; T. K. Beaver, Academia; W. P. Kuhn, Bellefonte; John Fleisher, Newport; Hon. Samuel Killian, Lewistown.

LAWYERS TO BE REVISED.

Governor Stone Signs a Bill to Create a Commission.

Governor Stone signed Senator Fox's bill constituting a board of three commissioners for the promotion of uniformity of legislation in the United States, to be appointed thirty days after the bill becomes a law.

The commission shall organize in Harrisburg and exist as a board for not more than four years. It shall be the duty of the board to examine the subjects of marriage, divorce, insolvency, probate of wills, notarial certificates, commercial law and such other subjects as said board may deem necessary.

The commissioners will receive no compensation other than their actual expenses.

Governor Signs Bills.

The following bills were signed by Governor Stone:

Authorizing policeman of boroughs to perform the duties of high constables.

Requiring notice to build or repair sidewalks in boroughs to be served upon the owners of property.

Empowering borough authorities to lay foot walks, pavements, gutters, culverts and drains over and upon lands abutting on and along the side or sides of public roads entirely within the borough limits and to assess the paving, curbing and guttering on the owners of adjoining lands.

Where the United States Began.

Some of the marvelous changes wrought by time in the appearance of four of the earliest settlements on our Atlantic coast are strikingly illustrated in a series of views which will shortly appear in The Ladies' Home Journal. The places are St. Augustine, Jamestown, Plymouth and New York. The forlorn indications of Jamestown's decay and death as a settlement offer a most interesting contrast to the varied evidences of the gradual development of St. Augustine and Plymouth and the gigantic growth of modern New York.

Luther's Diet.

The program sent out by the Central District Luther League, a convention of which body will be held in Lock Haven next week, announced that Prof. C. L. Gramley will talk on "Luther and the Diet of Worms." This is an entirely new subject, and one which Prof. Gramley no doubt will radically revise before he ventures to dilate upon it. Luther might have been a gastronome, but it may safely be said that "worms" never were found on his bill of fare.

SERMON TO VETERANS.

Dr. Schuyler Shows Veterans the Relation of the Civil War to the Kingdom of Christ.

Sunday morning members of Samuel Shannon Post listened to a sermon in the Presbyterian church by Dr. Schuyler that will never be eradicated from their memory. The theme of the sermon was the relation of the civil war to the kingdom of Christ, from the text found in Rev. 11:15: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." This was discussed for the purpose of showing that out of this relation grows a reason for honoring the memory of the dead soldiers of the civil war much beyond the honor that belongs to the ordinary soldier.

The happiest and most enduring nation is the one most in harmony with the great movements by which the Lord is slowly but surely wresting the world from Satan's grasp and handing it over to Christ. America's central, yet isolated, position among the nations of the earth; the abundance and variety of her native resources; the peculiar character of her people, drawn from all parts of the earth, yet rapidly becoming homogeneous; her political and social institutions with their striking resemblances to those appointed by God himself for his chosen people; and her past history indicates that Providence has given her an opportunity to share largely in the glorious work of making the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

God does not approve of war, but if men in the exercise of their freedom persist in war God may overrule their action to his own glory. Many of the results of the war to suppress the rebellion mark a decided advance toward the time when Christ shall reign in peace over all lands, viz., the abolition of slavery, the dignifying of honest toil of the hand, the legalizing of political equality, and the closer union of the nation in the bonds of a common brotherhood. These mark progress in the right direction and make our example more influential because more consistent with our professions.

Thus it happens that in addition to the usual reasons for honoring our dead and living heroes, their patient endurance of hardships, and their unselfish devotion, we have the ever enduring reason that they made a very large contribution to the very ends the Church has in view.

This honor should consist not only of talk, which is cheap, but of a determined guarding of what they purchased at so great a cost against the insidious foes of national welfare which are most active in times of peace. This thought was dwelt on to some extent.

The sermon closed with an appeal to the veterans to accept service in the army of Christ that their last days may be quiet and peaceful, and that when the great Commander summons them into his presence they may say: "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Surprise Party.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Zettles, of Penn Hall, gave a surprise party for their son Archibald on his eighteenth birthday, Saturday night. He received many useful presents. The following young folks were present: The Misses Jennie Moyer, Annie Waite, Theresa Rachau, Clara Condo, Verna Zettle, Ella Condo, Mary Barges, Lillie Ulrich and Martha Burrell. The Messrs. Franklin Richardson, Clarence Miller, Charles Hennich, Clyde Hoover, Kryder Frank, Harry McManaway, Hayes Zettle, Samuel Whitteer and William Smith. All enjoyed themselves finely. Refreshments were served at 8:30. Music furnished by Mrs. Albright and Miss Rachau.

Narrowly Escaped Drowning.

A three year-old girl of Luther Rote, residing in Penn township along the creek, narrowly escaped from drowning one day last week, says the Journal. A small stream runs near Mr. Rote's house and a plank laid across it served as a foot bridge. The family were at supper and thought that the little one was out with another child at the barn. A four year-old child of George Bower came over to Mr. Rote's and saw the dress of the little girl in the water near the plank. At first he thought it was a doll baby, but soon saw it was the little girl. He pulled her out of the water and told her parents. They found her to be almost dead, and immediately sent for Dr. Frank. Only by the greatest effort was her life saved.

Ministerial Association.

The Evangelical Ministerial Association will convene in Rebersburg next week. About three score of ministers and lay delegates are expected to be in attendance.

DEATHS.

MRS. CLARA WITMER.

Clara, wife of John Witmer, of Pine Grove Mills, died Saturday morning at 6 o'clock at her home at Pine Grove Mills after a ten days' illness from blood poisoning. She was born in Spring township and was about 42 years of age. She was the mother of 13 children, 10 of whom are living.

She had a large circle of friends and relatives and her sad death has cast a gloom over the community in which she lived.

The funeral took place Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment in the new cemetery at Pine Grove Mills.

SAMUEL S. WAGNER.

Samuel S. Wagner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Wagner, died at the home of his parents south of Tusseyville early Tuesday morning. The young man, whose age was sixteen years and four months, had been ailing for some months, and for the last ten days of his life was confined to his bed with an abscess that had formed on his brain.

The funeral will take place Friday, 9 o'clock a. m., at the house, interment in the Zion cemetery. Rev. Shultz, of the United Evangelical church, will officiate.

Rebersburg.

Cornelius Stover and daughter spent Saturday in Bellefonte, bringing his grandchild, Rebecca Moyer, home with them.

Mrs. Samuel Miller, of Lochiel, has been visiting at the home of J. R. Brungart.

Norman Stover, of Dushore, Pa., spent Thursday night in town.

Dr. J. W. Bright and daughter, Mary, visited his brothers at Sunbury over Sunday.

Seven horses were brought to our valley after the horse sale at Millheim on Monday.

Sheriff Brungart was in attendance at the horse sale at Millheim and took time to visit some of his relatives and friends in this vicinity before returning home.

W. Gaylor Morrison, of Bellefonte, agent for school supplies, was seen in town Tuesday.

The bridge builders have been delayed on account of the almost incessant rains during the last week.

H. I. Brungart, the bustling insurance agent of Wilkesbarre, is here to spend a fortnight under the parental roof.

Millheim.

Mr. and Mrs. McClellan Stover, of Cedar Springs, visited friends in town over Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Al. Gummo and daughter, of Mackeyville, spent Sunday and Monday at the home of J. C. Smith, on Penn street.

Miss Maud Wooster, of Bellefonte, was the guest of Miss Bessie Noll last week.

C. W. Freeby and family, of Wolf's Store, were in town on Sunday.

L. E. Kerstetter and family, who had been living at Fox Mills for several years, moved to town last Thursday and are occupying part of the Hockman property on Mill street.

J. C. Condo and wife, of Penn Hall, were in town on Monday attending the horse sale and visiting their daughter, Mrs. H. N. Meyer.

J. P. Condo and J. H. Matze made a business trip to Bellefonte Tuesday.

Linden Hall.

Memorial services were observed at this place this (Thursday) forenoon, of Centre Hall, who delivered an excellent address.

William Raymond thinks of buying a bull dog to keep the boys away since the arrival of that new girl at his place.

Ward Shultz and sister, Jean, of Centre Hall, visited at the home of Elizabeth Gettig on Thursday.

Adam Zeigler, of this place, spent a few days at Gettysburg last week as delegate from the Boalsburg I. O. O. F. lodge.

Mrs. Summers and family, of Gatesburg, spent a few days very pleasantly with the lady's sister, Mrs. F. E. Wieland, of this place.

George Weaver, who spent last summer at this place, but who is now employed at Scotia, spent a few days in town recently visiting his friends.

A little boy came to the home of Charlie Dagle last week and Charlie says he will make another saw mill boss out of him.

S. D. Gettig, of Bellefonte, spent a few days with his mother in this place. He is just recovering from a severe attack of tonsillitis.

Robert McClellan has finished the foundation for his new barn and is now engaged in hauling the lumber for the same from Colyer.

Mrs. John Shreck has moved to Brisban, where her husband is engaged in blacksmithing.

Philip Bradford and son, Carl, who are confined to bed with typhoid fever, are both convalescing.

I. W. Zeigler spent part of last week in Lewisburg as a delegate from the United Ev. Sunday school of this place to the district Sunday school convention.

Al. Stamp, the efficient and obliging milk man, is at present housed up and Arthur Cummings has charge of his milk route.

TOWN AND COUNTY NEWS.

HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS.

See Grant Hoover before you insure. D. R. Wilson, wife and daughter, of Howard, were the guests of Thos G. Wilson in this place.

Mrs. J. E. Campbell, and daughter, of Linden Hall, spent a day in Centre Hall last week.

Send your laundry to the Reporter office any time prior to Wednesday a. m.; deliveries made Friday and Saturday.

D. A. Boozer added two new buggies to his already well equipped livery at this place. The buggies were made at the Conlio carriage shops, Penn Hall.

Mrs. Minnie Richard and Miss Grace Lee, of this place, Saturday went to Altoona where they will spend some time with friends and relatives.

Miss Florence Love, a compositor in this office who for speed and correctness is among the best in the county, Friday morning went to Watsonstown where she will be the guest of Mrs. Foster, wife of Rev. W. K. Foster for a week.

Mention was made last week in reference to the Evangelical church observing children's day at Tusseyville. The item should have designated that it was the United Evangelical church. The time June 16.

J. Kline, of Aaronsburg, attended a meeting of the Piney Coal and Oil Company held at the Centre Hall hotel Saturday, and called at the Reporter office. Mr. Kline reports good prospects in the lower section of Penns Valley as very favorable.

Dr. C. S. Musser, of Millheim, who has a most enviable reputation as a physician and surgeon, spent Friday of last week with Gross Yearick, of Philadelphia. The latter gentleman left for his home Saturday after spending two weeks among friends in the Centre Hall.

Lewis Furey, of Lock Haven, who has been with the Tenth regiment in Cuba for two years and a half, arrived home last week. Lewis had been on detached duty for some time. He had several months yet to serve but received an honorable discharge through the influence of Senator Heinle.

A curfew ordinance is about to be adopted in Lewisburg, which means that at a signal given at nine o'clock children under the age of sixteen years are prohibited on the streets. The idea is a good one, but why should not every parent ring his or her own curfew bell in every town or city? Try the experiment, and note the result.

Miss Helen Hosterman, daughter of Dr. G. W. Hosterman, of this place, is in Lancaster, having gone there Tuesday. Miss Helen will attend the commencement exercises of Franklin and Marshall College next week, and later will visit several other points. While in Lancaster, she will be the guest of her brothers, Sumner V., an attorney, and John S., who is just closing his freshman year at F. & M.

Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Murray Friday drove to Fairbrook, where Mrs. Geo. Keichline, a niece of Mrs. Murray, lives, who has been ill for some time. The lady's condition is such that her recovery is doubtful. Mrs. Keichline within the last year had a large tumor removed, which for a time greatly relieved her. Later cancer of the bowels set in which the best hospital physicians refused to operate on.

B. D. Brisban, while attending the Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows at Gettysburg last week, visited Jacob B. Solt, formerly a resident of this place. Mr. Solt is living on a government farm near Gettysburg, and is getting along splendidly. The farm referred to is one of a number of farms purchased by the government with a view of keeping the buildings and surroundings as nearly as possible in the same condition as they were after the battle of Gettysburg. Calvin Solt, a son of Jacob B. Solt, is a merchant tailor and lives in Gettysburg. The establishment he is conducting employs a half dozen tailors.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Nevin Meyer and little daughter, Miss Winifred Wolf and Prof. Edward M. Brungart, of Rebersburg, and John K. Moyer, of Freeburg, were the guests of D. J. Meyer Friday night and Saturday morning proceeded to Bellefonte, their objective point. Mr. Meyer is a retired gentleman and takes life easy, and at present is spending the time with his many Centre county friends and relatives.

Messrs. Meyer and Brungart are school teachers, each of whom are held in the highest esteem in Madisonburg and Cross Forks, Potter county, respectively, where they taught school. And the ladies—well, neither of the gentlemen would think life worth living without them.

Paul K. Kellner - 1958