

The Lancaster Intelligencer.

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LANCASTER, PA., FRIDAY DECEMBER 30, 1881.

Price Two Cents.

JOHN WANAMAKER'S GREAT HOLIDAY SALE.

JOHN WANAMAKER

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 5th,

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Grand Depot, Thirteenth, Market and Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia.

Lancaster Intelligencer.

FRIDAY EVENING, DEC. 30, 1881.

THE CORONER'S OFFICE.

AN INTERESTING INTERVIEW.

A RETIRING OFFICIAL'S REMINISCENCES.

Review of An Eventful Term.

Coroner Mishler Relates the Story of Three Years in Office.

The official term of Coroner Isaac Mishler, is about drawing to a close. At 12 o'clock noon on next Monday he will lay off his robes of office and retire to the ease and dignity of private life. Obscurity is not to be his lot, however. His career has been a shining and memorable one. As has no doubt been recognized by many of our readers, he has invested his office with a degree of importance which it had not known under his immediate local predecessors and which recalled the traditions of its supremacy under the earlier English kings. He was the first coroner to fit up the little room which he now occupies under the west stairway in the corridor of the court-house and hang his blazing sign upon the outer walls; to establish office hours; to keep his vigil there, of late day and night, for the messenger whose hour of coming no man knows; and, to send his own lieges, to his coronation office as to make it productive of emolument for himself and fruitful in example for a line of less illustrious successors.

Seated in his official chair, surrounded by the insignia of his office, fondly caressing that game leg which has seen so many adventures and hair-breadth escapes of its owner's life and reviewing in these sunset days of his term its vicissitudes and triumphs Coroner Mishler was found by an INTELLIGENCER representative yesterday. As has long been his wont he consulted the cards that morning and their answer—infallibly correct—was "no inquest to-day." Hence he was at leisure to talk freely.

328 Inquests in Three Years.

In so much of his three years of official service as has already elapsed 328 inquests have been held of which the coroner himself, who can reserve all the territory within ten miles of the city for his own personal direction, held 150 inquests and his deputies held 178. In his first year he held 39 and his deputies 46; in the second the coroner held 51 and his subordinates 57, and this year—so far—he has had 80 and they 75. Next to himself Deputy Coroner Frank, of Columbia, has had the most, 39, and after him Deputy J. M. Eaby, of Paradise, follows with 17, the latter mostly victims of railroad accidents around Leaman's Place and Gosherville.

When Mishler took the office it was almost utterly without any sort of records and to find the proceedings of an inquest was an almost hopeless task. Now there is a carefully prepared docket, beginning with his term, in which are recorded the return of the jurors in full, the names of the witnesses and all the proceedings of every inquest.

Enticing the Law.

The coroner says he has taught the public and the county commissioners something about the rights and duties of his office. The popular impression that somebody else than himself was the judge of what he ought to do has forced him into some collisions, from all of which he has emerged triumphantly vindicating his judicial dignity and executive authority. The commissioners, who have resisted payment of his bills, only to be taught that they had no control over his exercise of discretion in judging where and when and how and over whom to hold an inquest. Montgomery has refused to sign more than a few of his warrants, but all the decisions have united in teaching him to know his rights and "knowing dare maintain."

Eventful Experiences.

Friends of deceased who have been reluctant to have their bodies examined or the manner of their death made the objects of inquiry, and who have felt outraged at the ruthless intrusion of the jury into the sorrow stricken households, have been met with heroic treatment, for says the coroner: "I have power to make arrests," and his power failing, the processes of the aldermanic courts have not been invoked in vain to sustain him. In one case three women met him with a club and his jury felt like sleep. He met the amazonian foe, repulsed them, recalled four of his scattered inquest and went on with his work. In another instance, as the coroner recites with much pathos, he was made to forcibly feel the ruinous effects of being tender hearted. At the solicitation of some members of a mourning household three lady members were exused from attending to the body of their husband and father. As he took into view what they might have testified to, the coroner very naturally put into his bill 75 cents for qualifying them as witnesses and drew the money from the county treasury. Many months afterwards this came to the ears of the family, and "What do you think?" indignantly says the coroner, "here their counsel sends me a letter to refund those 75 cents within six hours or be prosecuted for misdemeanor in office!" And the coroner sighed as he thought with melancholy of the ingratitude of men and women. But he has refunded the 75 cents, all the same.

The Legal Fees.

The coroner says that there is some misapprehension as to the fees of the office. He has bill blanks as follows which show the legal charges proper to be made:

To.....Dr. 188.
To inquest held on the body of.....\$2.75
Summoning and qualifying.....1.37
Mileage, miles @ 6 cents per mile......09
Jury, 12 men @ 50 cents each.....6.00
Witness, @ 25 cents each......09
This gives him \$4.12 for each inquest; the mileage he says is immaterial, except when he can travel by rail on a pass—"no fault attaching to the railroad company" otherwise the literary bill and toll eat up the mileage. Erstwhile the jurymen paid their fee to the coroner and that swelled his gain. It was the usual racket to select one experienced jurymen, who would always hand back his fee and set an example to the others. A few a while Coroner Mishler inaugurated the practice of treating them. Then they began to take 25 cent drinks. He ventured upon ice cream and they would call for two plates. Finally he concluded in disgust that he might as well pay them out of his right—a half dollar apiece. So from this source he now only gets \$3 an inquest. Qualifying witnesses is a profitable part of the business, and when there is a large family of children 25 cents a head, from

the parents to those in the cradle will pay the average inquest in the city and neighborhood \$10 for the coroner. In the country the jurymen look for their dollar, and when, as often happens, they agree to hand it over to the family, the coroner not only loses his divvy, but has to chip in with the rest for charity. These are some of the discouraging features of the office.

The Doctors.

By a bargain with the deputies they pay him \$4 out of each inquest, and he says they can easily afford it, as they can always make \$5 out of the attending physician. Any deputy who failed to come to time with his divvy speedily felt the coroner's axe upon his neck.

The Doctors.

The coroner is of the opinion that he does not get enough fees while the coroner's physician gets too much. The latter is entitled to \$10 for every post mortem examination, and an every case except one, in the reign of Mishler the Great, a physician attended. That case was the inquest of a man named Ruth, killed by the cars near Reamstown, and when the bill came in without a doctor's charge on it, Mishler relates that "Bob Montgomery was so tickled that he approved and commended me." "But," adds the coroner, "he might not have been so cheerful had he known that neither was there any corpse." And the way there came to be an inquest without a corpse was that when Mishler got to the place, the body had been taken to Wernersville, Berks county, for burial. The neighbors were greatly opposed to an inquest and declared it useless. Mishler insisted that it be held and, quietly inquiring around, found six men who had seen the body, summoned them as jurors and when two of them refused to serve, panicked with the law, he promptly arrested them and declares he would have brought them to town in irons had they not succumbed and reported a view of the body and the manner that it came to its end—without any blame attaching to the railroad company, on whose free pass the coroner rode to and from the inquest, at 6.3 mile mileage from the county. The consciousness of the coroner was not entirely clear, however, as to this manner of holding the inquest and he frankly told one of the commissioners—in a corner—that if he was not satisfied he would ride over to Wernersville on his free pass, at 6.3 mile to the county, and view the body. The commissioner told him to keep it dark and passed the bill.

Some Troublesome Customers.

As a class the coroner reports that he has not had much trouble in making his \$5 divvy with the doctors. Some of the rural doctors will even come in after him and bring him home in the bargain. Mr. Joy, he says, is the worst place he ever stuck. There the doctors won't divide, and even the jurymen claim their entire fee. A well-known physician of this city, when appealed to to remember how much more he got than the hardworking coroner, stood on his dignity and threatened to sue that official for "abandoning" money by false pretense; "and," says the coroner, "I had no further use for him." Of Dr. C. H. Brown, physician at the almshouse, Coroner Mishler speaks in unqualified praise and says that in Brown's three months attendance there he had eleven inquests—and Brown always paid the jury—while under his successor, Dr. Roland, whom the coroner classes as "timid," no apparent cause for an inquest has arisen.

A Model Attendant.

But the good genius of all good coroners is that great and good man Dr. Compton. He is the guiding star of successful administrations and of him the retiring functionary speaks with warmth of well merited praise. "He knows his business and attends to it," and from the fact that he is on Danny Shiffer's bond the coroner concludes that his wise councils and cool head will long continue to inspire the county coroner with a proper appreciation of his rights and duties. "There is no foolishness about Dr. Compton."

Shiffer's Scruples.

As to his successor, Coroner Mishler has his suspicions that Shiffer is too glib for the place. For instance, he thinks there should be no inquest held unless the family want it, in which case the present coroner says he will hold none and get no fees. Moreover Mishler solemnly recalls Judge Gibson's deliverance upon the duties of the coroner, and his own exclusive discretion as to the holding of inquests; and he thinks Judge Gibson knew the law better than Dan Shiffer. Mishler distasteful grand jury, he says, has told the fact that he is on Danny Shiffer's bond the coroner concludes that his wise councils and cool head will long continue to inspire the county coroner with a proper appreciation of his rights and duties. "There is no foolishness about Dr. Compton."

A Suggestion.

There is a strong feeling pervading court house circles, that Shiffer couldn't do better than to appoint Mishler district grand deputy for the whole county, to watch the graveyards and negotiate with the doctors and railroads.

Summing Up.

The retiring coroner is a little reticent about the sum total of the profits of his term. In his interview, running over the figures given him, he estimated them at an average of \$700 per year. "A little too high," said the coroner, "a little too high, about \$500." And Dr. Compton confirmed this, and it is said Coroner Dyck in his term laid over Mishler and had 352 inquests in all.

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Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup. For bottle, 25 cents.

Expert's Advice.

We must tell some men a great deal to teach them a little, but the knowledge of the curative properties of Spring Blossom in cases of sick headache, indigestion, and biliousness bought by experience. Price 50 cents. For sale at H. B. Cochran's drug store, 137 North Queen street.

A Short Road to Health.

To all who are suffering from boils, ulcers, scrofula, carbuncles, or other obstinate diseases, but left a lucrative practice for my present profession, 40 years ago. I was for many years a sufferer from a peculiar "Eucalypti Oil cured me." I was also troubled with hemorrhages, and "Thomas' Electric Oil cured them," and it taken in time it will cure seven out of ten. I am confident it is a cure for the most obstinate cold or cough, and if any one will send their head and neck to me, I will clean it out and cure their catarrh. For deafness and earache it has done wonders for my certain knowledge. It is the only medicine I have used in every place, for I tell you that I will not be without it in my house for any consideration. I can now suffer with a pain like rheumatism in my right limb, and nothing relieves me like Thomas' Electric Oil. For sale at H. B. Cochran's drug store, 137 North Queen street, Lancaster.

A Baptist Minister's Experience.

I am a Baptist Minister, and before I even thought of being a clergyman, I graduated in medicine, but left a lucrative practice for my present profession, 40 years ago. I was for many years a sufferer from a peculiar "Eucalypti Oil cured me." I was also troubled with hemorrhages, and "Thomas' Electric Oil cured them," and it taken in time it will cure seven out of ten. I am confident it is a cure for the most obstinate cold or cough, and if any one will send their head and neck to me, I will clean it out and cure their catarrh. For deafness and earache it has done wonders for my certain knowledge. It is the only medicine I have used in every place, for I tell you that I will not be without it in my house for any consideration. I can now suffer with a pain like rheumatism in my right limb, and nothing relieves me like Thomas' Electric Oil. For sale at H. B. Cochran's drug store, 137 North Queen street, Lancaster.

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I have already inaugurated the system of manufacturing

Usters, Overcoats and

Usterettes,

which are made in many different styles, and are the BEST, STYLISH, SHAPED, MAKE and TRIMMINGS far superior to any made in New York and Philadelphia, as those made in large cities are usually made by what is termed "shop tailors" and are inferior.

If you will give me a call and take a look you will immediately notice the difference. I will guarantee them NOT TO BE GET OUT OF SHAPE, as Ready Made Clothing usually does.

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