

The Centre Democrat.

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CIRCULATION, OVER 1800.

Telephone Call 1183.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Regular Price \$1.50 per year. If paid in ADVANCE \$1.00 "

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EDITORIAL.

A LABORER'S PLEA.

Walker, Pa. Sept. 13, 1897. Editor CENTRE DEMOCRAT: Dear Sir: If you will allow a small space in your valuable paper, I would like to ask a few questions of the men of this county who earn a livelihood, such as it is, by days labor. In the first place, last fall we heard nothing but Sound Money by the republican party, and Free Silver by the democrats. The republican leaders put out every inducement to draw the laboring man to them. Think of the promises that were made to us in case Mr. McKinley was elected. Well, elected he was; and now for the promises. I do not intend to say anything disrespectful of Mr. McKinley, as I do not think he or any other president has anything to do with the labor, as the laboring man, but I do want to call attention to facts and nearer home.

When is the poor man, with a family to support, on the best footing? Is it when he has to help to pay a big tariff on everything that he consumes, and labor from daylight, till darkness, drives him in, for the niggardly sum of 50 cents per day. I say, is that prosperity for this man who deserves prosperity? Let us come right home to our farming districts and in what kind of a shape do we find things? We find prosperity for the few and starving for the many. Take the farmer for instance. Who is more favored and have better opportunities than him, and yet all the cry of oppression is hurled forth for him and not one word is said for the poor farm hand. They may ask, in what way they are favored? In the first place we have the herd law. What does that mean for the farmer? It means that they have the power of the milk and butter in their hands. Why? because they have not only the pastures of their fields for their cattle, but the pasture along the public road, and the poor man dare not keep a cow or pig because he can not afford to keep them in the stable and feed them the year around, and if he turns them out they are penned up, having no means to pay the damage that they may have done, they are sold and the poor man's family is obliged to go to the table without either butter or milk, because the cow is gone and they have no means to buy them.

If we buy a pound of butter, or a pint of milk, we are obliged to pay the farmer whatever price he may see fit to ask. Last fall we were told by the farmer, that if McKinley was elected wheat and everything else would go up in price, and then the wages would advance. Let us see once. One year ago wheat was sold for 50 cents per bushel, potatoes 15 cents, corn 30 cents, oats 20 cents and wages were 75 cents per day. How are their promises holding out. To-day wheat \$1, potatoes 50 cents, corn 40 to 50 cents, oats 30 cents, and to day we are not only asked to labor for 50 cents per day, but are compelled to do so in order that we may earn at least something for our families to live upon. Again I ask where is the prosperity for the poor man, who has a family to support and rent to pay. Let the farmer, as well as every other man who employs labor, share up with the man who toils from morning till night, helping to sow and reap dollars for his employer. While it is true we can not get along without the farmer, it is just as true that the farmer can not get along without us. The farmer needs our labor and we need his produce.

While I am a republican, and have always voted the republican ticket, I want to say right here that if the rise in prices is due to the change of the administration, as they claim, and they do not fulfill their promises to the laborer in regards to their wages, I for one will try something else in 1900, as anything would be more acceptable to the laboring man than this present prosperity of high prices and low wages. I do not want to talk disrespectful of any one, but I want to say that the comfort of the laboring man and his family is not considered half as much by his employer, as the poorest pig or the lousiest calf in his stable. All they seem to care for is that he is on hand by daylight in the morning, and stay till dark at night, and labor with all their might to help to pay for that driving horse and silver mounted harness, or that fine carriage in which his employer drives out with all the pleasure and style his heart can desire, while us poor creatures go home with a sack of flour on our shoulders, for which we did three days work. Such are undeniable facts and there is no lack of evidence to prove them as such.

A LABORER.

The above communication, "A Laborer's Plea," is quite interesting at this time. The writer, evidently a farm laborer, bewails his lot and points out some of the reasons why their condition is extremely hard. He no doubt is correct on this point, and is not alone in this respect. The condition of most all classes of labor is about the same, the country over. There has been a general decline in the wage rate and opportunity for securing employment. Our coal

miners, furnace men, and all branches of skilled labor are in about the same shape at present. Distress has been general throughout the country, and his lot has not been worse than other laboring men, and he is not the only one who has suffered.

The writer of the article severely censures the employer, the farmer, for much of the oppression and distress endured. There may be farmers, here and there, who are heartless, cruel, task masters, who treat their farm hands with little respect and less consideration than brutes in their stables. There are such men in every calling and it would be a surprise not to occasionally meet a brutal farmer in every community-but these, as a rule, are the exception.

There are very rare instances of farmers accumulating wealth in the past years. The general decline in the price of farm products, has made it an unprofitable avocation. Few have anything to show for years of toil, unless mortgages and notes that long are over due. No, farming for years has been unprofitable and a loss to most, and while wages were very low, he did the best he could. Short crops and low prices have left most farmers sadly in debt and it will require all the proceeds of the present favorable conditions to place them on an even footing again.

That the expense of living has increased under the McKinley administration is evident. The increase cost of flour, corn, etc., has nothing to do with political conditions of McKinley's administration. The famine abroad increased their demand, and higher prices naturally followed. But the cost of most all other necessities of life have been increased considerably in consequence of the McKinley tariff, and every consumer must pay that much more, which in a majority of cases goes as a fat sop into the pocket of some rich manufacturer, as a reward for forcing his workmen to vote for McKinley and a high tariff. A small portion goes to the U. S. Treasury as revenue for the support of the government. That is the old story of protection and still the average workman is bamboozled every presidential election. The result is, the expense of living goes up and wages down. During a campaign the laboring man is easily deluded by cheap excursions to Canton and profuse promises, later he suffers for the folly of his way.

Another cause why the farm laborer finds his condition hard. By the adoption of the gold standard, one-half of the country's primary money was destroyed. The value of the dollar has almost doubled. These debts became doubled-twice as hard to pay-and are increasing as the money increases in value. In this way the shrewd capitalist's and financier's holdings increased in value, their wealth almost doubled at the expense of the creditor class. Small mortgages soon eat up good farms, and the land of the country is gradually passing into the hands of the money lenders.

While the price of farm products, for many years, have suffered general decline, state, county and local taxes have not been reduced and these conditions have also helped to make farming unprofitable.

It is the general trend of affairs in this country that has depressed agriculture and the farm hand has suffered along with the farmer, in consequence. It is about time that the writer of that communication realizes that the republican party is responsible for most of the legislation in this country in the past few decades. If he don't like to have the expense of living increased, it is time to quit voting for high tariffs and scarce money. Instead of censuring the farmer he should denounce the Mark Hannas, Vanderbilts, Carnegies and all the gigantic trusts along with the rich bankers-the Morgans and Drexels, and the Rothschilds, of England-who bought the election of McKinley last fall to enhance their holdings and increase the earning power of their millions, at the expense of those who must toil and labor from early dawn to dusky eve, by the sweat of their brow, to gain a meagre living.

Don't abuse the poor farmer again. Do a little thinking in the line indicated. Reflect a long time before you vote, so that you may clearly understand where you are at. When the workingmen of this country can lay aside party pride and political prejudice, and study existing conditions honestly and intelligently, a more hopeful future will be in store for them.

The price of wheat is still advancing. The foreign demand continues strong and good prices promise to prevail.

The democratic fracas at Reading is no comparison to the political knockouts in Gov. Hastings's cabinet. Political bosses are being unhorsed in fine style.

One fact is certain, Gov. Hastings is running his part of the State Government. Roosters who are not in sympathy with him, get their heads chopped off.

The price of bread has been advancing, same with meat, clothing and other necessities of life. Wages on other hand, have not apparently advanced. That makes the lot of the workman rather serious. He don't like that kind of prosperity.

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HARRISBURG LETTER.

Changes in the Executive Force on Capitol Hill.

MARTIN SECRETARY OF STATE.

The Philadelphia Opponent of Quay Succeeds Reeder-W. F. Reeder Succeeds Elkin as Deputy Attorney General-General Reeder Arrested.

(Special Correspondence.)

Harrisburg, Sept. 14.-On Saturday last Governor Hastings announced the appointment of David Martin, of Philadelphia, as secretary of the commonwealth, vacated by the resignation of General Frank Reeder. Mr. Martin's commission was forwarded to him yesterday, and he will be sworn into office at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. His first official duty will be to attend the meeting of the pardon board, which takes place tomorrow noon.

The new secretary of the commonwealth was born Aug. 20, 1845, on what is still known as the Ridgeway farm, Newtown and Harrowgate lanes, in the Twenty-fifth ward, Philadelphia. His parents were of Scotch-Irish stock, and Mr. Martin's youth was spent on the farm helping his father. He received a common school education and began taking an active part in politics upon attaining his majority. Soon after he removed to the Nineteenth ward, which then included the present Thirty-first ward, and has resided there ever since. Beginning with his election to the Nineteenth ward executive committee, in which he has sat continuously for nearly 30 years, he gradually climbed upward, until after about ten years of active service he secured control of the party organization in the district. During the past 19 years he has represented the ward in the Republican city manager court, and during all that time has controlled the delegations, not only from the Nineteenth ward, but through Magistrate Hackett, of the Thirty-first ward, as well, to every ward, city and state convention. With the exception of the last two Mr. Martin has sat in every state convention since 1873.

An Aggressive Republican Fighter. There has not been a Republican fight of any importance in the city for 20 years past in which Mr. Martin has not been conspicuous. He has been chairman of his ward delegation in all important city and county conventions, has helped nominate the mayors and other city officials for years past. He was also a delegate to the Republican national convention which nominated President Harrison in Chicago.

In 1875 he was nominated for county commissioner, after a hard fight in the convention, in which the followers of James McManes opposed him, and was elected by a majority of more than 14,000. He was nominated for another term of three years in 1878, and was re-elected by a majority of nearly 21,000.

Mr. Martin was sergeant-at-arms of the house of representatives in 1873, when he was 24 years old, and in the following year he was appointed by Mayor Stockley as lieutenant of the Delaware harbor police, a position which he resigned in 1875 to become a candidate for county commissioner. After his second term as commissioner had ended he was appointed sergeant-at-arms of the house of representatives at Washington for the session of 1881-2. In 1882 he was appointed a mercantile appraiser for three years, and in 1886, when Senator Quay was state treasurer, he was reappointed by the latter, and was serving in this position when he was appointed collector of internal revenue in May, 1889.

In the days of Hayes and Garfield and Arthur administrations, when there were constant fights between the federal and the local office elements in Philadelphia, the former spurred on by Cameron, Quay and the late State Treasurer Mackey, and the latter represented by James McManes and William R. Leeds, Martin was invariably the friend of the three state leaders. His first meeting with Quay was at Harrisburg in 1870, when he was introduced by Mackey, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Martin. It was largely through the memorable work of Mr. Martin in New York in 1888 that Harrison carried that state.

Mr. Martin resigned as collector of internal revenue on June 8, 1891, since which time he has held no public office. During the past two years he has been recognized as the leader of the anti-Quay faction in Philadelphia, and went to the St. Louis convention of 1894 in the interest of Mr. McKinley.

Some of the changes. It is expected that the new premier of the administration will make some changes in his corps of assistants. Colonel James G. Barnett, of Washington, who has had charge of the office since Reeder's resignation, it is announced, will hand his resignation as deputy secretary to Mr. Martin as soon as the latter assumes charge. Mr. Barnett is better known in Philadelphia for his action in the big battle between the administration and anti-administration factions in the Quaker City last November. In spite of the decision of the Dauphin county court, that it would be a mistake for the secretary of the commonwealth to certify the nomination of the Crow candidates who were on the McKinley-Citizens ticket, Barnett certified the nominations in the absence of General Reeder. The result was the election of Crow, and the defeat of Speaker Walton for the senate to succeed Senator Charles A. Porter.

Colonel Frank B. Eshelman, of Lancaster, who is judge advocate general of the National Guard, is mentioned as a possible successor to Barnett. He is a close personal friend of the governor, and has long been his lieutenant in Lancaster county. It may be, however, that the new secretary may choose some one who is a personal friend as deputy.

Secretary Martin will also make a few other changes in the office besides dispensing with Colonel Barnett's services. The colored messenger, Edward M. Baxter, of Philadelphia, will have to go. He is a protege of Senator Durham, and was one of the strongest supporters of Sheriff Crow in the fight last fall.

Colonel Edward Brady, of Pittsburgh, will be retained as deputy corporation clerk. He is a friend of Senators

Flinn and Magee. This is the only appointment these two leaders have in the department. Chief Clerk Gearhart, of Danville, will also be retained. There is said to be no truth in the rumor that Bank Commissioner B. F. Gilkeson is also to be placed on the "sliding board." Mr. Gilkeson had no connection with the bond deal. He was willing his friends should sign the document, but he refused to go along with them.

Howard B. Hartwick, of Clearfield, is in danger of losing his position as first assistant state librarian. He is charged with neglect of duty in giving more time to the work of private secretary of State Chairman Elkin than to his official duties.

Major Nesbitt Must Go. Major Nesbitt's doom is sealed. He will have to walk the plank, and promptly. Nesbitt was absent Friday night when the troops were ordered out to suppress the "rioting" in Luzerne county, and Lieutenant William O. Richardson was called upon by the governor to take charge at the state arsenal. Richardson is foreman, and has the details at his finger ends. Two hours after he was given the order all the equipment of the Third brigade was on the cars and ready for shipment. The governor was so pleased with Richardson's admirable work that he will promote him to superintendent of the arsenal, which place is now filled by Nesbitt.

It is said by friends of those who are alleged to be upon the bond to indemnify the state treasurer for the payment of money to persons who were appointed as extra employees of the legislature, and who were to be taken care of in the appropriation bill, that there is a widespread apprehension with respect to this matter, growing out of the belief by many people that the legislature had no power to create offices by appropriating money to them through the general appropriation bill. They recall the fact that while General Gregg was auditor general he refused to pass the account of a clerk of the supreme court for the Eastern district, whose sole authority for existence was the appointment by Prothonotary Green, and a provision in the judiciary appropriation bill that a certain sum of money be paid to the prothonotary for a clerk to the court.

Auditor General Gregg refused to issue a warrant, when a mandamus was applied for by Prothonotary Green and refused by Judge Simonton upon the ground that such payment would be unconstitutional. The supreme court overruled Judge Simonton's opinion, and decided that the legislature had ample power to authorize the appointment of a clerk in the office of prothonotary and provide for his salary out of the public treasury, "and as the purpose of such appointment and the duties of the appointee were to secure the performance of the regular and ordinary work of the office, they were of the opinion that the legislature might constitutionally do it in the form they did, by an item in the general appropriation bill."

John P. Elkin's Retirement. John P. Elkin, chairman of the state Republican committee, resigned by request last week as deputy attorney general. The correspondence was made public Friday night. Attorney General McCormick's letter is a curt request for Mr. Elkin's resignation. In his reply, tendering the resignation, Mr. Elkin declares: "Inasmuch as we have never had any differences, so far as I am aware, except those of a political nature, I feel that I am entitled to know the reasons which actuated you in making your request. I ask this not only for myself, but for the information of the public."

Attorney General McCormick replied at length to Mr. Elkin's request for "reasons." In his letter he says: "It is scarcely necessary for me to say to you that our differences of a 'political nature' have no bearing whatever upon the question. The attorney general and his deputy are the official advisers of the heads of the executive departments of the state government. I conceive it to be my duty and yours to see to it that the constitution is obeyed and the law observed. It appears, however, that not only by your own admission to me, but by what seems to have been an authorized and authentic interview, widely published throughout the state, you saw no impropriety in joining with other public officials in an obligation to the state treasurer during the last session of the legislature to protect him against the payment of moneys from the state treasury not authorized by law. This I believe a sufficient reason for severing our official relations."

Mr. Elkin is succeeded by Colonel Wilbur Fiske Reeder, of Bellefonte. The proposed capitol will not be erected in time for the meeting of the next legislature, as required by the act appropriating \$500,000 for a new state house. This was settled last Thursday afternoon when the capitol commission, against the vigorous protests of Governor Hastings, rejected all the plans recommended by the board of experts, and will ask the architects for new ones. The governor was so displeased with the action of his colleagues that he withdrew from the meeting and declined to further participate in its proceedings. It is expected that he will resign from the commission. The governor's friends assert that he has no alternative.

Ex-Secretary Reeder's Arrest. Ex-Secretary of State Frank Reeder and Assemblyman Webster C. Weiss were arrested at Easton Saturday afternoon, and Maurice C. Luckenbach was arrested at Bethlehem the same evening, the three being charged with conspiracy "to bribe" and with conspiracy "to defame and blacken the reputation of John Wanamaker" in connection with the United States senatorial contest at Harrisburg last winter, and a warrant has also been issued for the arrest of Detective J. N. Tillard, in connection with the bribery alleged. These arrests are the outcome of the bribery case against E. A. Van Valkenberg, and have been brought about by Mr. Van Valkenberg and other friends of Mr. Wanamaker, who now claim to be prepared to show that the bribery with which Van Valkenberg is charged was really a "put up job" on the part of Messrs. Reeder, Weiss and Luckenbach, with the intent of making it appear that the Wanamaker people were buying votes. Such wide publicity was given to one side of the case at the time of Van Valkenberg's arrest that this new phase of the situation has created a decided sensation. WILKINS.

Garman's Opera House, season of '97. The following attractions have been booked by Manager Garman for season of 1897-98: Oct. 14-Geo. H. Adams, "Sporting Craze." Oct. 26-Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" Co. Nov. 12-"A Turkish Bath." "18-Opera-Comedy, "During the Ball." Dec. 1-"Little Trixie." "11-Louis Morrison in "Faust." Dec. 17-Frank Jones. Jan. 22-"A Breezy Time." Feb. 12-Guy Brothers' Minstrels. Mar. 8-Byrne Bros., "Eight Bells."

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