

The Centre Democrat.

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EDITORIAL.

ACCORDING to the local papers, McKinley did not go south on a vacation, but came direct to Bellefonte and ordered the men to work repairing the Valentine furnace. We hope he will stay and look after some of the other local enterprises.

VERY few bills have been passed by the present legislature, and probably the less the better. On every side there is a disposition to loot the treasury. The Quayites want several millions to spend on the new capitol building, and are insisting on creating several new offices that are useless. The people voted for these things last fall and are entitled to have em.

GEN. MILES' beef investigating committee has been unearthing some startling testimony during the past week. Now there is no doubt but that our army, during the recent war, was supplied in numerous instances, with rotten canned beef, and Gen. Eagan, the convicted blackguard, furnished some of it. It now looks as though he would receive another court martial.

IN Blair and Union counties the republicans have elected Quay delegates to their state convention. This was done on a square fight between the two factions, and shows that the republican party in most sections of this state endorse Senator Quay's course and his political methods. At the same time the minority, anti-Quay, element represents a large vote that may cause them much trouble in the future.

WHY THE DIFFERENCE.

When Captain Clark, of the battleship Oregon, after the destruction of Cervera's fleet, worn out with excessive labor, received a shore leave he was allowed \$2,700 a year for salary. After Gen. Eagan had been court-martialed and recommended for dismissal from the service, President McKinley changed the sentence so as to relieve him from duty on full pay. Why this difference in treatment?

GENERAL MILES.

A question for the American people: How happens it that General Miles is so vigorously pushed for having objected to bad beef being sent our soldiers, while Egan gets six years vacation with a salary larger than Admiral Dewey's, as punishment for calling the head of the American army a liar?

LATE NEWS.

An ultimatum has been addressed by the president to the Philippine insurgents to surrender within forty-eight hours, or they will be crushed by force. Our troops are ready for the attack.

Ex-Senator John Sherman is improving in health. He is now at Santiago.

The Pope is not likely to recover. His condition is not encouraging.

A sweeping investigation is to be made of all members of the House at Harrisburg, in the bribery charges. The Quayites bitterly opposed this course, but were defeated.

When They Come.

There is always much trouble in remembering when Lent begins and when Easter comes. The rule is that Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the full moon which happens on or next after March 21, and if the full moon falls on a Sunday, Easter is the following Sunday. The first Sunday in Lent is the sixth Sunday before Easter. This year the full moon is on March 27, so Easter falls on April 2.

Their Connections With Trees.

One of our school girls asked her father this question the other day: What three noted men had trouble growing out of their connection with fruit trees? He couldn't tell, and she enlightened him by saying: "Adam, with the apple tree; Washington, with the cherry tree; and Quay, with the plum tree."

Spring Began Monday.

Spring began March 20, in the afternoon, a day which is always regarded as "variable;" summer starts a little before noon June 21; autumn sets in early on the morning of September 21; and winter takes hold at eight o'clock in the evening of December 21.

Next week we expect to furnish a list of the moving in the different sections of the county. Correspondents will please take note of this and send in their communications as early as possible.

So far the March winds have proved to be a howling success.

WASHINGTON LETTER.

According to War Department officials, Gen. Gomez will not receive a dollar of the \$3,000,000 about to be distributed, entirely on his say so, among Cuban soldiers, by this government. This statement has caused everybody to wish to know where Gomez got the money to pay for his present very extravagant mode of living, in Havana. It is known that previous to his beginning the negotiations with R. P. Porter, who acted as Mr. McKinley's personal representative, which resulted in the agreement to pay \$3,000,000 for the disbandment of the Cuban army, Gomez had no money, and that ever since then he has apparently had plenty. Did Porter make an individual payment of money to Gomez? If so, how much, and from what fund was it derived? These are some of the questions suggested by the situation and asked on every hand. Congress did not appropriate a cent to pay Cuban soldiers, but there was an item added to the Sundry Civil Bill by the last congress, appropriating \$3,000,000 as an emergency fund, to be expended at the discretion of the President. That is the money that will be used, but if the claim that Gomez has got none of it and will get none of it, be true, the source from which Gomez extracted the wealth to pay his present enormous expenses is left a mystery. But it will be solved. The acting Secretary of War says that the administration intends to make Cuba repay from its revenues, this money.

Senator Thurston, of Nebraska, isn't one of those wild republicans who regard the presidential election of next year, as already settled. In an interview, Mr. Thurston said: "The presidential battle promises to be lively and exciting. McKinley will probably be renominated and I presume that Bryan will head the democratic ticket. I believe that the republicans will win if we stand together and work hard, but our democratic friends will undoubtedly put up a stiff fight. We must not indulge ourselves with the delusion that we are going to have a walk-over."

Secretary Alger doesn't appear to care any more about being consistent than he did about the welfare of the soldiers during the war. Several days before congress adjourned, Alger announced that the juncture he had intended to conduct to Cuba and Porto Rico was off, because his official duties would prevent his leaving Washington. Of course, it was well known that Alger abandoned the intended juncture because he failed to get a sufficient number of democratic senators and representatives to accept invitations to accompany him. But for consistency's sake, it was supposed that Alger would remain on duty and make a bluff of being busy. Not he. He left immediately after Mr. McKinley did, for a trip to New England, which was extended to Canada, and this week he is going to start for Cuba and Porto Rico, but he won't carry any congressmen with him. He says he is going to pay the expenses of himself and the two men who will accompany him, but it would require the vouchers for the payments to convince the public.

If any proof were needed that Mr. McKinley isn't in the South solely for rest and recreation, it is furnished by the fact that he will, during the present week, meet Czar Reed in person, on Jekyll Island, where Mr. McKinley will be the guest of ex-Secretary Bliss, and Mr. Reed will be the guest of a rich Wall street banker, both at the same club house. It is stated by Mr. Reed's friends that the meeting is his idea, and that he intends to compel an immediate show down on the part of Mr. McKinley that will make the position of the administration on the speakership of the next house, perfectly clear.

The queer part of the whole business is that two men who have spent the winter within a stone's throw of each other, in Washington, should find it necessary to meet in the Spring, on an island off the coast of South Carolina, in order to come to an understanding.

Private news from the Philippines indicates that the administration is again juggling with the public in regard to the situation. While no official dispatches have been quoted, officials have talked so as to leave the impression that the reports of Gen. Otis, since the victories of the past week have been to the effect that Aguinaldo's army is about ready to ask for terms and that a general collapse of the rebellion may be looked for at any time. Owing to the strict censorship, so private telegrams dealing with the conditions existing, can be sent from Manila direct, but some have been sent to Hong Kong by boat and cabled from there, which do not take such a rosy view of the situation. According to these, the war is a long ways from being over, and the only effect that will follow thrashing Aguinaldo's army, which our troops do every time they come into contact with any portion of it, will be to transfer the fighting ground to the hills and bushes, where it will be difficult for our men to get at them except when they choose to be got at, and possibly to other islands of the group.

There is a nightly panic in Manila and most of the white women and children have been sent away for fear of a native uprising. Time will tell which is correct, the official or the private view of the situation. The Oregon has arrived in Manila Bay.

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HARRISBURG LETTER.

Pennsylvania Lawmakers Accomplishing But Little Work.

VERY EXPENSIVE LEGISLATION.

Only Eleven Bills Have Reached the Governor, and These Have Cost the Taxpayers \$19,100 Each--The Various Revenue Measures Proposed

(Special Correspondence.)

Harrisburg, March 21.---It has cost the state \$19,100 each, or a total of \$210,000, for eleven bills that have passed both houses and gone to the governor. That

has been the cost of the session of the senate and house up to last Thursday night. Of the 1,012 bills that have been introduced in both houses the senators put in 320, of which only 231 have come out of committee, and the representatives presented 692, of which the committees have reported only 385.

The house has passed finally only 27 of its own bills and but four of the senate's. The senate has rushed through final passage 119 of its own bills, but has finally disposed of only seven house bills. On March 18, 1897, only 218 of the 703 bills that had been introduced in the house were out of committee, but that legislative term lasted two months and ten days later than April 20, which is now fixed for final adjournment.

Representative Allen, of Philadelphia, has amendments to offer to the bill to pay constables of that city \$1,200 a year. The bill will come up for third reading on Tuesday. The Allen amendment would make the salary \$800, require all constables' fees to be turned into the city treasury and limit the number of constables to one in each ward.

A notable parliamentary feature of last week was Speaker Farr's placing in the chair for an hour the 365 pound gentleman from the Second ward of Philadelphia, John F. Slater. He gravely pounded the desk and looked warningly at Mr. Fow, who thereupon began helping members to write a great variety of amendments to the bill under consideration.

When dozens of members were up at one time shouting for recognition by the speaker, "Pud" thundered with the gavel and declared that until there should be order he would permit "no business to be transferred." This did no good, and in the midst of the babel Patriarch Cole, of Adams, strode down an aisle, gesticulating violently, and in his sympathy for "Pud" trying to make the members hear him say that they were behaving like children.

Mr. Slater, instead of encouraging his aged but frisky defender, promptly dismissed him out of order and told him to be seated. This captured the house, and the only trouble which the temporary speaker had afterward was to keep the clerk from reading tomfoolery amendments.

The Revenue Schemes.

Chairman Hosack and his colleague on the house committee on ways and means are doing their level best to devise schemes for the raising of additional revenue for the commonwealth. The committee will be ready to report its recommendations this week, and the revenue measures will then have to be put through at high pressure. There are seven distinct propositions. One measure provides for the division from the counties to the state treasury of the three-fourths personal property tax. This would bring into the treasury about \$2,000,000 a year for the next three years.

Another proposition is to change the method of taxing beer so that instead of brewers paying a license fee they will be taxed according to their output a certain amount per barrel. This would bring into the state's coffers according to the estimate about \$400,000 a year. Under the present law there are 23 small breweries which pay a tax of 25 cents a barrel, while there are 51 breweries of 10,000 to 20,000 capacity whose tax is but five cents a barrel. One brewery with 3,000,000 capacity pays but one and two-thirds cents a barrel tax. The idea of the proposed law is to make a uniform tax per barrel on the output.

The third plan is to impose a tax of one-third of 1 per cent. on foreign corporations. There are 5,000 doing business in this state which have paid no tax at all. They have obtained their charters in other states, and it is proposed that they shall pay into the state treasury for the privilege of doing business in Pennsylvania the same amount which they would have paid as bonus had their charters been granted in this state. The idea is to stop the taking out of big charters in New Jersey and other states and then locating in Pennsylvania under the easy foreign corporation provision for the filling of a certificate of office location with the secretary of the commonwealth.

A fourth proposition is to impose a tax of one-third of 1 per cent. on the bonds of corporations and any increase thereof. It is estimated that such a law would produce \$500,000 a year. Under the fifth proposition, where corporations reorganize and increase their capital stock and are not operating under the act of 1897, they shall pay a bonus of the same amount. This catches capital which escapes under the act of 1897. The sixth plan proposes a tax of one mill upon manufacturing corporations, which are exempt now. This would include artificial gas companies now untaxed, and it is estimated that the treasury would be benefited to the tune of \$250,000 a year.

Mercantile Taxation.

The seventh and last plan now being considered is a system of mercantile taxation. It is proposed that a mill rate based on gross receipts shall be fixed; that the tax on the retailer shall not be greater than on the wholesaler, but the burden shall rest equally on the largest wholesaler as well as the smallest retailer. A million dollars is thought to be required to the tune of \$250,000 a year.

The aggregate of these several bills as estimated would be \$4,000,000 a year. Governor Stone has made it so clear that he will refuse to approve any appropriations in excess of the carefully estimated revenues that the legislature is bound to get more cash.

Argument by Mr. Stuhl, of Philadelphia, defeated an effort made in the house by Mr. Stahle, of Blair, to place on the calendar the negative bill to require clergymen and others of the vital statistics authorities. Mr. Stuhl, who was the only Philadelphia health officer who ever sued clergymen for de-

linquency in this matter, told the house that the bill would leave nothing but the marriage licenses as records, and these were not proof of marriage. The system of vital statistics in vogue since 1865 would be destroyed, merely to relieve persons officiating at marriages from an occasional minute's writing. The present system had saved thousands of dollars to heirs who could not have produced any other record. The vote of 96 years and 21 days to put the bill on the calendar lacked seven of a sufficiency.

A delegation including President A. C. Woolman, Major E. A. Hancock, C. O. String and Attorney H. B. Gill, representing the Philadelphia Commercial Exchange, before the house ways and means committee opposed the wholesale business feature of the Baldwin mercantile tax bill, which would put \$1 tax on each \$1,000 worth of retail business and 50 cents per \$1,000 on a wholesale business.

Grain Men Protest.

Mr. Woolman asked the committee to consider wholesalers' small margins of profit and the competition they had to contend against in lack of a deeper Delaware river channel. He pleaded specially for the grain and flour trade. Mr. Gill, who represented various exchanges, suggested that dealers in agricultural products pay 25 cents per \$1,000, and that there be no tax on retail or wholesale of American products for export from the United States. This bill unchanged would drive much of the grain business to New York city. Being an export business, it should get governmental encouragement. Mr. Gill said there was no tax on the shipment of grain from New York, Baltimore or Newport News.

To Chairman Hosack's queries Mr. Gill said that about 46,000 car loads, or about 70,000,000 bushels of grain were received in Philadelphia in 1897, and most of it was handled for export. The profit was less than one-half of 1 per cent., owing to the cost of inspection, leakage and other expenses. Major Hancock said that if the grain men could be treated like the iron manufacturers, who export their wares, there would be a large increase in the exports of grain.

Representative Baldwin wrote an amendment that "each dealer at any exchange or board of trade shall pay a tax of 25 cents on each \$1,000 worth of goods sold, provided that all receipts for cereals sold for export shall be exempt from the provisions of this act." Mr. Hosack said he thought the bill would be reported in a shape to suit the grain men.

Favorably reported to the house from committee, through Mr. Voorhees, of Philadelphia, was the bill which had passed the senate finally to largely increase the force of capitol employees. The Quayites hope for its enactment, because most of Senator Martin's Philadelphia friends in the house will vote for it, as he did in the senate, and similar Martin support, with that of some up-to-date "ants" for the capitol appointments early in the session, carried the slate safely through. The prospective appointments under the pending bill have been parceled out with the view of effecting that result.

No Money For Normal Schools.

Until additional state revenue shall be assured there can be no prospect of the passage of the bill introduced by Mr. Heldbaugh, of Lancaster, appropriating \$130,000 to the 13 state normal schools. These were classed by Governor Stone and the appropriation committee, in their recent interview, with the state college and other educational institutions that could get no financial aid from this legislature under the present revenue conditions.

A resolution offered by Mr. Palm, of Crawford, for a constitutional amendment, would permit the introduction of the New York voting machine system in this state. A resolution with that object, offered by Mr. Grady in the senate, has been reported favorably to that body.

The governor notified the senate that he has signed the bill authorizing the department of public works in cities of the second class to appoint park patrolmen, making them subject to the control of such department.

Mr. Hosack, of Allegheny, called up in the house the postponed judges' retirement bill, which was on the calendar for second reading, and a short discussion followed on the merits of the measure followed. To avoid the possible defeat of the bill Mr. Hosack had it postponed.

The Keegan bill providing for the weighing of coal at bituminous and semi-bituminous mines and for the payment of the same by weight was taken up on a special order and passed third reading after it had been amended to allow persons who have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States to hold the position of check weighman.

Support of Indigent Parents.

The supplement to the act of June 25, 1895, relating to the support of indigent parents by children, creating a liability for the support of indigent parents out of minors' estates, was amended to give courts discretionary power to fix the amount of all allowance, after which it passed second reading.

The report of the capitol building commission was presented and a concurrent resolution adopted that 500 copies of the document be printed for the use of the members of the senate and house.

Mr. Stewart, of Philadelphia, offered a report from the committee on rules providing for sessions on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, and that the order of business be second reading bills at the evening sessions and third reading bills at the session of Wednesday morning and afternoon. The report was adopted.

Among the bills passed on second reading was the measure to designate the lawful rate of interest for the loan or use of money at 5 per cent. The bill to limit the state appropriations to school districts the preceding year for school purposes also passed second reading.

Mr. Spatz made a vain effort to put on the calendar his negative bill to give a bounty of \$100 each, or \$1,800,000, to the 18,000 Pennsylvanians who enlisted for the war with Spain.

Governor Stone sent to the senate last week the nomination of John H. Weiss, of Harrisburg, to be judge of Dauphin county, vice McPherson, resigned. The senate went into executive session at once, and confirmed the nomination by a vote of 37 to 0.

Governor Stone is requested to name Monday, May 1, of the present year, as "Dewey day," and designate it as a legal holiday, by a concurrent resolution adopted by the legislature.

Governor Stone on Saturday issued an Arbor day proclamation, setting aside Friday, April 7, and Friday, April 28, to be observed.

WILKINS.