

ANOTHER OPEN LETTER.

SECTION II.

To Tom Harter, Charles Heisler and Such, Greetings:

A Personal Reply to a Personal Attack.

The editor of The Centre Democrat, at the outset of this article, wishes to beg the indulgence of its readers for consuming much valuable space in reply to what is hardly an issue in this campaign, or of much interest to the taxpayers of Centre county.

(From the last issue of the Keystone Gazette.)

In view of the above there is no need of further discussing this point, and I turn to your attempt to poo-poo, laugh off and ignore the charges I made against you and which I still hold up for your refutation, that you denounced your present candidate for county commissioner, John Dunlap, on the public diamond in Bellefonte three years ago as "nothing but a d---d loafer."

Now, My Dear Sir; you cannot, dare not attempt to get away from these facts and I command you to camp right there, for you said it; you know you said it—and the only questions that now arise are: Why did you say it, and were you justified in saying it?

FIRST.—Why did you say it? I answer you said it because, Mr. Dunlap, being disappointed in not being nominated for county commissioner by the Democrats three years ago, accepted money from the Republican party and made a canvass of the county against the Democratic candidates for county commissioner, Mr. E. A. Humption and Philip Meyer, who had defeated him for the nomination.

SECOND.—Were you justified in saying it? You know that Mr. Dunlap is now going over the country on foot, pleading poverty. He is a poor man and you know the reason why. You know that he is one of the best carpenters in Bellefonte and if he cared to work he could make better wages than those paid to the county commissioners.

THIRD.—You know deep down in your innermost soul that John G. Bailey and Abram V. Miller are honest men. You also know that you would not trust Mr. Dunlap to anything. YOU HAVE SAID IT.

How then, therefore, can you justify your course of attempting to malign, traduce and blacken men who have lived long and honored lives, in order that you might gain a little money for yourself at the risk of the interests of the taxpayers of Centre county—who must necessarily look to you and others like you to lead them to the light?

Your hand is the hand of Esau but your voice is the voice of Jacob. Yours for a square deal. T. H. HARTER.

Foundation of the above Letter Absolutely Untrue:

My first reply to the above is, that Tom Harter, as editor of the Gazette, is an untruthful man, to verify it, I quote the following questions propounded in the Gazette on Sept. 15th:

1. Didn't you, Mr. Kurtz, three years ago, say, in the presence of a crowd of witnesses, on the public diamond in Bellefonte, among other derogatory things, that Mr. John Dunlap was "nothing but a d---d loafer?"

2. Did you not say this when Mr. Dunlap was a candidate for county commissioner and when you feared that if elected he would not give you any county printing?

3. What has Mr. Dunlap done since then to cause you to change your opinion of him, and prompt you to recommend him for the charge responsibility of controlling the interests of the tax-payers of Centre County?

In the next issue Sept. 21st, of this paper, in reply, I gave special notice that

"In our next issue (Sept. 23) one and all of Mr. Harter's questions, fully and frankly will be answered. We have nothing to fear or dread. It is coming, next issue, don't fret. For the present we will confine ourselves to the issue—Our County Commissioners' dealings with Bridge Agents."

I submit as proof that I kept my promise, for the following reply was duly published Sept. 28th in a conspicuous point, on the Editorial Page. Here-with it is reproduced:

STRONG WITH THE PEOPLE.

"The Gazette will not answer our questions in regard to the County Commissioners, Miller and Bailey, taking expensive trips with bridge agents to whom large contracts were awarded. Nor will the Commissioners even face them. In turn, it asks the editor of this paper to answer several questions that have no connection with that issue."

"To satisfy Mr. Harter we will say that three years ago many things happened that neither of us can recall. Three years ago the judgment of the writer (who does not claim to be all-wise or infallible) was that the nomination for county commissioner should go to the candidate from Snow Shoe. Fortaking that view, the writer got into a mighty hot encounter with some gentlemen, and it is quite possible that cuss words were exchanged and things said back and forth that were not complimentary to each other or the two candidates involved."

"Three years ago John Dunlap showed his great strength with the people by coming to the county convention with the largest number of instructed delegates of all candidates, as well as receiving the largest popular vote. Three years ago he surprised the people. If elected at that time John Dunlap could not have controlled the county printing, even if hostile towards this paper; and there was no fear then, or is there now, that he will not, when elected, deal fairly or justly with the various publishers. We never asked Mr. Dunlap for any special favors, never; we have confidence in him giving, not alone printers, but all, a "square deal," republicans included."

"When Mr. Dunlap became a candidate again for the nomination this year, for a time his was the only name announced. Believing that the wish of the party or the strength of a candidate for a nomination can not be ascertained when there is no opposition, the writer encouraged other candidates to announce for the same office, so that the strongest candidate might be selected, and we frankly informed Mr. Dunlap of our action, and advised him to prove his strength with the people. What was the result? On first ballot Mr. Dunlap had more than enough delegates to nominate. That proved for the second time that he is strong with the voters of the county, who by their votes want him to fill the office of county commissioner."

"And right here we bank our reputation as a prophet that after the vote is counted in November John Dunlap will have a greater vote than Messrs. Miller and Bailey, the tourists, by several hundred."

In spite of that distinct notice and the above reply, this man Harter tells his readers last week that I had ignored his charges, and thus far had not dared to answer his questions. When the opposite is the case, and is directly proven above. This is deception—an untruth—A LIE TO HIS READERS.

CHARGES FULLY ANSWERED.

Now to the charges. Four persons are directly involved: Tom Harter, Charles Heisler, the writer, and another whose name will be withheld.

In addition to my former reply, which is published above, I will add more detail.

Three years ago my personal preference for commissioner, which I had a perfect right to exercise, (while the paper was neutral) was for the candidate from Snow Shoe, because I believed him to be the stronger man. The day the convention met I was surprised at the strong showing John Dunlap made, but I opposed his nomination conscientiously, because at that time it also would have put the bulk of the ticket in Bellefonte. For doing this I engendered the bitter enmity of Charles M. Heisler, Joe Rightnour and other politicians, who for several days prior to the convention paraded themselves as the boomers of John Dunlap's campaign; and this very fact, more than anything else, caused general fear of his nomination lest, if elected, he could not throw them off and each would then have an axe to grind at the commissioners office. That we believe more than anything else, caused his defeat in the convention. The morning of the convention this man Heisler, whose political record is well known, came to town, and perched on the corner in front of Blair's jewelry store like a political faker or a curbstone politician, began to announce his wares. Whenever anyone recognized or approached him he would "look wise," and immediately would inform them of his business in about this language: "I live in West Spring township; have one delegate out there, and I control him; he is uneducated and will vote just as I tell him." I heard this man make this play several times that day on the street corners, but I am satisfied he could not interest anyone in his goods, for he was faking. Philip Garbrick was the delegate, and Heisler could neither "vote him" or even make a fool of him.

Hounded and Threatened by Heisler:

That morning Heisler and others began threatening me with all kinds of vengeance for favoring Humption. At about 11 am., as the convention was assembling, this man Heisler, with Joe Rightnour following, began assailing me near the front of the Court House. Heisler cursed, and, shaking his fist in my face, made threats. Knowing that it was a discredit to get in a public altercation with this man, I endured his wilful abuse and made no reply; in order to avoid him I crossed over to my office (then above the Garman House.) He followed close after, howling all kinds of epithets and profanity, attracting everybody's attention. To all this I paid no attention until he came under my office window, where several of our lady compositors were at work, when his ugly tongue poured out such a flood of profanity that I ordered him away; told him to move on. Joe was with him, barking in occasionally, but more gentlemanly in his department. Seeing that I cared nothing for his abuse, ignored him, he became desperate; with his foul mouth he then began to curse, berate and heap insults upon my parents—people who never injured or offended him in any way. So cowardly, malicious and wicked was the onslaught that I lost my temper, and had I been prepared his wicked tongue would have been forever silenced on that spot. In my anger I likely cursed him, his gang, and possibly his candidate; and if I called anyone a "d---d loafer," I feel quite confident that I applied it to this man Heisler, and not John Dunlap—knowing Heisler for 16 years I can come to no other conclusion—profanity omitted. I may have sworn at Dunlap, hardly think so; I don't believe Heisler wants to tell the truth, and if Joe Rightnour says I did swear at Dunlap, I will admit it, for Joe Rightnour is a better citizen and much more truthful and reliable man. Since that day I have never recognized this man Heisler, unless business conditions demanded. My contempt for him no doubt has inspired the spleen he now ejects through the Gazette at me.

The Bookman, a Little Tale doth Unfold:

Recently Chas. Heisler, was a director on the School Board in Spring township and served as Secretary. The following information comes from Charles W. Scott, agent of the American Book Company, at Williamsport, to a leading citizen of this town and then told to me:—That Charles Heisler, as a school director, tried to "squeeze" that company for six costly books, among them being the novel "Virginia" and other works. Heisler made a demand by letter for these books. Scott's company replied that the firm did not print those books, and was "not in the habit" of purchasing books for directors. Heisler wrote back a sharp letter saying he was not so green, he knew that they did not print the books when he wrote, and further notified Scott's company would suffer for this later, and that when they needed him (Heisler) he would not be around. It is said the teachers in that township were soon notified indirectly to recommend to the other directors a change in text books. The board threw out Scott's line; it evidently worked.

Because Heisler, as school director, could not squeeze or beat the American Book Company for his personal advantage it looks as though he made the taxpayers of Spring township pay hundreds of dollars for unnecessary text books. This is the story told me on Saturday, in this town, by the man who got the information from Mr. Scott, who retains the original correspondence. If this is true, it brands Charles Heisler as a grafter. If the information is not reliable, Mr. Heisler has full liberty to vindicate himself, in this paper if he desires; but until he does so, he must bear the brand—chew it and swallow it in the bargain.

Story of the Pot and the Kettle knocked in the Shade:

This is the kind of a man that Tom Harter quotes in his columns, to cast reflections upon the integrity of the editor of this paper. Tom Harter knows him better than I. He has hunted and fished with him for years. Upon numerous occasions, as a result of that acquaintance, Harter has in front of his office in the presence of many people, and on the streets of this town, and elsewhere, denounced Heisler as a "—dead beat," that he "sponged his way" off of other sportsmen, etc. I have heard Tom Harter curse this man, denounce him as "dishonest, and unprincipled"; that he tried to take game that did not belong to him. Harter has declared he would never associate with Heisler for those reasons in the woods or on a stream—and I am not the only one that heard Harter—and other sportsmen as well—make similar remarks. Thos. Harter, you know you said these things! Were you lying then, or telling the truth? Answer! If you were honest then is it not a dirty, dishonorable trick, now, on your part, to allow such a man the free use of your columns to vent his spleen? You also committed a similar offence last spring. Do you know that Heisler denounces you about the same as you denounced him—but then you are as good as Heisler, and Heisler is as good as you. Mr. Heisler is a stonemason or stonemason by trade and one of his specialties is building abutments and piers for bridges, such as are needed when the "United Order of Bridge Builders" are working industriously. That is one reason he injects himself into this campaign to elect Miller and Bailey and from his record as a secretary of the Spring township School Board he certainly is qualified to join the "U. O. of B. B." as an honorary member.

In answer to another charge: I will admit that I did say some uncomplimentary things in my office about Heisler, Rightnour and quite likely about Mr. Dunlap, also, after that encounter on the streets. What I said I don't recall. An employee in a newspaper holds a confidential position and if he wilfully goes outside the doors and reveals anything said or done is at once guilty of a breach of trust, and in this business that forever brands an employee with being not only dishonorable, but deceitful. Any editor who recognizes such betrayal of confidence, and would uphold to his readers charges from such a source is tainted with a yellow streak. Yet I do not wish this fact to be offered as an apology in my behalf. If Mr. Harter looks around a little he might discover that the authority he now proposes to quote against me, is the same source by which the information leaked out of his office to democratic headquarters as to which article, Judge Love wrote for his paper last fall. Better root around your own nest to know what is happening.

My Reasons for Supporting John Dunlap:

Yes, I am supporting John Dunlap and will urge everybody to vote for him.

FIRST: Because he fairly, squarely, openly, without money, without a political ring, or any unfair means, by his own efforts, won his nomination. He was the choice of the party, and the fundamental principle of Democracy is that the majority should rule; Jefferson said, and wisely too, that he has confidence in the judgment of the people when clearly expressed.

SECOND: I am satisfied that John Dunlap intellectually, morally, and upon general principles, is the superior of either Messrs. Miller or Bailey.

THIRD: I believe that, if elected, he will have the firmness to say "No!" to all political grafters who may claim a personal pull on him.

FOURTH: I believe that when men like Miller and Bailey run the county largely in debt by questionable bridge contracts, and awards to political roosters, the taxpayers are justified in firing them out. John Dunlap and Cal Weaver have no such charges against them and are entitled to a trial; and if at the end of three years they can give no better accounting, let us fire them out of office bodily, no matter if they are democrats.

FIFTH: If after election, John Dunlap and Cal Weaver should be caught grafting with bridge agents, accepting costly presents like a set of harness, a lap robe, a fur cap, or goods of equal value, I pledge my word that this paper will use every means in its power to send them to prison, instead of rewarding them by a re-election, as Philadelphia does with convicted grafters and ballot box stuffers.

For these reasons and many others, The Centre Democrat will support John Dunlap and Cal Weaver for Commissioners, and if by doing so (as Harter declares) it will make me "stand forth before the world, naked and unshamed a self-confessed liar" I will bear the stigma and never murmur; but my greatest humiliation then would be that Tom Harter and his handy-man-Friday, Charles Heisler, are already in the same class.

Mr. Harter you say to me "Your hand is the hand of Esau, but your voice is the voice of Jacob." By that you evidently wish to imply that through greed for gain I have become guilty of deception to the readers of the Centre Democrat who look to me "to lead them to the light." You remind me of the Smart Alecks who want to be the whole show; not only argue the point, but act as court and jury. On this point of political duplicity I am ready to undergo investigation and comparison and leave the patrons of this paper and the public at large form their own conclusions.

I now take the privilege of calling attention to your crooked political career as an editor, politician and chronic-disappointed-office-seeker since you emigrated to Bellefonte.

From the time you made your appearance here as a whippersnapper from Snyder county, your course has been that of treachery, betrayal of friendships, vindictive assaults on political rivals—an editorial brigand—and today you stand in your party alone and deserted—without a true, sincere or influential friend. The following are some of the reasons:

A Crooked Political Career:

Years ago you tried to play the "double shuffle" on Gov. Hastings and his friends. You sought his friendship and confidence by carrying to him stories of Judge Love. Next day you would be secretly consorting with Judge Love and trying to assure him of your support. Has it not dawned upon you by this time

that both these men read the brand of Benedict Arnold in your countenance? Was not your duplicity proven in the famous Republican County Convention when you were forced to stand up and endure interrogation? Don't you remember how you squirmed and twisted, and dodged—but you were unmasked to the amazement of the public? Do you know that you never enjoyed either of these men's confidence, for Hastings frequently ridiculed your course; and Love seeks you only when you can be his servile tool? As proof of this, in your aspirations to become postmaster of Bellefonte, neither of these men, Love or Hastings, would give you recognition or support, the first or the second time. Then you sought a Food Commissioner appointment and some of our influential republicans notified the department at Harrisburg that Game Warden about met your deserts which you received—the office Joe Rightnour afterwards filled. You are the same man who secretly turned on Clem Dale, who for years was your friend and valuable patron of your office. When he asked for the nomination of Congress you secretly consorted with Dr. M.J. Locke, a newcomer, and claimed the credit for accomplishing his nomination and Dale's humiliation. But the worst duplicity was your extolling the virtues of Dr. Locke before the Conference met and when the Dr. came back you declared he sold out to Dresser for several thousand dollars and since then have denounced him, bitterly—evidently disappointed because you got none of the "swag";—ask Locke if he shared with Harter? I now appeal to Dr. Locke, Clem Dale and other reliable republicans if I have not correctly recorded you in these matters?

"A Disgrace to the Newspaper Fraternity":

In your issue of Sept. 22nd, 1905, you further said of me: "You are a disgrace to the Newspaper Fraternity." For that reason, you have no complaint if your career is herewith reviewed, to wit:

I further declare that your editorial course is one of dishonor. I now remind you of the assault you made on the integrity of Wm. C. Heinle a few years ago, by publishing a false list of his obligations. Don't you remember that our bankers and other leading citizens denounced you in print over their signatures; and you were further rebuked in consequence, by the overwhelming vote Senator Heinle received two days later, as a vindication?

You certainly know, and the public has not forgotten, how you pried your nose in the home of a certain family last fall, and not even content with that attempted to besmirch the memory of one of Centre county's famed citizens. That act alone brought upon you a flood of denunciation from your own party and for your brutal attack you were largely responsible for the rebuke that came at the polls, and caused your party's defeat. These are only incidents which the public can recall along your yellow trail.

Repeatedly you have deliberately misquoted this paper, as well as private individuals of the town. You have quoted the present County Commissioner this year, upon points that they thus far have hesitated to face over their signatures. Leading men in our town constantly complain that it is dangerous to engage with you in social intercourse owing to your disposition to distort, misrepresent, and practice of hurling it broadcast in the columns of your paper—which is a violation of confidence, an abuse of a friendship, and against all rules of propriety recognized as sacred among gentlemen. Yes, truly, "Your hand is the hand of Esau but your voice is the voice of Jacob."

Editorially, your course is cowardly. You withhold from your readers the facts. You will say this paper said one thing while the opposite is the case. We have faced your charges fully, published your open letter complete. Now we make the charge, that you are too cowardly to let your readers know the result of our reply, or the sorry figure you present when put under the lime light. If you say you have no space to publish this reply, we will print it in supplement form and furnish it free for your use and pay you \$5 additional for the trouble of inserting same in your paper, but your acceptance must reach this office before Friday, Oct. 6, 9 am.

I doubt whether I am justified in recognizing such an attack. But since these men have "pressed the button," I will do the rest; and if they desire more they need only ring me up.

In conclusion, Sept. 15th, you said of me:

"A buzzard's defense is vomiting. The editor of the Centre Democrat must either swallow his pill or play buzzard."

If in the above reply it appears that I have played buzzard, the public may enjoy the spectacle. In this article you and your man Friday, (Chas. Heisler) are brought up to your vomit; if you can get it away without eating it up, do it.

Yours Fraternally, CHAS. R. KURTZ.

As to Operation of Fish Baskets.

The attorney general's department at Harrisburg, furnished the state department of fisheries with an opinion a few days ago in which it is held that the right granted by a license to operate a fish basket with wing walls for the purpose of taking eels can be enjoyed only by the person named therein.

Among the passengers on the Manchuria, which sailed Thursday from San Francisco, for Japan, via Honolulu, were W. J. Bryan and family and D. J. Pottleff, Russian minister to China. Were it not that the great Commoner was being fought so annihilatingly by the Gazette, every week for a score of years, we believe Wm. J. would have remained here.

THE American people object to 3rd terms. Let the good things be passed along. When some men get in office they want to stay there.

LIVING WILL BE LOWER.

Secretary James Wilson, of the Department of Agriculture, predicts lower retail prices during the coming winter season for meat, dairy products, poultry and other necessities of life. He says the relief for the householder will come from the enormous yields of small grain and corn in the great grain territory of Illinois, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas.

Letter to J. K. Johnson, Bellefonte. Dear Sir: Pay more for Devoe; be glad to. It is full-measure and honest. Paint is a watch-dog. How would you like a watch-dog that wouldn't watch from two to five o'clock in the morning? That's short-measure. How would you like a watch-dog that had a way of wagging his tail at a burglar? That's false paint. The burglar is rain and snow.

Go by the name: Devoe lead-and-zinc. Yours truly F W DEVOE & Co New York

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