

The Centre Democrat.

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WHAT PLEDGES WERE MADE! WHAT PLEDGES WERE BROKEN! WHO FAILED TO KEEP PLEDGES!

A Complete Reply to Some Vicious Charges in the "Republican" and the "Gazette"—An Effort to Avoid The Issue.

During the past month in the "Keystone Gazette," and the "Bellefonte Republican" there has been but one defence offered in behalf of Commissioners Woodring and Zimmerman for their extravagance in remodeling the Court House. These papers have never dared comment or allude to the enormous cost of the completed building, \$135,000, as compared with the pledges made to the people. They have not, and certainly can not, defend the costly \$100,000 bond loan for 30 years. They have avoided it; they don't want their readers to see the real facts in the issue, for fear they might do a little thinking, and vote accordingly.

As we said at the outset, they have made but one defence and that is to completely avoid the issue. For weeks the "Republican" has been running double-column, front-page articles in which Dorworth hurls at us the most vitriolic epithets at his command, to denounce what he terms a "betrayal of confidence," base "treachery," "trickery and deceit," "brutal vilification," etc. Editor Dorworth has repeatedly declared that "The Centre Democrat" has been guilty of a most unpardonable sin, that of violating a most solemn pledge, viz: Not to criticise the work of the County Commissioners in case they responded to the popular demand, and remodeled the Court House. Likewise the "Gazette" has, from week to week, reiterated similar charges, that "The Centre Democrat" and other Democratic papers had, upon their sacred word and honor, entered into an agreement with someone, that in the event the present Board remodeled the Court House, that should not be used in anyway against them for reelection. Both have openly declared that we have thus violated our word and honor in a compact supposed to have been made in the spring of 1909, when this proposition was under discussion.

But mark you, if "The Centre Democrat" actually did violate a solemn pledge—a matter of honor among men—as they allege, how would that excuse the County Commissioners if a greater wrong was perpetrated by them on the taxpayers of Centre county? How could one wrong condone for another? If all the Democratic editors violated pledges, does that justify a body of public officials in the violation of their pledges—made in 1909—and still on record in the Prothonotary's office? If "The Centre Democrat" violated a pledge made in 1909, it is not now seeking a re-election next Tuesday! If we violated such a pledge we certainly did not burden the taxpayers of Centre county with a \$170,000 debt, or does it justify a body of public officials in doing so! We hardly think any intelligent man will be misled by such a peculiar course of reasoning which is only a studied effort to avoid the direct issue, which is:—*Were Commissioners Woodring and Zimmerman unduly extravagant, did they violate pledges made to the taxpayers of Centre county; and have they demonstrated that their record now merits a re-election?* That, to our mind, is the vital and only issue, on which the taxpayers will vote next Tuesday. As proof you will find nothing mentioned on the printed ballot regarding "The Centre Democrat," or any other Democratic paper violating pledges, on which they will be asked to vote—therefore it can not be an issue in the coming election. It has only been introduced to distract attention from a record that thus far has not been satisfactorily explained to intelligent voters and taxpayers of Centre county.

THE CENTRE DEMOCRAT'S PLEDGE.

A half truth, cunningly told, can be transformed into a vicious falsehood, and in this way many reputations have been blasted and industrial enterprises ruined. In precisely the same way, and with the same malicious motive, the "Gazette," and the "Republican" have untruthfully assailed this paper. While the charge made against us has no relation to the merits of the candidates of either party, yet with the indulgence of our readers we meet it squarely, and present the undisputable facts connected therewith.

When the proposition was under discussion to rebuild the Court House, in the spring of 1909, it was freely discussed in print. Then came the famous meeting at Judge Orvis' home, where plans and specifications were submitted, J. Thos. Mitchell, Esq., being the active spokesman in charge of same. Several attorneys absolutely recall that the cost then was estimated at \$45,000, and was guaranteed not to exceed \$60,000; that the architects were experts and would give a bond to that effect.

After that meeting several members of the bar prepared a statement and same was published in the county papers, explaining what they deemed necessary in remodeling the Court House, in which they stated the repairs WOULD COST ABOUT \$60,000. On June 11th, 1909, the "Keystone Gazette" published an article on this subject from which we make the following extract:

"These changes, alterations, and additions complete will COST ABOUT SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS, and for this amount of money the commissioners feel that Centre county will possess a Court House which will compare favorably with those of the adjoining counties, upon which upwards of a quarter of a million dollars have been expended."

As required by act of assembly, the County Commissioners then filed a financial statement in the Prothonotary's office setting forth what they proposed to do in remodeling the building, the cost, and how it was to be financed. That statement was published in "The Centre Democrat" July 29th, 1909, and the following is an extract:

"The expense for additions and improvements to the Court House is estimated at \$60,000"

"The number of funding and improvement bonds is 100 of \$1,000 each, dated August 1, 1909, and due in thirty years, or 1939, and bearing interest at the rate of four per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually."

On June 19, 1909, "The Centre Democrat" published a statement in which it informed the public that the repairs were to cost about \$60,000; and on June 24, following, it stated that the "architects have agreed that they can be made for so much money" i. e. about \$60,000.

Now note well, the amount was definitely pledged, repeatedly—and it can not be disputed—to "cost about \$60,000" and the "architects have guaranteed" this by bond. Then to meet the \$25,000 existing county debt, and the \$60,000 for these repairs, the \$100,000 bond loan was to be made. With all these assurances definitely made (on the county records and through the county papers) the publisher of The Centre Democrat personally assured members of the Centre County Bar Association that this paper would approve the proposition as made. As proof, we now quote:

From "The Centre Democrat," June 24, 1909—

"A friend asks, 'What would the Centre Democrat say if the present Republican Board of County Commissioners expend \$60,000 on the present Court House?' The answer is easy: We always believed in the old fashioned simplicity and 'Democratic economy' of earlier days. But when improvements become necessary they should be substantially made with a view to permanence. Now we have no opposition to a Republican board doing their duty and hope no one will find occasion to criticise them in such an effort. The undertaking is up to them; it is a business proposition entirely, and if they will divorce it from petty politics and disregard the councils of the petty, selfish, would-be leaders who hover around that department and endeavor to dictate the parceling out of every tiny morsel to their personal advantage—if they rise above these political prejudices, they will succeed better and their official work will be subject to less comment. The expense of rebuilding our Court House, remodeling it, we should say, is not large and the result will be of benefit to every citizen of this county."

This statement was carefully and deliberately made and we now stand by every word. It shows that our fears then were not unfounded, and to make our pledge positive and distinct, it became a public record, by our publication of it, at that time. But when the Commissioners spent up to last January \$122,000, and the final cost is near \$135,000 we submit in all fairness that Commissioners Woodring and Zimmerman violated the solemn pledges made in 1909, and not "The Centre Democrat." We did not bind ourselves to uphold them in such a breach of trust—due largely to their utter incompetency. They confided too much in the councils of scheming politicians and oily-tongued contractors. While economical on details, they became bewildered in dealing in large sums, and easily were led into gross extravagance and costly contracts by the very influences that we cautioned them against when we made our public pledge in print.

At the same time we disapproved of the terms of the costly bond issue, and frankly told them so. Hoping that public sentiment would deter them in such a costly deal, on August 5th, 1909, "The Centre Democrat," in an editorial on page 4 said:

"We hear of considerable criticism over the proposed plan of the County Commissioners to finance the expense of rebuilding the Court House. Many think it is a mistake to pay interest for thirty years in which time the principal will practically be repaid. In our judgement a shorter period would be better, even if there would be a slight advance in the millage."

This again is proof that we did not pledge approval at that time to the method of financing the expenses. Our criticism was timely and meritorious, but not appreciated. Instead, the bonds were peddled to the city by J. Thos. Mitchell, Esq., and Centre county taxpayers "got stung"—good and proper. They must now send \$120,000 in interest out of Centre county; and, as shown heretofore, the method will cost possibly \$40,000 more than it should.

The above fully explains every detail of this charge that "The Centre Democrat" was in a deal with the politicians who looted the county treasury, in spending \$135,000 on the Court House instead of \$60,000, and then violated its pledges, its manhood and its honor, by not defending this transaction, and attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of Centre county taxpayers when these commissioners came for re-election. To have remained silent, under such circumstances, would have been practicing a gross deception upon our 5,600 patrons and thousands of other readers, whose confidence we believe we enjoy and will retain in the future; and which is prided more than any emoluments or honors of office the voters of Centre county could bestow upon us.

In conclusion: The assertion of the "Republican" and the "Gazette" that "The Centre Democrat" violated its pledges to these commissioners, we absolutely know is a vicious falsehood; and with the above facts submitted we leave an intelligent public draw its own conclusion as to who practiced deceit, who is guilty of violating confidence among men, and who now must wear the brand of dishonor. Even the Court, the Democratic county officials and the Democratic members of the Centre County Bar—like "The Centre Democrat"—have all been subject to slander by these same reckless, sweeping, unlicensed, unsupported, unwarranted charges, in the "Gazette," and the "Republican," of not having faithfully kept an agreement among men, in this Court House episode—but that even will not shift the responsibility for this enormous debt of \$170,000 now saddled on the taxpayers of Centre county by Commissioners Woodring and Zimmerman.

Next Tuesday every taxpayer should go to the polls and vote as his best judgment directs.

THE DIFFERENCE.

John D. Miller, and the Miller family, for a century have been residents of Centre county, paid taxes in Centre county, and have farmed Centre county soil. He stands for Centre county institutions and has been nominated for Treasurer of Centre county on the Democratic Ticket.

The Republican candidate for Treasurer of Centre county is a youngster, who moved from Decatur township, Clearfield county, only eight years ago, while old-time families like the Dales and the Musers of Pennsylvania, and the Comleys of the Bald Eagle valley, were ignored. This is hardly a square deal among men. Repeatedly the Comleys and Dales have been promised recognition and told to wait until "next time" and on such assurances have waited, only to see youngsters and strangers step in and be awarded the plum.

Who can stand up and deny these well known facts.

Abusing Reuben Comley don't change the facts. Recently Tom Harter, editor of the Keystone Gazette, publicly in his paper attempted to read Mr. Comley out of the Republican Party of Centre county,—and this same R. T. Comley was for several generations fighting Republican battles in Centre county while Harter was down in Snyder county opposing and betraying Republican Tickets along 1890 to 1892, and was openly denounced and run out of Snyder county by the Republican party. This is hardly a square deal among men. Repeatedly the Comleys and Dales have been promised recognition and told to wait until "next time" and on such assurances have waited, only to see youngsters and strangers step in and be awarded the plum.

Harter, like Pritchard, was in Centre county but a few years until he was after the best office in our county, while old-time Republicans were ruthlessly ignored and pushed aside. Pritchard, like Harter, has also a record for opposing Republican tickets. Some people are independent and won't stand for such deals.

A CALCULATION.

According to the last census the population of Centre county was something over 43,000. Reliable statistics show that one-fifth of the entire population represents the number of male voters, or heads of families. That would indicate that there are between 8600 and 9000 voters and taxpayers in Centre county.

This leads us to another calculation. Three years ago Centre county had no indebtedness; since then the present board of County Commissioners rebuilt the Court House, and in consequence we have a bonded indebtedness of \$100,000, also a floating debt of about \$75,000 or a total of \$175,000. With almost 9000 taxpayers and voters it means an additional average expense of about \$20 on each taxpayer. As many voters do not own real estate and little personal property, it is safe to say that it means an additional expense to the average farmer of about \$30 each. That is quite a nice, tidy sum in addition to your ordinary taxes.

Next Tuesday, November 7th, is Taxpayers Day, when you can either approve or disapprove of such excessive expenditures, by casting your vote for or against the men who incurred this debt.

Three years ago Centre county had practically no debt. Now we have \$100,000 bonded debt and \$75,000 of floating debt, or a total of \$175,000 created in three years by the present Board of County Commissioners. Remember for three years they had full sway, but next Tuesday is Taxpayers Day.

Potter House Changes Hands. The Potter House, which for several years has been so excellently conducted by the Waples, father and son, changed hands, the new landlord being J. H. Grosbeck, of Johnstown, a brother-in-law of Mrs. M. B. Mapledoram, owner of the hotel, who will continue the extensive improvements already begun.

PLAYING THE BABY ACT.

Licked to a Frazzle—Now Squealing Like a Stuck Pig.

Immediately after the September primaries the greedy editor of the Gazette rushed to the defence of the present County Commissioners. We say greedy, for he is the printing hog who wants all of the party's patronage, and now he is exceptionally hungry since he lost that bunch of velvet down near Temple Court. Fearing that the present board was sure to go down, he first was instrumental in urging the candidacy of other men against them at the primaries; and that having failed, he now is back to the former board whom he gave a double shuffle and they knew it, even though they accept his support. The primaries were held on September 30th and in the next issue of his paper he displayed his wonderful ability (?) as an editor when he penned that famous defence of the Commissioners' notorious bond deal. As was his custom he disposed with the whole affair in one of his visionary rhetorical strides, and then in his egotistical, ignorant conceit, in which he has always enveloped himself to the exclusion of fact or common sense, he imagined that the taxpayers would accept his statement as final. Mark these windy words; in speaking of the bond deal he said: "Instead of a financial blunder as it has been broadly advertised, it must be accepted as one of the shrewdest and most economical deals ever accomplished by any board of county commissioners in this or any other state." Sounds splendid! If it only was true!

There was no occasion for such a sweeping comment; but the emigrant was uneasy lest the defeat of the present board would mean that more "selvet" would slip through his fingers; why, then, not paralyze them at one fell swoop! And he did it—in his mind. But what happened? Immediately the statement was taken up and discussed in detail, and torn to shreds. It was shown that this "shrewd deal" the greedy emigrant spoke about, will cost the county \$120,000 in interest alone, which will be carried out of Centre county and away from Centre county people who earn the money and pay the taxes; and that local capital also was deliberately ignored. It was also proven that the character of the loan and the style of sinking fund created will cost the county between forty and fifty thousand dollars more than it should. Further, that when most of us will be dead and gone future generations will still be paying interest on this loan—a mortgage on posterity. It was a job set up on the taxpayers of the county by a lot of smart politicians who easily duped this innocent board into a transaction they did not understand. That is what was proven through the columns of this and other Democratic papers when we began to turn the searchlight of investigation on the emigrant's eulogy of this bond deal; that instead of it being the "shrewdest and most economical deal ever accomplished by any board of County Commissioners in this or any other state" it was an expensive blunder, with a smattering of graft supposed to be attached to it, and the public realizes it—only after it is too late. The whole affair was torn to atoms and riddled so completely that the Gazette was so helpless, that it appeared ridiculous. Driven from post to corner, with no defence left for this notorious deal, for the past two weeks the editorial course of that paper has been typical of the man who presides over it—a yammering baby. Helpless and unable to defend himself, for the past two weeks he has been howling like a stuck pig, yammering that he is the object of abuse! Think of it, the great, big baby, yammering that he is the object of abuse! And appealing for sympathy! Remember, he lead off in this campaign by his windy boast of the wonderful bond deal; now he is simply getting a few facts put up to him that he thus far has not faced, can not face, and will not face. He invited the discussion, as the files of his paper for the 5th of October will show. Now he wants some one to "call a halt" and says this "blackguardism and abuse should be resented." Naturally the big lunk would like to have a halt called when he gets such a load of hot shot poured in the guts—it sickens him. He has a paper and press, why don't the poor old booby stand up and call the halt, and resent it—if he can; or if he is amounted to a pica-yune, instead of bawling like a great big baby, that he is "being abused" and some one should come and pull these bad Democrats off, he would do the job. Is this not a pretty spectacle of a man who wants to run the Republican organ of Centre county?

No wonder County Chairman Quigley has been cursing in seven different languages at the manner in which the Gazette has, as its custom, haled things up. Republican headquarters are storming, while others now are sorry that the emigrant did not take a vacation, and as usual when in trouble, visit Snyder county instead of vaudling up the campaign, and impeding the success of the Republican ticket by his windy efforts.

"MAIL-ORDER" WILLIAMS.

If you rob a man it matters very little whether you do it in the morning or the evening, it is a crime—and the time don't count.

If you knock a man down it matters little whether you strike him on the forehead or jaw—it is an assault.

If a man buys nearly all his household goods from mail-order houses in Chicago, and then truthfully declares he never purchased anything from Sears, Roebuck & Co., that does not relieve him of the serious part of the charge. As long as he bought from Montgomery Ward & Co., or any similar firm he took that patronage from home merchants, who help pay our taxes and support our public institutions. The statement and denial in the last issue of the Gazette that Ed Williams, candidate for Register, made no purchase from Sears, Roebuck & Co., is only a half-truth, intended to deceive. The house he buys from is of little account; but the fact that he deals largely with the cheap mail-order houses (and everybody in Unionville knows it) and in Chicago is not denied, is the essential point. It is a slap at the home merchant; and the Gazette's denial was only a play on names—a piece of deception—an insult added to former injuries.

All the big and little merchants in Centre county will give "Mail-order" Williams a good boost on Tuesday.

CREDIT GIVEN.

All persons who paid any money on subscription to the Centre Democrat during the past month of October will find full credit given for same by a change of the date on the label this week. Look at it now, and in case you find an error kindly report it at once. Remember your subscription account is printed each week on your label, which shows when the subscription expires.

25c children's wool hose, a pair 15c.
20c fleece lined hose, a pair 10c.
25c children's girdles each 10c.
Finklestine's, 29 south Allegheny street.

PENITENTIARY NEWS.

The Visit of the Commission Postponed to Next Wednesday.

Owing to the unfavorable weather conditions, rain and bad roads, the penitentiary commission deferred their final visit to Bellefonte, on Wednesday. This was somewhat of a surprise, and could not be avoided by people interested at this place.

A telephone message received last evening stated that the commission expected to be here on next Wednesday noon. From that we infer that they will remain until Thursday.

During the past week some trouble has been encountered by several property owners making excessive demands for tracts of land in this plot. It is hoped that they will be public spirited enough, like others, to accept a fair market price.

Get a sample ballot now, study it carefully; go to the polls early on Tuesday. That is the duty of every good citizen. Don't hang around home until the last hour and have the party workers come after you. Next Tuesday be a man.

Hospital Notes.

Operations: Mrs. Nannie Bughdol, Bellefonte; Mrs. Julia Shope, Milesburg.

Admitted for treatment: Lillian Grassmeyer, Milesburg; Miss Estelle Stover, Bellefonte.

Discharged: Roy Adams, Unionville; Mrs. Majorie Harding, Tyrone; Miss Mary Harding, and Miss Julia Foreman, Bellefonte.

There are now twenty patients in the hospital.

Taxes in Bellefonte are high enough—in that reason be careful how you vote on Tuesday.

Francis Speer has many warm friends throughout Centre county who will give him a complimentary vote on Tuesday. If elected, and it seems almost a certainty, he will insure the public that they will receive the very best service.

DIRTY POLITICS.

For some time veiled attacks have been made in the Bellefonte Republican for the purpose of creating a prejudice among old soldiers against Arthur B. Lee, Democratic candidate for sheriff. The following is the manner in which it is done, being taken from the last issue of that paper:

"George Yarnell, the Republican candidate for Sheriff is a friend of the old soldier. He never branded the Grand Army button as the 'badge of government paupers.'"

"A vote for the Republican ticket on Nov. 7th, will be a vote resenting the slander that brave old soldiers are government paupers."

The same thing is being quietly peddled over the county by Mr. Yarnell's political workers who attribute the saying to Mr. Lee.

On Monday Mr. Lee was in Bellefonte and his attention was called to the manner of assailing him. In reply he made the following statement for publication:

"I never branded the old soldiers as 'government paupers.' Any such statement attributed to me is absolutely untruthful, as I always had the highest respect for our soldiers, and would not make such an unkindly comment."—ARTHUR B. LEE.