

DELETED A DISPUTE. Brice Says the State Convention Must Select W. L. Scott's Successor. KERR DECLARES HIMSELF. He is a Candidate for Re-Election as State Chairman. HARRITY TO FIGHT AGAINST HIM.

Secret of the Bitter Enmity Existing Between the Two Men.

SOME GENERAL POLITICAL MATTERS

J. M. Guffey returned from Washington last night on the limited. He came home highly pleased with his visit to the East and to friends who awaited his coming at Union station he announced that his mission had been successful from a political standpoint, and that he would certainly be chosen the member of the National Committee to succeed the late W. L. Scott. Mr. Guffey denied emphatically that a conference of Pennsylvania politicians at the State Hotel in Harrisburg, Pa., had been held last Thursday. He admitted, however, that during his trip East he had met Senator Wallace in New York, Congressman Mutchler and State Chairman Kerr at Washington, and other politicians of national reputations in Philadelphia, Washington and New York.

"I am satisfied that I will be chosen to succeed Mr. Scott on the National Committee," Mr. Guffey said. "The Chairman of the National Committee holds that, having admitted Mr. Kerr to the National Committee, they have no vacancy from Pennsylvania. Mr. Kerr, having been admitted by courtesy to represent the State Democracy on the committee and to fill the vacancy created by the death of Mr. Scott, he will hold the place until the proper tribunal has selected his successor, and the proper tribunal is the State Convention or delegates chosen by it."

Kerr is out for Re-Election. "This," Mr. Guffey went on, "sustains my position, and, while it removes any contest over this matter from the meeting of the State Central Committee, I wish to say that, when the proper tribunal assembled, the Democracy of the State in convention, I will be a candidate for this place."

"It has been stated that Chairman Kerr had determined to be a candidate for re-election. Is that true?" he was asked. "Yes," that is correct," Mr. Guffey answered. "Chairman Kerr is a candidate for re-election as Chairman of the State Central Committee, and there is no question about his success."

Mr. Guffey refused to talk further on politics. He said he had never seen such a snow storm as the one which passed over the country since he left Pittsburgh early last week. "They are sleighing in Baltimore, Washington, New York and Philadelphia," he said, "and I find them sleighing here in Pittsburgh."

The decision of National Chairman Brice that there is no vacancy on the National Committee, and that State Chairman Kerr had been admitted to the committee through courtesy to fill the place of the late W. L. Scott disposes of a much disputed question, and will be an unsatisfactory ruling to the Harrisburg faction of the Democratic party in Pennsylvania.

A lively fight is likely to follow. Secretary Harrity has been named as the candidate for the National Convention. He inaugurated his campaign for the place just after the announcement of Mr. Scott's death. His first effort was to have the District Chairman of the State elect him a member of the committee. He then wanted the State Convention to elect him to the National Committee and later he decided to have the State Committee name him for the place when it meets in annual session in January next.

Several pledges of support from a majority of the State committee. When the committee assembled it will no doubt discuss the decision upon and the affairs of the committee, and in order to satisfy the desires given it will name Mr. Harrity as the successor to Mr. Scott. Such action will result in a question precipitate a lively fight for the place. The State Central Committee, and will be finally decided by the delegates to the National Convention which are chosen by the State Committee. The National Convention will meet at one meeting between the time the State Committee meets and the meeting of the National Convention. At that meeting a plan for holding the National Convention in Harrisburg will be presented to the committee. Mr. Harrity will be named a member of the National Committee by the State Committee. He will refuse his admission, and will allow Mr. Kerr to represent the State until the new National Committee is chosen in the Spring.

"The Harrity people are vigorously opposed to Chairman Kerr," a Pittsburgh Democrat said last night. "They will oppose Mr. Kerr's re-election as Chairman of the State Central Committee, and they will oppose his right to a seat in the National Committee pending the election of a regular committee. It is the duty of the Harrity people to oppose Mr. Kerr's re-election as Chairman of the State Central Committee, and they will do so."

Chairman Kerr Announces Himself. A telegram from Philadelphia says: Mr.

ROBE'S FINES UNPAID. He Claims He Did Not Know Who Should Get the State's Money. THE ALDERMAN DEFENDS HIS SAFE. Only Five or Six Law and Order League Fines Collected by Him. A DEEP MYSTERY STILL UNSOLVED.

The wise and learned Alderman Robe, whose knowledge of law extends back to the time of 1794, when the blue laws of Pennsylvania were passed, claims, as a defense for not returning money due the State, that he did not know to whom it should be paid. The Treasurer of the great Commonwealth formed by William Penn is to him, a stranger, of whose existence no man, it seems, has been thoughtful enough to inform him. While he has assumed to sit in judgment on cases brought by the Law and Order League as represented by Houston, Leggett and McCarty, under the old statute of 1794, and while he has, according to his own statement, imposed the usual fine of \$25 on a number of unfortunate victims, he states in a letter to the State Treasurer, who is the proper person to receive money due the State.

From the publication in THE DISPATCH yesterday morning, he stated yesterday that he supposed Attorney Frazer had authority to receive the money, but outside of information received in this way, Mr. Robe's knowledge on the subject is as bright as "Darkest Africa."

Justices Hidden in a Cellar. Mr. Robe, as has been stated before, is an Alderman. Proof of this fact can be found in yesterday's DISPATCH in an office on Wylie avenue above Kirkpatrick street. The county justice in that office is in the basement of a private house. A half-dozen narrow steps lead to the entrance. The room is about 16 feet square. It is isolated from public view, and on this account is especially adapted for Law and Order League hearings. When a reporter called on the "Squire" yesterday it was found that his greatest grievance was the incursion in yesterday's DISPATCH that the safe in which he keeps Law and Order documents was old and possibly rusty. Mr. Robe wanted it understood that his safe is a new one, and, in justice to him, it should be stated that it is either new or painted over. Although not large, it is a respectable-looking safe and should be provided with a better home. It is brightly varnished and on account of its brightness forms a striking contrast to everything else in the room.

The program is issued in book form and contains much valuable information and is well illustrated. The music will be furnished by the Guenther Orchestra. Supper will be served in the hall. Among the speakers will be the Hon. J. P. Edwards and others. Arrangements have been made for the accommodation of 1,000 people.

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THE NEXT CITY TAX LEVY. Property Valuation May Be Increased \$50,000,000—An Increase of \$700,000 In Tax Receipts—Brown's Department Wants \$100,000 and Bigelow's the Balance of It.

One of the most generally discussed topics at City Hall just now is the tax millage for the coming fiscal year. The triennial assessment now being made figures largely in all discussions of the matter, but there is a vast difference in the estimates of what the increase in valuation will be. By some the increase is figured at \$20,000,000, making the total valuation \$200,000,000. By others the increase is figured as high as \$50,000,000, and from all the indications that figure is nearer the mark than the first. The increase in valuation, however, certainly reaches \$10,000,000 and will probably exceed \$40,000,000.

The increase will be pretty evenly distributed over the city. If any sections are increased, they are increased in the Southside and Lawrenceville districts. The Old City and the East End assessments will be largely increased. Increase in values along the city streets, particularly the extra assessment, particularly along Penn avenue and down toward the Point from Market street. Values have doubled all through the Point district within the three years since the last triennial assessment, and nearly the same conditions have prevailed on Penn avenue up as far as Tenth street.

In the East End, besides the increase in acreage values, there are other improvements that have raised values in certain localities and the general improvement of streets, not only pushed up the value of abutting lots, but also raised the value of the lots themselves. The increase in valuation is expected to make about \$70,000,000 of an increase in the tax receipts for the year. Of this amount the Chief Brown's department asks for \$100,000 more than last year and Chief Bigelow's \$500,000, so that if neither of these appropriations are reduced there will be no change of the millage being reduced. It is in view of the fact that the Finance Committee have declared for a reduction in the millage, and they will make it if the department appropriations are so sacrificed.

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FOUR BRAVE FIREMEN CARRIED BY A FALLING FLOEM INTO A FIRE. CALVARY SCHOOL ROOM BURNED. The Great Crowd Stampeded When the Floor Went Through. TWO OTHER VERY BAD DOWNTOWN FIRES.

The Sunday school room of Calvary Church, at Penn avenue and Station street, East End, was destroyed by fire yesterday afternoon. Four firemen were injured by falling through the roof of the burned building. The loss to the church will not exceed \$5,000, fully covered by insurance. The injured firemen are: ROBERT EDWARDS, No. 8 Engine Company, leg and arm broken and injured internally. JOHN LANGDON, Lieutenant of Truck B, severely burned about hands and face. JOHN PAZELL, No. 8 Company, badly burned and bruised. WILLIAM BEST, No. 8 Company, leg sprained, hands and feet burned.

The fire broke out on the first floor of the school building shortly after 1 o'clock. The flames spread rapidly, and before the engine companies responded the entire first floor of the structure was in flames. When the firemen arrived they entered the second story of the building, and were at work when the floor gave way. They were all carried to the burning floor below, and Edwards fell through both floors to the cellar. The firemen went down with an awful crash. Dense clouds of smoke and dust rose above the burning building, and the great crowd of people which had assembled to see the old structure destroyed rushed through the street almost in panic. Even the firemen at work on other parts of the building for the moment became confused. Before the rumbling of the wreck had ceased, however, the firemen were in the building looking for their fellow workers. Edwards was so pinned in the wreck that he had to be chopped out.

Caring for the Injured Fireman. He was taken in the patrol wagon by Dr. Mercer. He was afterward removed to his home. The loss of time by the firemen occasioned by getting the men out of the debris allowed the fire to get a headway, but when work was resumed it was but a short time until the fire was gotten under control.

The Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church was probably better known as Dr. George Hodge's church. It was built about 20 years ago. It had been enlarged several times, and the present size was about 75 by 40 feet. The structure was of brick, two stories and entirely of frame. It was almost entirely overgrown with Virginia creeper, which entirely concealed the framework. The church proper is of stone, and was but slightly damaged by water and smoke. The furnishings of the Sunday schoolroom, including a library of 1,200 volumes, were valued at \$5,000 more. The first floor was used as a day room, in which religious services were held and the various societies of the church met. The Sunday schoolroom, on the second floor, accommodated 800 scholars. The church is valued at \$25,000 and \$30,000.

The insurance is \$5,000, in the following companies: Phoenix of Brooklyn, \$2,000; Citizens of New York, \$2,000; Queen of America, New York, \$2,000. The fire was caused by an effort to properly heat the building for services to-day. A destructive fire on Liberty street. The fire broke out before 10 o'clock on the morning of the 9th inst. at 541 Liberty street at 6:50 yesterday morning and before extinguished did about \$15,000 worth of damage. The building is the old Calvary Episcopal church, a two-story brick building, and before the engines arrived had communicated to J. P. Hanna & Co.'s parking establishment, next door. The fire was not got under control for three hours, and was difficult to handle on account of the ice that formed wherever water fell. Three districts of the neighborhood were in attendance. Buildings were badly damaged, and their contents nearly all ruined. The Irish block, on the corner of Sixth street, was also slightly damaged. 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