



RIGHT OR WRONG. WHEN RIGHT, TO BE KEPT RIGHT, WHEN WRONG, TO BE PUT RIGHT.

EBENSBURG: THURSDAY, JANUARY 30.

Unholy Ambition.

It is a fact which cannot be successfully denied, that there has been and is a very serious defect in the working of our social system. This must be manifest to every intelligent person, who has given the subject the least consideration. It fails to extend the proper encouragement to men who are really competent and worthy of official positions and honor, and instead, it too frequently gives renown and glory, as well as emolument and gain, to those who are crafty, unprincipled and depraved. Every man possesses more or less of ambition; with many it is of an honorable cast, while with others it is quite the reverse. When, therefore, the defect mentioned shuts the door of Ambition's temple to the former class—to those who would be good, and true, and useful—and opens it wide to the latter, it is not, after all, so surprising, that reckless and unscrupulous men will take advantage of the occasion, and in order that they may gratify an unholy ambition and acquire distinction, will misuse their intelligence and energies in stirring up strifes, in shedding blood, in desolating fertile fields, and in bringing discontent and ruin upon a people who would otherwise be happy and prosperous.

If, a few months since, the question had been propounded—Who is JEFFERSON DAVIS? a great many would have been able to answer that he was a United States Senator from Mississippi, and had been engaged in the war with Mexico, as an officer of the American Army. But a great many could not have answered the question at all. Now, however, he is known to almost every man, woman and child in the country; and not only so, but his name is familiar also to the people of the old world. And why is this? Is it because he has been a great, and good, and virtuous man? Is it because he has performed any deeds of valor, of bravery, or of heroism? Is it because he has been peaceful, loyal and patriotic?—No; none of these. It is as the head and front of the Southern Rebellion, that he has made himself famous, and at the same time infamous.

It is through Perjury, Piracy, Arson, Robbery, Rapine and Murder, and not by fair and honorable means, that he would satisfy his ambitious spirit. It is as the emolument of a treason, with which that of BENEDICT ARNOLD sinks into insignificance, that he has gained for himself a bad name which will be handed down to the latest posterity.

And, so, too, of BEAUREGARD. Though he had for years occupied a prominent position in the army of the United States, yet as we had long been at peace, and his military services had not been called into play, he was comparatively but little known. But no sooner had he assumed command of the Secession forces at Charleston, than his name was in every newspaper and in every one's mouth. In the sacrifice of the lives of loyal citizens, in the destruction of public and private property, and by the exhibition of courage and other high military qualities, he seeks to gratify his ambition. He doubtless hopes and expects that, by these means he will greatly increase his fame, and that the youth of the country will read of his exploits with as great an avidity as they study the deeds of the most renowned conquerors the world has ever seen. But we would fain hope that, however much they may read of him, none will be found desirous of emulating his career. Like DAVIS, his Rebel Chief, he has gained a bad eminence in a bad cause, and deserves only a bad end.

But in order that we may further illustrate our idea, let us suppose that these two bad men, respectively possessing the same physical and intellectual powers, had been conscientious, having hearts filled with patriotism and humane feelings, and cherishing a desire to work, not for their own selfish purposes, but for the good of their country and the benefit of their fellow men, they would then have regarded war as a dreadful necessity, and they would

have shrunk back in horror from the bare idea of a Rebellion such as they themselves have helped to inaugurate.

Instead of becoming the detested head of a bastard Confederacy, DAVIS might have devoted his time, talents and energies to building up and perpetuating our glorious Republic—a government always kind and indulgent, and to which he stood so much indebted. And instead of making war a trade, and engaging in fratricidal slaughter, BEAUREGARD might have employed himself in the more useful and more laudable occupation of enlightening and refining the minds and hearts of the rising generation; and in cultivating the arts of Peace—always better than those of War, and tending so materially to increase the happiness and comfort of all.

But DAVIS and BEAUREGARD were stung with mad and unholy ambition.—As the benevolent do not often amass wealth, and the useful rarely acquire distinction, so these two bad men did not wish to spend their lives in struggling with the embarrassments that useful men have always to encounter, and be rewarded in the end with doubtful reputations or respectable obscurity. Here, then, is a serious defect in our social system, and to remove it should be the desire and study of every right thinking man. When this accursed Rebellion is put down, and peace and prosperity once more smile upon a united Republic, let us all endeavor to inspire the youth of our country with an ambition of the right kind—a desire to gain honorable distinction through honorable means.

The "Dog Law"

To the Editor of The Alleghanian:

A great deal has recently been said and written relative to a law, passed at the last session of the Legislature, entitled "An Act to extend the provisions of an Act for the protection of Sheep and taxing of Dogs, in the county of Blair, to the county of Cambria." In view of this fact, and as the member under whose auspices the act was passed, I desire also, with your permission, to say a few words in regard to it, through the columns of your paper.

In reply to the abuse which has been heaped upon me, I will be brief. No matter what course he may pursue, it is simply impossible for a legislator to please everybody. In matters purely of local concern, the best rule he can adopt is, to pass or endeavor to pass such bills as may be petitioned for, when he believes them to be right in themselves, and likely to prove beneficial to his constituents. If he legislates in this wise, then, whether his measures are popular or unpopular—whether he pleases or displeases—he has at least the proud satisfaction of knowing that he endeavored to do his duty. I claim to have been governed by this rule, in securing the passage of the bill in question, and if I erred, it was an error of the head—certainly not of the heart.

It is not my purpose to enter into any labored defence of the Blair county law, which has been so roughly assailed, and which, by the passage of the act of last session, it was intended to extend to Cambria. I leave it to speak for itself, merely remarking that, such a law had been asked for, and upon a full examination of its provisions, I believed that, if extended and properly carried out, it could not fail to prove beneficial to our people. And while nothing has transpired since to change my opinion, yet it is a fact worthy of note, that some who were anxious for its passage, and who pronounced it a good law at first, suddenly turned round and joined in its wholesale denunciation. A transition so violent and sudden, can only be satisfactorily explained, upon the hypothesis that such things are sometimes done for the purposes of political capital.

It cannot be denied that the "law" under consideration has its friends as well as its enemies; and in judging of them, the true criterion seems to be this—the law is popular with those engaged in, or in favor of, the business of raising and keeping SHEEP, while it is unpopular with those engaged in, or in favor of, the business of raising and keeping DOGS. Numerous weighty arguments have been urged against it by the latter class—a fair sample of which was pressed upon my attention but a few days since. It was this: "There is not half enough of Dogs in the county, and there is too d—d many Free Schools." Against the crushing force of an argument like this, it will readily be seen that no other argument, however sound, solid or sophistical, could possibly prevail.

But let me state a few facts connected with the passage of this "law," and the attempt made to enforce its provisions—this law which it seems to be generally conceded is no law at all.

Knowing how sensitive men generally are in regard to the subject of taxation, it was only after I had received a number of letters and petitions earnestly requesting it, and when convinced that it would prove beneficial, and was desired by the people of the county, that I determined to secure the passage of an act similar to the one in question. No bill having been sent me, it devolved upon me to draw one myself, and while making preparations to that end, my attention was particularly called to a couple of bills which came up, on final passage, on the 12th of February.—One of these was entitled "An Act to tax Dogs in the county of Erie," and the other was an act to extend the Blair county law to the county of Crawford. After examining both carefully, I concluded that the Blair county act was the better one, and believing its provisions in harmony with the wishes of those asking a similar enactment, I determined to adopt it. In the bill extending it to Crawford, therefore, I proposed at first to embrace Cambria also, but did not do so for the reason that the bill had already passed the Senate, and the member from Crawford was anxious to have it pass the House without amendment, in order that it might receive the Executive approval, and become a law as soon as possible.

Having both passed the House, on the 12th of February, the Erie county bill was taken to the Senate; and the Crawford county bill was sent to the Governor, whose signature it received on the 27th of the same month. With this precedent before me, I drew up a bill extending the Blair county act to Cambria, which was read in place and presented to the House on the 1st of March following. Knowing the member from Crawford to be experienced in matters of legislation, and supposing of course that he knew whether the Blair county act was in force or not, at the time his bill passed, I did not even think of making any inquiry or examination in relation to it; nor was it natural, under the circumstances, that I should do so. By the passage of the act extending it to Crawford county, both Houses, as well as the Governor, had but a few days before recognized it as an existing law, and in the absence of any knowledge or information to the contrary, it would have been exercising more than ordinary prudence to have looked further.

On the 26th of March, my bill passed the House, and it was, I believe, in the evening of the same day, that I first learned that the Blair county act had been repealed. My informant, if I mistake not, was the member from Blair, who merely stated it as an impression. Having examined the matter, and found his statement to be correct, the next morning, (March 27th), I went to the Senate with a view of having the bill either indefinitely postponed, or not called up at all. But Senator Hall, with whom I conversed in regard to it, informed me that it had already been passed.

It was then quite too late in the session to introduce another bill and secure its passage, or it is quite likely I should have done so. But regarding the one passed as being inoperative, I gave the matter no further thought, until informed one day, by the member from Erie, that the bill passed in relation to his county had been vetoed by the Governor. Involving, as I thought, precisely the same principle of taxation, though not the same in detail, I supposed indeed that mine would share a similar fate. I was somewhat surprised, therefore, when on the 8th of May, in a Message announcing the approval of some three or four hundred bills, I found it too among the number.

Here, then, was a law which, though regular enough on its face, was nevertheless very doubtful and defective in its character—not to call it an absolute nullity. Perfectly harmless in itself, and obligatory upon nobody, the attempt to enforce its provisions, after a knowledge of the facts, could only be viewed as a very delicate and hazardous experiment. While therefore I have no desire to shirk any responsibility attaching to the passage of the bill, or which might or could have legitimately resulted from it, yet I wish it distinctly understood that I am in no way responsible for the effort recently made to carry its provisions into effect. It was but a short time after the adjournment of the last Legislature, that I had a conversation with Abel Lloyd, Esq., (then one of the County Commissioners), in which I informed him that, although such an act had been passed, yet for the reason already indicated, I did not think it could be enforced. And he then assured me, that, even though it were a legal and valid enactment, the Commissioners would take no action under it until they had first received an exemplified copy of the bill.

Some time afterwards, I had a second interview with Mr. Lloyd upon the subject. He then informed me that the Board had received a copy of the Pamphlet Laws, and had examined the act in question, and approved its provisions. But he added that, as I had suggested some doubts about its validity, and as the assessments had then all been made, and were partly distributed, they would not act under the law until the following year—and not then unless they were first satisfied it was all right and proper to do so. With this understanding I never thought of the matter again, until informed one day that a "Dog Tax" had actually been levied; and then Mr. Lloyd assured me that it had been authorized during his absence from the sessions of the Board.

Had the Commissioners pursued the course indicated by Mr. Lloyd, it would have given a year to the people of the county to consider and discuss the merits or demerits of the act in question, and—assuming it to be valid and legal—they might, if they so desired, have secured its repeal by the present Legislature. If, on the other hand, the act is really a nullity, then it should have been treated accordingly. And thus, in either event, if its passage had done nobody any good, it would certainly have done nobody any harm. But they have undertaken to enforce this law, after having ample notice of its doubtful character. If they are right in this, so be it; but if they are wrong, then I submit that, under the circumstances, it would be unjust and unreasonable to hold me responsible for any unpleasant consequences resulting from their act.

Respectfully, &c., A. C. MULLIN. EBENSBURG, Jan. 28, 1862.

Letter From Harrisburg.

HARRISBURG, Jan. 24, 1862. Correspondence of The Alleghanian.

A few days ago I embraced the opportunity of a visit to the Executive and State Departments, in the former of which I had the pleasure of meeting his Excellency, GOVERNOR CURTIN, and having a cordial shake of the hand from him; and, in the latter, of having a *te te* with that model officer and gentleman, Hon. ELI SLIFER, the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Governor CURTIN looks remarkably well, notwithstanding the fatigue and labor attendant to the performance of the onerous duties imposed upon him since the inauguration of the war. The Governor is a plain, blunt man, who gives utterance to his thoughts and convictions without any fear of consequences. I must confess, that I rather like this undisguised exposition of opinion, expressed in unmistakable Saxon.

The Governor receives his visitors in the most courteous manner, giving to each, in his turn, an opportunity of making his wants known. All ceremony is dispensed with—circumlocution is discontinued—business, and nothing but business, secures his patient attention. The impressions made upon your correspondent, at this interview of a few minutes, were such as to give birth to a higher appreciation of the character of Governor CURTIN than he previously entertained. A determined will and the courage to execute are evidently prominent characteristics of Pennsylvania's Executive. These traits are of the Jacksonian stamp, and are such as will always command the admiration of the People. While this is true, as relating to the great mass, it is no less a fact, that the distinguishing features referred to are always sure to elicit the vindictiveness of such as become enemies from disappointed expectations in "the wild hunt after office and official patronage." Governor CURTIN can not expect to be an exception to a general rule. He has his enemies, like unto all other public servants, but an approving conscience is a set-off for a world of slander and detraction.

Hon. ELI SLIFER is one whom to know is to esteem. He has been in public life for a number of years, filling the offices of Legislator, State Treasurer, and now Secretary of the Commonwealth. The writer of this communication has known him intimately for a long time, and he can truthfully aver, that a truer man never lived. To be privileged to address such an one as Friend, is indeed an honor of which your humble servant feels proud. He only hopes that the time may arrive, when the opportunity will present itself of evincing his appreciation of favors generously extended.

The Legislature is gradually assuming the appearance of a working body. In a few days, questions will come up for discussion, which will be of some interest to

your readers. Thus far, the most important proceedings have been those connected with contests for seats, with raising a committee to investigate the "alleged corrupt influences in procuring the passage, by the last Legislature, of an act for the commutation of the tonnage duties," and also a committee to investigate the "State Military Contracts." Both of the Resolutions for the appointment of these Committees are now before the House, and have already been discussed to some extent.

If we may judge of the future by the past, very little good may be expected from these investigations. The fact is very easily accounted for. "Pro bono publico," is not the motive which the introducers of these resolutions have always in view. Some of our law-makers have a remarkable penchant for besmearing the reputations of their political foes while they are as blind as bats at noon-day to the merits of those who differ from them in politics. The efforts of men whose incentives are of this character will meet with no favor.

Before I indite my next communication, something may present itself in the way of Legislative news that will be of interest to the readers of "The Alleghanian." The old adage has it, "that you cannot make a silk purse of a sow's ear," nor can you get up readable matter for publication, when you have not the material of which to construct it.

HUGO.

Patriotism.

True manliness is immortal. They may die in whom this quality was pre-eminent, but their lives become mighty teachers and preachers for succeeding generations. No sacrifice was ever vainly made. The path of human progress, from dim antiquity down to this day, is bounded and defined by ruined altars. The fruit of sacrifice may always ripen in the day and generation of him that sacrifices; but the harvest is as certain as the day is to follow the night. Right action is not only self-perpetuating, but cumulative in force and influence at each recurring period.

Conscious of right motives, men have joyfully ascended the scaffold, and embraced the axe. The lot of these was cast in ages of appalling gloom; but how grand luminous does that age appear in the light of their example! But where is the record of the false, the feeble, the timid and the timeserving, who also lived in that age? They withheld sacrifice, and have perished out of the memory of man. And such has been, as it must be, the fate of the weak and selfish in every age. It is just retribution.

Look abroad, and say that the Republic has fallen upon evil times. Yet never in the history of the nation, was such a great reward promised to manly action. It seems but yesterday that mothers jested in the faces of their sons, and said, "If you'll live, you may aspire to fill the highest places in the nation;" and to their daughters, "You may be the mothers of Senators and Presidents." To-day, they say to their sons, "Go! your country wants heroes;" and to their daughters, "You shall be the daughters, sisters, and wives of heroes." Then, individual honors were omitted as the reward of virtuous action; now, heroic fame, won on the battle field or in the deadly breach, in defence of moral honor.

A hundred thousand Pennsylvanians have taken their lives in their hands, and to-day menace us with blow for blow. Twelve months ago they took for themselves more or less pride as "Republicans" and "Democrats," and strove with each other for empty opinion's sake. How is it now? Have attained to better things; they are more, and better—patriots! and their brothers. Their old antagonisms laid aside, and their blood will mingle as it has already mingled, on many a field of strife. Shoulder to shoulder they forward to work out a lofty and comprehensive purpose. As freemen, they buried the hatchet of past differences as patriots they have forgotten when buried. Who, of all that remain alive, will have the hardihood to disturb repose? Will loyal Republicans? Will loyal Democrats? No. No man puts national honor above the shadowy significance of names, will offer such insult to the men who peril their lives as we may sit by our blazing hearth security. None but the weir-wolves hyenas of party will dare to belittle heroic age with exhibitions of partisan prejudice and passion. Pennsylvania sent a hundred thousand men into field, but she has not exhausted her stock of patriots. Enough remain to vindicate honor and patriotism at the ballot, if they remember that "LIBERTY IS THE PRICE OF LIBERTY."—I. Press.

Judging from number and variety of poetical quotations that garnish the columns of the Dem. &c. each week, we are irresistibly led to conclusion that our friend Dizzard must something in the metrical composition himself. A poet-ass-ter, frinstance.

We have awaked dogs.—D. & S. You seem to "take them," that's a fact. Especially in matters of growing, turning tail, and baying the moon.

The President's View.

Mr. W. A. Croffut, in a letter to the New York Tribune of Tuesday, gives the following report of a conversation between President Lincoln and Gen. Lane, which shows that the President is quite sound on the "contraband" question, and that his views have changed somewhat unless they have been misunderstood. Mr. Croffut says:

At the leave-taking of Gen. James H. Lane at the White House, on Friday 11th M., a conversation occurred so remarkable and important in its scope, and so evidently designed for the public eye, that I feel at liberty to record it for the reader of the Tribune.

There were present at the time President Lincoln, Gen. Lane, Senator Pomeroy, Commissioner Dole, a few members of the House, and a group of officers and clerks from the different departments of Government.

On turning to leave Gen. Lane said: "Mr. Lincoln, you know my way, I shall pursue the policy with which I began, and somebody may get hurt." To which the President replied: "Yes, General, I understand you. And the only difference between you and me is, that you are willing to surrender fugitives to loyal owners in case they are willing to return; while I do not believe the United States Government has any right to give them up in any case. And if it had, the People would not permit us to exercise it."

Gen. Lane rejoined: "That remark, Mr. President, makes me happier than anything that has transpired since the commencement of the war.—And if you will announce that as the active policy of the Administration, and let us win one victory on it, you will be the most popular man ever on this continent!"

Mr. Lincoln returned a nod of earnest acknowledgment, and another prominent officer present asked:

"I have been aching to ask you, Mr. President, why you do not, without asking the consent of Congress, or anybody else, acquire or set apart some territory somewhere in the South, and say to the negroes in the rebel States, 'Here! come out and go over there, and we will protect you in its possession and your own freedom.'" After some other general remarks, the General and his friends withdrew.

THE UNION—RIGHT OR WRONG? UNION PLANING MILL. Ebensburg, Penna.

The subscriber begs leave to inform the Public that he is prepared to furnish, on short notice and on reasonable terms, all manner of WORKED LUMBER, SASH AND DOORS, and MOLDINGS.

All work warranted to give entire satisfaction, otherwise no charge will be made. Orders from a distance solicited, and filled with promptness and dispatch.

Rough Lumber taken in exchange for Worked Lumber. B. F. WILLIAMS. Ebensburg, Jan. 30, 1862-3.

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PROTECTION MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY OF CAMBRIA COUNTY.

Table with 2 columns: Description of insurance and financial items, and Amount. Includes annual report, premium notes in force, and total assets of the company.

At the annual meeting of the Company, held on the second Monday—13th day—of January, 1862, the following named persons were duly elected Directors for the ensuing year:

- Johnston Moore, John Lloyd, Edward Roberts, E. Shoemaker, John Thompson, Wm. Murray, A. A. Barker, John Geise, Isaac Crawford, Henry Nuter, John Williams, Wm. R. Hughes.

And at a meeting of said Board of Directors, held on Tuesday evening, January 21, 1862, the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

- President—John Williams. Vice President—Edward Roberts. Secretary and Treasurer—A. C. Mullin. General Agent—A. A. Barker. Executive Committee—John Thompson, Isaac Crawford, John Lloyd, Agents—A. A. Barker, Wm. R. Hughes, Evan Roberts, Henry Nuter. JOHN WILLIAMS, President. A. C. MULLIN, Secretary. Ebensburg, Jan. 23, 1862-3.

NOTICE.—All persons indebted to R. S. Bunn are requested to call and make settlements immediately. Otherwise their accounts will be distally. JOHN WILLIAMS, President. Ebensburg, Sept. 26. R. S. BUNN.