

The Democrat.

BY *W. & CRUSER.*

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ANOTHER'S.

She has the most alluring eyes,
A little Grecian nose,
She wears the most bewitching guise,
And parti-colored hose!
Her touch can thrill one strangely when
One clasps her in the dance;
At least they tell me so—but then
I never had the chance.

Her melting tones, so people say,
Intoxicate the brain,
And leave, when she has gone away,
A joy akin to pain.
Her voice is like sweet music when
Its strains are soft and low;
So those who've heard it say—but then
I never did, you know.

She makes the most superb ragout—
Knits stockings by the score;
Knows Latin, and Italian, too,
Greek, French, and plenty more!
She's just the girl to sweeten life—
Adorable!—divine!
In short, she is a perfect wife!
But then she isn't mine!

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

Delivered at the County Centennial Celebration at Montrose, Susquehanna County, Pa., July 24th, 1876, by Benjamin Park, L.L.D., of Parkville, in compliance with Resolution of Congress and Proclamations of President and Governor.

FELLOW CITIZENS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: This is indeed a proud and glorious day to our whole country; a day to be remembered. The Centennial Anniversary of an act, and event, the influence of which is seen and felt in every corner of the civilized world, so evidently owned and blessed by the Creator and Governor of the Universe during the past 100 years, in the extension and diffusion of light, liberty, intelligence, and general prosperity, that we may adopt His language in delivering Israel from bondage: "This day keep it throughout your generations." The impulse of Republican Government started on that day and by that memorable declaration of principles, a political gospel, has shaken every government in the world—except ours—which is built upon it.

In commemoration of that great act, which was one hundred years ago this day consummated in Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, not only a severance from England but a covenant of union among themselves, in grateful remembrance, and as we trust heartfelt gratitude to God, for the blessings which have so lavishly and continuously showered upon us as a nation; in the earnest hope and prayer that this freedom and immunities gained by the virtue, the wisdom, and valor of our revolutionary fathers may be continued and transmitted to the generations yet to come—the people of this whole nation, it is presumed, will on this day assemble in their respective neighborhoods will swell a general chorus of National rejoicing, a telegram of which is even now on its way from the hand of our President to every corner of the earth: "Glory to God in the Highest—and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Let us hope that this, the proudest 4th of July since 1776, may be a revival season of public and political virtue and piety; of faith in each other as a true national brotherhood, and faith in God, as the author and bestower of all; and thus do honor to the past, the present, and future of our land.

Here, in this Switzerland of Penna, the Keystone and Centennial State of our Union, the heavens shine brightly upon and over us; peace rests upon all the landscape. These hills and valleys, but a few years since an unbroken forest, penetrated by the arm and industry of our ancestors, are now clothed with the verdure of civilized life; the grain waves with majesty in the fields, the air is sweet and sends upwards an aroma of exultation and joy, as if to mingle with the grateful emotions which should swell every heart among us as we read and recall the story of the doings and sufferings of our Revolutionary fathers—serious, God-fearing and God-loving men, who came to this western world to enjoy the freedom and rights which God has given, and to plant the tree of civil and religious liberty, "under whose shade," said Roger Williams, "every one has the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience." There was a divinity which directed their course and shaped the end. Adopting the motto of Whitfield—"Never despair while Christ is the Captain"—they dared not only to declare and publish their wrongs and assert their rights, in the clearest and most daring statement ever before that time set forth by man, but with a handful of untrained men from the farm, the shop, and the forge, poorly armed and equipped, without supplies of ammunition or anything, to defy and confront the mightiest empire in the world—their motherland—invincible on land and supreme at sea. In the prowess of that mighty empire as children they felt a glow of pride and reverence—for her armies had been successful everywhere, girding the globe with her victories. But liberty, for which they had left that motherland, was still dearer; they could not submit to be slaves; they preferred to brave the

dangers and endure the privations and sufferings of open resistance. The result under God's blessing, is the immunities we now enjoy and this day commemorate. Said John Adams—"We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day! When we are in our graves our children will honor it. On its annual return they will shed tears, copious, gushing tears, not of subjection and slavery, not of agony and distress, but of exultation, of gratitude, and of joy. * * * Through all the gloom, I can see the ravishing rays of light and glory. Posterity will triumph in this day's transaction."

The part of the Celebration assigned to me, is the delivery of the Historical Address in compliance, it is presumed, with a joint resolution of both Houses of Congress assembled, approved March 13th, 1876, the proclamation of the President and also of the Governor of Pennsylvania of April 21st, 1876, commending its observance. "To have delivered in each county or town, an historical sketch thereof from its formation and statistics as can be obtained in relation thereto, to the intent that from them a complete record may be obtained of the progress of our industries during the first centennial of their existence.

The duty I have to discharge is therefore somewhat difficult. I may tax your patience, for the trial is, how much or how little to say; keeping in view historical faithfulness and a true regard to statistical information, calculated to show the development and estimating the present state of the country.

In preparing this brief historical sketch, I will here state, that many of the facts, and in some instances the language in which they are detailed, I have gathered from the excellent and very interesting "History of Susquehanna county," by Miss Emily C. Blackman of Montrose, a copy of which should be in every household in the county, and of every one born here, wherever he may reside. My labor in gathering these facts has been thus materially lessened, and the value increased by availing myself, not only of her research, but in some cases of her graceful style in the recital of them. For all this she is entitled to be credited.

For statistics, I am indebted to the compendium of the Census of 1850-60, and '70, and also the Report of the Bureau of Statistics of our State, for the years '72-3. From a comparison of these and such other information as I have been able to gather, I have made and give my estimate for the present time.

The county of Susquehanna is scarcely middle aged among the sister counties of Pennsylvania. It was set off from Luzerne by an act of the Legislature passed February 21st, 1810. The south line of the county was run by Trustees in 1811, and the first county officers were elected by the people in 1812. It is bounded on the north, by the State of New York; south by the counties of Wyoming and Luzerne; east by the county of Wayne; west by the county of Bradford. The county contains an area of about 825 square miles, or nearly 530,000 acres of land. The population when set off in 1810, could not have exceeded 7,000. It is now estimated at 40,000. It then contained eight townships. It now is divided into 27 townships and 7 boroughs.

The county derives its name from the fact that the Susquehanna river first enters the state of Pennsylvania within its limits. The name is derived from two Indian words. *Hanna* signifies a stream of water, and *Susque* is generally believed to mean *crooked*. A more winding and crooked stream than the Susquehanna, as to its general course, is not to be found in the state. In our own county it varies directly three times.

It is not probable that the Indians ever had any fixed residence or dwelt in our county. In passing from Wyoming northward, or in returning they frequently crossed the county, generally, it is supposed, following the large streams, as along these valleys arrow heads and other Indian implements have been found, and several places are marked by tradition as the sites of Indian cabins.

The earliest white and civilized settlers within what now is Susquehanna county came here, it is presumed, soon after the close of the Revolutionary War. They were mostly from New England, and came here under the impression that the lands belonged to the state of Connecticut under the Charter of 1662, and the purchase from the Indians in 1754. For although the joint Convention, which convened at Trenton in 1782, had decided that the jurisdiction belonged to Pennsylvania under the Charter of 1681 and their purchase of the Indian title in 1768, yet as the Court had before that decided that the right of soil did not come before that tribunal, it was presumed that a title derived from Connecticut was good and valid. Many of the settlers, either after they left their homes or after arriving here, invested all their available means in the purchase of title to the land they occupied. This was afterwards, by the Legislature and Courts, declared to be worthless. They were, therefore,

compelled to abandon their improvements or pay for their lands a second time—(note 1.) This state of things greatly added to, and in many cases intensified, the hardships and sufferings inseparably incident to the settling and obtaining a livelihood in a new and heavily timbered forest. They had no other communication with places where provisions could be obtained than by footpaths through the forest, indicated by marked trees. Until land could be cleared and grain raised, all bread-stuffs were brought from 15 to 20 miles on the shoulders of men through these forest footpaths, across hills, valleys and streams; for the making of even a horse path, by cutting away the brushwood and logs, was too tiresome and slow a task for the very few who even owned that useful animal.

The whole country was thickly timbered with hemlock, sugar and white maple, birch, chestnut, white pine, poplar, ironwood, elm, cherry, hickory, and butternut, proportionately much as in the order here given.

There was a great deal of ill-feeling between the Connecticut claimants and those who came to survey and take possession of the lands under the Pennsylvania title. Though not resulting in open conflict, as in the Wyoming valley, there were many warnings given, threats made, and guns discharged—bullets whistled too near for safety.

The ill-feeling which grew out of this controversy not only retarded the settlement and improvement of the county, but engendered a doubt of all title as claimed, and caused several long and vexatious suits at law to settle questions raised—the more especially where considerable bodies of land had been sold by the original patentees or middlemen, and mortgages taken to secure the payment. But the mild and liberal policy of most of the large owners did much to banish ill-feeling, to allay the difficulty, and give assurance to such as were desirous or willing to pay for the land.

Some thirty years after this another difficulty arose in relation to several acres of land in this county under a claim derived from John Nicholson, who was Comptroller of Pennsylvania from 1782 to '84; and during that period he became owner of nearly four million acres of land in this state. He had mortgaged a portion of lands in this county to the "Widow's Fund Corporation," of Philadelphia, died insolvent, leaving the mortgage unpaid. It is not deemed necessary here to detail the particulars of this unpleasant conflict, which, for over twenty years caused great interest and excitement; especially to those who had paid either in whole or part for their farms. Suffice it to say that after several suits at law, and some legislation, the whole matter was settled by suit of compromise. Since then, for the past 30 years, our citizens have had peace in regard to their land titles.

These difficulties, as to land titles, very naturally interfered with the more rapid settlement of the county. But for them it is probable the census of 1840 might have nearly doubled.

Prominent among the claimants and supporters of the Pennsylvania title, was Col. Timothy Pickens an officer in the Continental army at Salem and Marblehead, Mass., in 1775, and afterwards a member of the cabinet of President Washington. Having removed to Pennsylvania he became the agent of the government to endeavor to settle the disputes as to title and possession of the lands in Luzerne county. He was appointed the first Prothonotary, Clerk and Recorder of that county in 1786. A few years after, he came to this part of Luzerne, became a landholder, built a cabin and stayed one or more years.

During this time he introduced to our county Dr. Robert H. Rose, a literary gentleman from Philadelphia. He was so much pleased here that he purchased 100,000 acres of land, nearly one-fifth of the county, and made his home thereon at Silver Lake. Dr. Rose took an active part in the development and improvement of the county, built an elegant residence, encouraged the raising of sheep of which he at one time owned 7,000. He was influential in fixing Montrose as the site for the Court House, and gave it the name after a town in Scotland. When selected it contained but two houses one of which was at one time, a tavern, store, postoffice, and Court House.—The first court was held in January, 1813, Hon. John P. Gibson, President Judge and David Dimock and William Thompson, Associates. Since then we have had President Judges—Thomas Burnside, Edward Herrick, John N. Conyngham, William Jessup, David Wilmot, Darius Bullock, Ulysses Mercier, and Ferris B. Streeter, who now presides over all the county courts.

I can hardly suppose it to be within the domain of this address, as prescribed in the resolution of Congress and the proclamations of the President and Governor, to detail the names and recite the deeds and privations of the worthy men our fathers, the pioneers, active in the earlier settlement of this county when an

untrodden wilderness. In doing so I should but copy from the published history of Miss Blackman which I trust most of you have read, as I have, with great interest and pleasure.—Reading that, you know who they were, and have a glimpse of their privations, sufferings, and labors, the fruits and results of which we now enjoy. We cherish their memory, their patience, fortitude, and enterprise—we venerate their piety and trust. They have passed beyond the veil which separates the unseen world from our vulgar gaze. As a class they were noble, honest, truthful, high-minded, and pious men and women. It is more than doubtful whether they have ever been excelled, if equaled, in the pioneer history of our Union. They were descendants of the Pilgrim fathers, and brought with them many of the Pilgrim and Puritan customs. They trusted in God and honored His Holy Word, regarding themselves as co-workers with Him in subduing the wilderness and preparing a home for their families. They felt the loss of religious privileges as one of their greatest privations, and welcomed to their hospitality every one who came as God's minister.

Though Death, the grand leveler and enemy of our race, has laid away their mortal bodies in the bosom of our mother-earth, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," he cannot hide or destroy the light of their character or the influence of their example; their fame and virtues, their self-denial, privations, and labor, are our property, and should be cherished in our memories, more valuable than the fields they cleared and tilled. The more we can brighten and exalt their memories and improve and beautify these farms, hallowed by the labor and toil spent in clearing them, the more we add to our inheritance. Let us honor our ancestry by becoming more worthy as their descendants.

No white men are known to have dwelt here during our Revolutionary war. No foreign army has ever trodden our soil. Nor has disloyalty to our government or Union, ever found active friends here. Having no mines worked, and but a few manufactures, we have had no strikes or riots, no unusual or thrilling events in our history. Outside of the land-title disputes, and the privations, sufferings and inconveniences, incident to the settling and subduing a new and wild territory changing a howling wilderness into such fields, and farms as cover our hills and valleys, the progress of this county from its origin up to the present time, has been generally gradual and entirely peaceful. The question, which like storms have agitated the sea of public opinion in other parts of our Union have spent their force before their waves reach our outer borders. Whether the feeble roar or spray have left an impression here worthy of record. I shall, therefore, as to particulars, confine myself pretty much to such facts and statistics as I have been able to gather, showing the general character and gradual progress of our county.

I have said that our County includes an area of some 825 square miles, and nearly 530,000 acres of land. It is almost entirely agricultural. At least seven-eighths of our land being capable of tillage or pasturage and no mineral deposits of known and approved value or extent of lime stone have as yet been developed; though in some places there have been found clear indications of iron ore and slighter traces of copper and lime. Some feeble salt springs have been found a few explored, but none as yet have proved worthy of working. Several Medicinal Springs have been discovered and waters tested. Some of these are said to have proved highly beneficial in many diseases. At one of these in Rush township, commodious buildings have been erected, and good accommodations provided for invalids and other visitors.

Our county occupies an outlying spur of the Allegheny Mountains, a part of the great Appalachian system. This spur is here somewhat flattened down and spread out into a series of hills, which rise generally with a gradual, but in some cases with a steeper ascent, from 100 to 1,000 feet above the valleys of the larger streams—these valleys being from 1,000 to 1,200 feet above the level of tide. The average height of the county is from one to two thousand feet above the tide water level; an altitude securing a pure and bracing atmosphere, favorable to health and activity of both body and mind. Lifted above the regions of miasma and the diseases arising therefrom, shielded by our hills from the tornadoes and hurricanes which sweep through a level country, our summer or warm season is somewhat shortened, and we are subject to later and earlier frosts than lower or more level districts in the same latitude. It is regarded by all who know it as a most delightful, healthy, and quiet summer residence; pleasant and healthful also even in winter to all not affected with pulmonary weakness.

The valleys throughout the country appear to have been washed out by the streams running through them, at some period in the cycles of the past, when

the currents of water were immensely greater than at the present, and the strata, now stratified sedimentary sandy rock, must have been so soft as to be cut or washed through without moving the mass. These rocks now generally lie in regular horizontal strata or layers from the base to the tops of the hills; unlike the position of the rock strata in the southern parts of our State, or near and around the coal measures, where they are turned up, inclined, and bent. It is the theory of some geologists that the country north of the anthracite coal fields, has by some convulsion been raised and the coal basins sunken, and by drift and deluge filled with what became coal. They say that the series of rocks which form our hills, are the same as underlie and form the floor of the coal basins, some thousand feet lower than our valleys; and, therefore, though iron and other minerals may here be found, there are probably no coal veins in our hills worth working. As in our rock strata there are no fossil remains, and very few if any traces of vegetable or insect life we are supposed to be seated upon an early crystallization of chaos—our rock strata a deposit millions of years before God called the light day and darkness night; when there was no eye to see, or heart to feel, or intelligence to register His awful plan of creation.

The soil of our county, from our valleys to the tops of our highest hills, is a rich slaty gravelly loam, intermingled with some clay and disintegrated rock and shale. This soil from twelve inches to three feet in depth, is underlain by a subsoil of tenacious clay and gravel called hard pan; which being in most cases impervious to water, preserves the moisture of the soil, defends it in a great measure from the effects of drought, and prevents the leaching down and waste of the manure and other fertilizers spread upon the surface. When well tilled and manured, our soil yields all the common grains and vegetables—as fine crops of wheat, rye, corn, buckwheat, potatoes &c., as any land in the state—although the tillage is somewhat more toilsome than the sandy valleys or limestone uplands of our southern counties. Being watered by the purest springs and streams it is pre-eminently adapted to raising grass and stock, furnishing abundance of hay and pasturage.

Nestled among our hills and higher valleys of our county, are some fifty lakes and ponds of varied size and beauty; fed by springs from the higher ground. Fringed with lilies and bordered with undergrowth, they are gems of loveliness, set in the landscape along the footpaths of Nature. In most of these are found the common fish, such as pickerel, perch, sun and catfish, in more or less abundance. In some have been lately introduced the black bass.—Speckled trout in considerable quantity are found in the mountain streams and ponds where there are no pickerel.

Lying within thirty miles of the Wyoming coal region—a ready market—with which we are now connected by three railroads, the farms of Susquehanna county are not as yet estimated at half their real value; for what they may be made to yield with proper tillage and culture. From forty to fifty bushels of wheat have been gathered from an acre, and the records of our State Agricultural Society show the proof of over 150 bushels of corn harvested from an acre. Forty years ago, before the potato crop had become subject to disease and vermin, from four to five hundred bushels of potatoes were expected and often gathered as the product of an acre of well tilled land.

For dairy farming, the land of this county is probably equal to that of any section of our Union. No better or richer quality of butter is made anywhere than is now supplied by some of our careful and painstaking dairy farmers, and the quantity has rapidly increased within the past few years. The number of cows in this county as reported in 1873 to our State Bureau of Statistics, was about 25,000, producing some two and a half million pounds of butter; nearly a million pounds of cheese, besides selling 100,000 gallons of milk. Taking the last census and the report as furnished to the Bureau in 1873 as a basis, I estimate the number of milk cows in our county at this time to be not less than 30,000; and calculating the butter at the very low estimate of 100 pounds per cow, we have at least three million pounds of butter as the product of this year, in addition to cheese made and milk sold. National statistics place the number of milk cows in the United States at thirteen millions and credit them with a product of in round numbers, 1,400,000,000 pounds of butter.

The product of hay in 1873 was about 100,000 tons. Our farms are generally improving in production and as the present season so far is highly favorable, the hay as well as other products may be estimated considerably in advance of 1873. At that time the number of domestic animals or live stock horses, cattle, sheep, and swine were about 98,000—of sheep

[Continued on eighth page.]