

Mountain Sentinel.

"WE GO WHERE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES POINT THE WAY;—WHEN THEY CEASE TO LEAD, WE CEASE TO FOLLOW."

BY ANDREW J. RHEE.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Philadelphia Pennsylvanian.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BIGLER.

It is not until a man emerges from the comparative obscurity of private life, and assumes a prominent part in public affairs, that the community inquires into his personal history, and seek to ascertain by what successful steps he has attained position. Some are relatively great—others are more indebted to adventitious circumstances rather than to individual character; and as they are thrown upon the surface by accident, pass from the scene without note or mark. Others again, particularly in this country, achieve greatness, trained in the school of adversity, with none of the advantages of wealth, position, or influence. By indomitable perseverance, unwavering industry, and high moral integrity, they assume their proper place among their fellow men. Of such is the subject of the present brief sketch.

WILLIAM BIGLER, the Democratic candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania, was born in Cumberland county, December 1813. His father was a respectable and intelligent farmer, much beloved by his neighbors. His means being small, and his family large, he was induced to exchange his small farm in Cumberland for a large tract of wild land in Mercer. To this place he removed in 1820, and commenced the arduous task of clearing the forest. WILLIAM BIGLER was at this time seven years of age; at ten he had the misfortune to lose his father. He was thus left with his widowed mother, and helpless brothers and sisters, amid the rude scenes of forest life, with incessant toil and severe privations, entirely dependent upon his own exertions; and yet it is under such circumstances that the innate energies of character are developed. Aided by his brothers, he maintained in comfort his mother, sacrificing all selfish considerations to the sacred duty of providing for her support. He received only the pittance requisite in such locations to pay for the elementary education to be acquired during the winter months. Many now residing in Mercer, remember the bearing of the boy—his persevering industry, sturdy independence, and filial devotion. His rigid economy and sterling integrity gave promise of that success which has attended him in every sphere in which he has been called to move. Honesty of purpose, and stern principle, were his guides. No lofty aspirations made him discontented with his life of toil; and while he embraced every opportunity of improving his intellect, he engaged actively in the business of life. Fortunately, Mr. BIGLER was not one of those young men (considered by a late traveler as the only unfortunate ones she met with in our country,) who are born to an inheritance of wealth. His relations and position in life called into immediate exercise all the ability with which he was endowed. He had neither the time nor means to indulge in ruinous dissipation or theoretical speculations, had the tone and temper of his mind led him to such courses.

In 1829, he selected as his future occupation the trade of a carpenter. In 1831, he entered a printing office—that prolific school of sound thought, and intelligent, well-toned minds. His brother, late Speaker of the California House of Representatives, and now Democratic candidate for Governor of that State, was then the publisher of the *Centre Democrat*. In 1833, when but yet a minor—being but twenty years of age—in harmony with that determination of purpose and sturdy independence which are chief characteristics of his mind, with an old printing press and twenty dollars loaned by a friend, he undertook the hardy, and, as it appeared to many of his friends, the fool-hardy enterprise of establishing a Democratic paper in Clearfield county. The population was exceedingly sparse, his resources meagre almost to penury; without influence, without friends, without position, the present was dark, the future unpromising. Contrary to the advice of experienced age, against every consideration of personal comfort, he boldly dared, self-dependent, the issue of a doubtful experiment. Being without the means to employ the necessary assistance, he was editor, compositor, pressman, and devil.

A political crisis was now approaching. General Jackson, doubting the constitutionality of a United States Bank, opposed a re-charter, and boldly dared the powers of the monster. Even the most indifferent were, as their interests or convictions swayed, forced into the arena—neutrality in politics was not known. A fair field of argument was now opened, and Mr. BIGLER did not stand aloof. The associations of boyhood, confirmed by the judgment of more mature years, had arrayed him with the Democratic masses. The money power controlling every energy of the people—influencing the commercial and manufacturing business—acting upon hopes or fears, wielded a powerful scepter. The *Clearfield Democrat*, under the superintendence of Mr. BIGLER, was conspicuously active in this contest as an expo-

nent of the Democratic principle. The resources of a well stored mind were called into requisition. Firm and decided in his political principles, he expressed his sentiments in strong and energetic language; yet ever courteous and urbane—never forgetting the man in the partisan—he disarmed opposition of its virulence and malignity. The campaign of 1834 is an era in the political history of our country. On the one side wealth and its consequent power, with the efficient aid of a numerous press; on the other the *Man of Iron Will*, leading on the Democratic masses. In any other country, under any other political organization, the contest would have been less than doubtful—the result was but another proof of the beauty of our system. This crisis brought Mr. BIGLER more immediately into notice; the circulation of his paper was increased—his sentiments were adopted—his editorials extensively quoted as purely Democratic—his course gained him the respect and esteem of his political opponents while it endeared him to the friends whom he had gained. He advocated Democratic measures because he considered them founded upon pure, constitutional principles; never sacrificing them to the plea of expediency, panics did not frighten him from his position, the cry of change did not alarm him. He was, during his editorial career, the firm and unwavering supporter of a radical reform in the Banking System.

The question of amending the Constitution of the State now became the leading topic, and Mr. BIGLER was earnestly in favor of change from the almost royal character of the old Constitution to the more republican features of the present. The appointing power of the Executive, as also the tenure of office, were considered by the Democratic party as anti-republican, and although violently opposed by those in power, the event justified the confidence of the people in the influence of principle. Mr. BIGLER was solicited to become a member of the Reform Convention, but he modestly declined.

In 1838 he married the accomplished daughter of A. B. REED, Esq., of Clearfield. The same year he sold out his printing establishment and engaged in the more active and stirring business of a lumber merchant—not as the mere director of the physical energies of others, but practically in the labors and toils incident to the business. Taking to market his own rafter, he might be seen working as diligently as his own men at the various parts; he was really and emphatically a craftsman. In 1839 he was nominated as a candidate to the State Senate, on the part of Clearfield county, but again declined the proffered honor, as he had repeated nominations to the House of Representatives. In 1841, during an absence from home, he was again nominated to the State Senate. The urgent solicitations of his friends induced him to become a candidate. The result was his election by a large majority.

During the memorable session of '42 the State was unable to pay the interest on the State debt. The commercial world was convulsed—crash followed crash, and banking institutions were prostrated—the confidence reposed in them had been forfeited—personal honesty and individual integrity were objects of suspicion. Domestic creditors, fevered by hopes or chilled with fears, thronged the halls of legislation, petitioning for rights, clamoring for redress: to crown all, the mammoth creation of a previous admiration utterly failed. Ways and means were to be provided; the emergency was instant and pressing; the cry of repudiation sounded across the waters—State pride was invoked—every consideration called for action. Mr. BIGLER entered energetically upon his duties; declamation ceased to be of avail or heeded; the Committee room became the proper sphere of usefulness; correct information and sound principles of action the only means of retrieving the past. To the various points connected with the finances and resources of the State, Mr. BIGLER devoted his attention. Being a young member both in years and experience, he seldom obtruded his sentiments in debate; when he did, it was in the strong yet simple language of common sense, unadorned with those flowers of rhetoric which, while they beautify, seldom add to the force of reasoning. His opinions on all questions of finance were listened to with attention, and regarded as valuable. As the Banks had suspended specie payments, the efforts of the session was to adopt some means to compel them to perform their duty by resumption. In the accomplishment of this object, Mr. BIGLER labored assiduously, and sustained the bill which finally passed.

The Statute Book of the State was at this time disgraced by the law authorizing the imprisonment of the poor debtor, howsoever honest—in erasing this relic of barbarism from our code the subject of this sketch was conspicuously active.

At the close of the session of 1843, he was elected Speaker of the Senate, and was unanimously re-elected at the opening of the session of 1844. As the presiding officer, he was courteous, conciliating, and firm—he discharged his duties with dignity—and won the esteem and respect of all, as evinced in the resolutions passed at the close of the session.

At the subsequent election he was returned to the Senate by an increased majority. During his last term in the Senate, he devoted much of his time to the subject of Internal Improvements, especially to opening the great thoroughfares through our State. Familiar with its mighty resources, his far-reaching mind saw that means must be provided for the transportation of its wealth, or it would seek a passage through other channels. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company had already petitioned for the right of way through the State—the New York and Erie road sought to reach the lakes through our northern line of counties. The former project, as destructive of our best interests—as sacrificing our great commercial emporium—as subversive of much of the uses of the improvements already complicated—drawing from their proper course the trade and travel of the West, was strongly opposed by Mr. BIGLER. Philadelphia was to be sacrificed, an act prejudicial to the interests of the whole State, was about to pass—strong sectional feeling was aroused, yet looking to the future, Mr. BIGLER was neither intimidated by powerful interests nor seduced by the alluring pictures of local prosperity. The incorporation and successful prosecution of the great Central Rail Road attest the wisdom of his course.

The other project met with his support, as affording to the citizens of the North a market for their productions and interfering with no vital interest of the other portions of the State.

Among other projects calculated to develop the resources of Pennsylvania, the North Branch Canal has been regarded by the inhabitants of the northern portion of our State, as of primary importance. The immense mineral wealth of the Wyoming and Lackawanna Valleys must seek a market through this channel. The extensive country North and West which depends upon this region for its supplies, indeed the idea of this improvement, and led the Legislature to appropriate liberally for its completion. Our financial difficulties caused the abandonment of this very important work. Mr. BIGLER, looking upon it as part of a comprehensive financial scheme calculated to benefit the whole State, as also involving great local interests, has been its unwavering supporter.

It would be invidious to follow Mr. BIGLER through his entire Senatorial course—suffice it to say that the records of Legislation attest his devotion to pure Democratic principles, and to the advocacy of those measures tending to the welfare and prosperity of the whole State. Merging the individual in the Statesman, he permitted no local interest to bias his judgment—liberal in his sentiments he allowed no narrow or individual views to influence his course—"too fond of the right to follow the expedient," he was unwilling to sacrifice the future to the present. While his career is marked with decision and firmness, the amenities and courtesies due to his fellow members were rigidly adhered to.

He retired from the Senate at the close of the term, and devoted himself exclusively to the pursuits of business—with the usual results of industry and intelligence—an independent competency. His abilities, experience and sound information on all subjects connected with the resources and interests of the State, together with his purely democratic principles—pointed him out as a suitable candidate for Governor. In 1848 he was brought forward by his friends—Judge LONGSTRETH was, however, the choice of the Convention—and as if every circumstance tended to add greater lustre to the character of the man, Mr. BIGLER though his strongest opponent in the Convention, was his most strenuous and ardent supporter in the campaign that followed. His time, abilities and means were devoted to the success of the Democratic nominee.

Mr. BIGLER's name was again brought forward, and the unanimity with which county after county instructed their delegates—the acclamation with which he was nominated by the Convention, are significant of his popularity, and auspicious of success.

Such is a brief sketch of the career of WILLIAM BIGLER—another illustration of the beauty and harmony of our political institutions. Few would have ventured to predict a future so brilliant for the carpenter's apprentice, or the printer's boy. More daring would he have been deemed who would have presumed to fashion the enlightened statesman from the rude child of the forest.

The history of our country abounds with such examples. Honesty of purpose, integrity of character, and moral worth, are always assured of success; yet the frequency of the illustration does not destroy our admiration of the qualities of the individual. The hackneyed politician petitions for the suffrages of his fellow-citizens, but this intelligent statesman is presented to them, willing to abide by his principles. No unworthy motive actuates him—no overleaping ambition impels him; he has frequently declined proffered honors, and yet feels his duty as a citizen too strong to refuse compliance with the wishes of his fellow-citizens so significantly expressed. On all the issues touching the present state of affairs, his mind is fully developed;

with the finances, resources, and improvements of the State, he is familiar; on the great questions of national policy, he is sound; his personal integrity is above suspicion; in his social relations, the promise of his boyhood, his devotion to his mother, has been realized by his conduct as a man—slander has not dared to breathe a taint upon his name. In personal appearance, Mr. BIGLER is prepossessing; his form is manly and robust; his countenance, intelligent and kind; his manners are winning and unobtrusive.

Such is the candidate presented by his Democratic fellow-citizens, combining all the requisites for the office—honesty and capability.—The result cannot be doubtful, and as the next Governor of our time-honored Commonwealth, we hail the poor boy, the toiling apprentice, the laboring craftsman.

What a Whig Paper says of the Hon. Ellis Lewis.

The Hanover (York) *Spectator*, published in a "hot bed" of Whiggery as can be found in a month's travel, and whose editor is proud of being "an original, ingrain Whig," pays the following handsome tribute to one of the nominees of the Democratic party for the Supreme Bench: "The two great political parties have each in convention severally furnished their respective lists of candidates for the Supreme Bench of our Commonwealth. On the list of candidates presented by the Lancaster Convention, we recognize the names of men of spotless purity and erudition and, as such, shall render them a cordial support, so with a portion of the Democratic nominees; they are entirely unexceptionable jurists of eminent celebrity. Amongst these latter we hail with pride and pleasure the name of our own distinguished 'son of York'—the Hon. ELLIS LEWIS, now President Judge of the 2d Judicial District of the State.

A jurist should combine in his character, a rare assemblage of high, intellectual and moral qualities. He should be endowed with philosophic strength of mind, capable of reaching beyond formal rules, to fundamental principles; he should possess quickness of apprehension, so as to be prepared for unexpected circumstances; he should be equally removed in his feelings, from a blind attachment to antiquated forms, and from a spirit of useless innovation; he should be blessed with a coolness and comprehensiveness of judgment, ready for the most sudden emergencies; and he should unite to these qualities, that happy combination of discretion with energy, which enables its possessor to act with firmness and preside with dignity. This rare assemblage of high mental endowments, we believe Judge Lewis, in an eminent degree, to possess; and our attention has long been directed to him as a suitable person for the distinguished post for which he has recently been nominated. Under these circumstances, we select him as the object of our support, and commend him to the suffrage of our friends and patrons; to the support of every voter in the county of his birth, and state of his nativity."

A Rich Scene.

Mr. McLaughy, the Whig candidate for Congress in the Seventh (Indiana) District, recently made a speech at Terre Haute. A correspondent of the *Terre Haute Journal* thus describes the closing scene:

"The speech of Mr. McLaughy ended, and respectable gentleman of the same party rose to reply, I suppose. Just then from another quarter of the room the words, 'Mr. Speaker!' Mr. Speaker!' addressed to Mr. McLaughy, in an effeminate but portentous tone, drew attention all one way; and the gentleman upon the floor overcame with gallantry, in courtesy, sat down. This gave the floor to Miss Fanny Lee Townsend, (who is, to say the least, somewhat notorious)—and a more severe tongue-lashing man never got from woman than Miss Fanny inflicted on Mr. Gawkley, as she called the Hon. gentleman. Her eyes flashed lightning upon him, and her tongue baptized him with gall and venom. She directed a question to Mr. McLaughy, when he turned his back upon her and left the room, looking very much like a man who had been badly caulked. Miss Fanny was not there by arrangement of Mr. McLaughy's political opponents, for she professes to be a Whig herself, but on this occasion she contended that Mr. McLaughy had trampled on the Constitution and insulted philology! She said in conclusion—'Whigs of this district, I implore you for God's sake, to send a patriot to Congress—not send this candidate of little physical and mental development—but send a man and less... not turn his back to Congress—one that will take it all in all, I never have seen a richer gathering.'"

A young man smoking in the streets of Boston was tapped on the shoulder and told that he must pay the penalty of five dollars or be imprisoned; whereupon he handed the supposed officer a \$10 bill and received a \$5 bill in change. To his great mortification he soon found out that the bill he had received was a counterfeit, and the man who gave it to him was not, as pretended, an officer.

MY MOTHER.

My mother's voice! how often creeps
Its cadence o'er my lonely hours,
Like healing sent on wings of sleep,
Or dew to the unconscious flowers.
I can't forget her melting prayer,
E'en while my pulses madly fly;
And in the still, unbroken air,
Her gentle tones come stealing by.
And years, and sin, and manhood flee
And leave me at my mother's knee.

Gen. Jackson—Judge Douglass.

We lately met with an incident in the evening hours of Andrew Jackson's life, which is worthy of being more generally known than it is. Every fact relative to this remarkable man is interesting to the popular mind, and deserves preservation.

To those who enjoyed the confidence of Gen. Jackson, it is known that no event of his whole life gave him more concern than the charge, so often made against him, that in proclaiming martial law at New Orleans, he had violated the constitution of his country. This charge gave him increased pain, from the fact that all his friends and staunchest supporters admitted the violation of the constitution, but justified it on the plea of necessity. Livingston, Grundy and Ingersoll—names of note—had all written and published able defenses of the conduct of General Jackson; still they had given no quiet to his mind. The question of the remission of the fine imposed by Judge Hall before Congress had, elicited all the violence of his opponents, all the acumen of his friends; still the defence was not satisfactory to the General, who said, "he did not know how it was that a man in saving his country could violate the constitution by doing so."

It was when the debate was drawing to a close, that amid the various competitors for the Speaker's ear it was awarded to Judge Douglass of Illinois. He was a warm advocate for refunding the fine, and commenced his discourse with views so new that he at once riveted upon himself the attention of the whole House. We have not his speech, though we remember some of the points he made. He denied that General Jackson had at New Orleans violated either the law or the constitution—contended the only question was, Did the necessity for proclaiming martial law exist? If it did, it was no violation of the constitution to proclaim it; and that it did exist, was admitted by the Governor and Legislature of Louisiana, the courts, the whole population of New Orleans as also by Judge Hall himself. It was the necessity, he argued, which made the act legal and constitutional, and which but for it would have been a crime. Thus, it is unlawful to take the life of another; still, suppose a traveller on a high way beset by a robber, who with uplifted arm and gleaming knife is about to strike, and at that moment the traveller, to save his own life, kills his adversary, would it be said he killed him in violation of law? No; the necessity in the case would make legal and proper that which but for the necessity would be a crime.

So, for an officer to destroy a ship intrusted to him by his country, is a crime. But suppose us at war with a foreign power, and one of our national vessels well supplied with military stores should be overtaken by an overwhelming force of the enemy—the captain defends his ship as long as there is hope, until all his men fall around him and his capture is inevitable.—He pauses. Shall he suffer his ship to be captured and turned against his country, or shall he serve his country by sacrificing himself and his ship? He determines on the latter; approaching the magazine he waits until his ship is boarded; another moment and its fragments are scattered over the waters. Will his country tarnish his bright escutcheon or his fame with the charge of destroying his ship in violation of law? No, but the very necessity would make that a dazzling virtue, which but for the necessity would be a dark and damning crime. It is the necessity which makes the law, not justifies it.

Again: to destroy the public property is unlawful; but suppose in a time of war, at one of our frontier posts, large quantities of provisions and military stores should be collected, and the officer in command, finding it necessary to retreat, is unable to remove them: shall they be left to strengthen the enemy who is in want of these very things, or shall they be destroyed? The officer destroys them. Can it be said he violated the law by doing so? No; it is the necessity which makes the law. It was the necessity at New Orleans, not which justified Gen. Jackson in doing an illegal and unconstitutional act, but which made legal and constitutional that which he did do.

Thus illustrating and enforcing his views, he made the most effective speech delivered on the subject—so absorbed the entire attention of the house, that, the one hour rule existing, he spoke nearly two hours and called forth an apology from the Speaker for permitting him to do so—who said he was so much interested that he was unconscious of the lapse of time; of which speech John Quincy Adams said no one could now attack General Jackson without denying the necessity which was said to have existed for proclaiming martial law.

But to the incident. It is taken from H. G. Wheeler's Biographical History of Congress, Vol. 1, page 162:

The following anecdote in connection with this subject was related by an eye witness, and published in a highly respectable journal, from which we take it.

"At the Nashville Convention of August last we visited the Hermitage, (only twelve miles distant) in company with Judge Douglass of this State and some other of our fellow citizens. The Hermitage was crowded with people from almost every other State, who had been invited thither by the venerable patriot on the day succeeding the Convention. Gov. Clay of Alabama, was near General Jackson, who was himself sitting on the sofa in the hall of his residence; and as each person entered the Governor introduced him to the Hero, and he passed along. When Judge Douglass was thus introduced, Gen. Jackson raised his still brilliant eyes, and gazed for a moment on the countenance of the Judge, still retaining his hand.

"Are you the Mr. Douglass, of Illinois, who delivered a speech last session on the subject of the fine imposed upon me for declaring martial law at New Orleans?" asked General Jackson. "I have delivered a speech in the House of Representatives upon that subject," was the modest reply of our friend. "Then stop!" said General Jackson, "sit down here beside me. I desire to return you my thanks for that speech. You are the first man that has ever relieved my mind on a subject which has rested upon it for thirty years. My enemies have always charged me with violating the constitution of my country by declaring martial law at New Orleans, and my friends have always admitted the violation, but have contended that circumstances justified me in that violation. I never could understand how it was that the performance of solemn duty to my country—a duty which if I had neglected would have made a traitor in the sight of God and man—could properly be properly be pronounced a violation of the constitution. I felt convinced in my own mind that I was not guilty of such a heinous offence; but I could never make out a legal justification of my course, nor has it ever been done, sir, until you on the floor of Congress, established it beyond the possibility of cavil or doubt. I thank you, sir, for that speech. It has relieved my mind from the only circumstance that rested painfully upon it. Throughout my whole life I never performed an official act which I viewed as a violation of the constitution of my country, and I can now go down to the grave in peace, with the perfect consciousness that I have not broken, at any period of my life, the constitution or laws of my country."

"Thus spoke the old hero, his countenance brightened by emotions which it is impossible for us to describe. We turned to look at Douglass. He was speechless. He could not reply, but, convulsively shaking the aged veteran's hand, he rose and left the room. Certainly General Jackson had paid him the highest compliment he could have bestowed on any individual."

We also remember to have heard that among the private papers of General Jackson after his death, was found a pamphlet copy of this speech, with an endorsement on the back of it, in the hand writing of the General himself, saying it was the only perfect and satisfactory vindication of his conduct which had been made, and as such he left it as an inheritance to his adopted children. The pamphlet is now believed to be in the possession of F. P. Blair, Esq., of Washington.—*Richmond Examiner*.

I THINK OF THEE.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

I think of thee, when eve's last blush
Falls mournfully on heart and eye;
Of thee when morn's first glories gush
In gold and crimson o'er the sky:
My thoughts are thine 'mid toil and strife;
Thine from the tomb and peril free—
Ay, thine—forever thine—my life
Is but a living thought of thee.

I think of thee, when mid spring's sweet flowers,
And in the summer's brighter glow;
Of thee in autumn's purple bowers,
And gloomy winter's waste of snow
My thoughts are thine when joys depart,
And thine when all life's sorrows flee—
Ay, thine—forever thine—my heart
Is but a throbbing thought of thee.

A lady hired a western country girl for family "help," and was surprised to see her poke her head into the parlor one afternoon, when visitors were present, and ask—"Marm, did you call just now?—I thought I heard a yell."

What a mournful spectacle is presented by the late census in poor old Ireland. In thirty-one counties the decrease in population since 1841, is one million, seven hundred and thirty-seven thousand, six hundred and sixteen persons.

The indebtedness of the City of San Francisco is \$1,361,380. Sacramento owes \$380,000.