

Towanda, Pa., Saturday, Sept. 17, 1881.

EDITORS
S. W. ALVORD. NOBLE N. ALVORI.

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Senator Davies on Wolfe.

Mr. Burr of the Philadelphia Press was here the other day and interviewed Senator Davies on the State Treasurer question. Those who know the Senator did not need his emphatic, unequivocal condemnation of Mr. Wolfe's course. Mr. Davies is a Republican and while he would be excused for feeling sore over the unfair treatment of the bosses, he takes his defeat good-naturedly, and gives his successful competitor a hearty support, just as his friends all over the State knew he would. The interview is readable and will be relished by our readers:

TOWANDA, PA., Sept. 14, 1881.

It is strange to see how the people of different localities are affected by an event interesting to all alike. Up here in this northern tier of counties, known as the "Gibraltar of Republicanism," where the fight against what is called the machine really begun and is most aggressive, the revolt of Mr. Wolfe against the Republican nominee for State Treasurer does not create as much apparent interest as it does in the center of the State where there is less reform sentiment. There is some quiet feeling and talk here, but I doubt if Mr. Wolfe can get any considerable number of Republicans of standing in this section to support him at all, much less take an active interest in his canvass. It is by no means easy to get these quiet, industrious citizens, wedded to the party to join in a revolutionary movement, no matter what the provocation. To be sure, Mr. Wilmot once lead them. Democrats and Whigs alike, into the greatest political revolution of the age. But that was upon the great slavery question—an issue too broad to be couped with a simple struggle as to which faction of the Republican party shall control its machinery and dispense the patronage. The Republicans of this end of the State are very strong in the faith, and will kick very hard inside the traces and do a great deal of protesting, but voting for an independent candidate is not in their line. When a candidate is "settled," as they call it, he is sure enough "settled" to control their political action. Yet Mr. Wolfe will get some votes in the Northern Tier, but they will be quiet ones and dropped in with caution. There will be now and then a man who will help him this much, but he will get little, if any, active support unless appearances are very deceptive. The party seems in good shape and heart and a revolution against it strikes the rank and file, even more than the leaders, much as would a crusade against their religion.

The place from which I write is the home of Mr. W. T. Davies, the Reform candidate, whom General Baily defeated. Mr. Davies is State Senator from this county, and has always held a prominent place in the party here for years. There is even little apathy here, much less any decided expressions in favor of Mr. Wolfe. If, then, the home of the defeated candidate, where there must necessarily be disappointment and the pride of the party more or less hurt, furnishes no distinct evidence of comfort for the revolutionist, it may well be taken for granted that General Baily will not suffer materially in the Reform end of the State. There is nevertheless a great deal of feeling and some resentment that might be nursed into active life if some strong Republican who has the confidence of the people would stand out and make the fight. No such man can, I think, be found, for all the leaders I have seen, while they are cross and full of fight, propose to stand by the party and continue their contest strictly within its limits.

Towanda is a pretty little place, nestling down among the mountains in a fertile little valley along the Lehigh. It has many fine homes and pleasant people. But I have told the readers of the Press all about its people, wealth, etc., recently in reciting some of David Wilmot's history, suggested by a visit to his grave, not a gun-shot from where I write, so I will devote myself to the object of my visit and talk politics. There is a natural desire in all parts of the State to know where Mr. Davies himself, the defeated candidate for the Treasurership, stands, and I dropped off the train here at an early hour this morning, on my way north, to find this out. Mr. Davies sat in his

spacious library in almost as pretentious and elegant a home as there is in Towanda as he welcomed me. Neither of us lost any time in approaching the all-absorbing subject. Our talk lasted for a long time and Mr. Davies spoke with great freedom and frankness.

"I am unequivocally opposed to the course Mr. Wolfe has taken," said he. "No single individual, no matter what his position, after acting with others in a great cause, should, without consultation with his associates, take a step calculated to bring reproach upon it. Much less has he a right to run counter to the expressed wish of, I might say, every other man in it. I regret sincerely that he should have thought differently."

"Will his candidacy have much effect or get much support in this section?"

"Our people are Republicans, sir. There is a great deal of feeling here against the action of the Harrisburg Convention. Our people thought and still think that when a man has created a following and become known throughout the State, there is no reason for his being set aside for one unknown simply because he does not suit a few leaders, but that feeling will find expression in some other way than by rebellion against the Republican party. Mr. Wolfe will, no doubt, get some votes in this section if he persists in his candidacy, but not many unless he can have some active, well-known Republicans to take hold of his canvass, which I do not think at all probable."

"Will you support General Baily?"

"Most assuredly I shall. I shall take active part in the canvass here at home and do what I can to secure his election. I cannot possibly see what Mr. Wolfe expects to gain by a different course. Suppose he should succeed in defeating General Baily, see what he has done to the party. He will widen the breach, already too great, and above all will bring into ridicule, the movement he professes to have so much at heart. The vote he will get will not represent a hundredth part of the strength of the reform element and yet it will stand before the world to a greater or less extent as the power of the opposition to the machine. It will almost make it ridiculous, when in reality it represents a great majority of the party."

"Was there a chance for it to find expression within the party?"

"Certainly there was. It was growing stronger every day and by making the fight this year inside the party and quietly instructing the people we would have gained strength enough to have made a ticket next year which would have been acceptable to every element of the Republican party. We want unity and faith in the party and these can only be found in fidelity to the party. Leaders we must have. Organization is necessary. The wrong to be corrected is the arbitrary and unjust use of power by our leaders, and this can only be accomplished by a steady contest within party lines. It is not leaders that are objectionable, but their methods. Mr. Wolfe himself, I believe acknowledges this."

"Will he defeat General Baily?"

"That cannot be told now. But suppose he does, what has been gained? If the defeat of the ticket had been desirable there was no trouble about that. If the delegates to the Convention who did not favor General Baily had remained sullen he could not have been elected. If the word had been passed that it was necessary to correct the abuses of which the people complain, that he be stricken down, he could not have been carried through with all the power now in the hands of the leaders. The movement is just that strong when there is uniform action and expression, but no single individual can set up his judgment against all the rest, go outside the party, and carry any considerable strength with him. But I insist that the loss of the ticket this year by a revolt is only not essential to the effort to correct the abuses complained of but will have the effect of retarding if not defeating, the movement. We want party unity upon a plane honorable and just to all Republicans. We want and must have party harmony to insure party success, and it cannot be obtained by destroying the party organization. It must be reached by a struggle inside, and I believe we have reached a point where there will be no more trouble unless this ill-advised step of Mr. Wolfe's shall undo what has been accomplished."

"You do not expect the least trouble here at your home, then?"

My friends will give him a hearty support, and there will, I think, be little trouble anywhere in the northern counties. The canvass, I suppose, will be vigorous, and there ought to be no doubt of the result. I for one do not mean to relax my efforts either in behalf of the party or the movement within it, to compel a more just, liberal policy in its management. Mr. Wolfe, much as he has done and honest as he may be, does not represent all of the Independent element." Mr. Davis

said much more than I have been able to write, but here is enough to show his position. It seems to me to be too strong for assault and too fair for adverse criticism by either side. The Reporter, will put his position thus in its issue of to-morrow:

"None will be more earnest or more active in giving such support than Senator Davies himself. Mr. Davies is a believer, and strong believer, in the doctrine that party differences should be settled within party lines. He counts the success of the Republican party and the advancement of its principles as of far more importance than the victory of a faction or the honoring of an individual. Believing this, he and his friends will give to General Baily a cordial, hearty support." F. A. B.

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