

# The Middleburgh Post

BY  
T. H. HARTER.

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DE. GEORGE H. WEISCH, Chairman.

Thursday, May 26, 1887.

It is estimated that not more than fifteen per cent, of the farms of Pennsylvania are mortgaged. At an average of \$50 an acre they are worth \$1,000,000,000, or a tenth of the entire farm valuation of the United States.

An exchange very truthfully remarks: Lawyers stand up in court-houses before juries, in the presence of large audiences and denounce men as liars, scoundrels, thieves and perfidious villains, and when court adjourns the men thus abased appear to harbor no ill-will against them. But let a newspaper faintly intitiate that a man's character is without blemish, and the editor has to confront a horse pistol, stand a trial at or at least suffer the greatest of all mortifications—lose a subscriber!

The report of the Department of Agriculture for May leaves much to be desired as to the condition of the crops, and from various causes it appears plain that the yield in all the States, and for nearly all kinds of crops, will be inferior to that of last year. Wheat will be nearly ten per cent lower, while rye has fallen off four per cent and barley ten per cent. It is a sombre outlook, but in a country which produces more than it can possibly consume there is no such terror in a failing off of crops as prevails in less favored lands.

## GENERALLY COMMENDED

The Legislature having adjourned and its work revisited, there is very general commendation. The character of the large majority of the members has been above that of the average legislators. The ranks almost, the rotors who have been so persistent in their bennishes, were repudiated. They fought always well, but they were not so many, were discovered early in the session, and had very little influence in shaping legislation. Penitentiaries, and gaoling and felonies also assisted but to a very limited extent. The representatives who were guilty of these sins were particularly conspicuous, by the fact that they were few in number. The great majority were self-respecting, honorable men, deserving the respect and confidence of their constituents.

The legislation has been of the most important character, more so than that of any session of a quarter of a century. It is universal in its application. The added appropriation of half a million dollars to the schools of the State is a step from which there can be no receding in the future especially so as the maximum school term has been increased to six months. The regulation by a high license of the liquor traffic, the abolition of the saloon and the adoption of a resolution to submit prohibition was a courageous response to a demand that came up from every section of our broad Commonwealth. This too is an advance from which there can be no retreat. In the interests of labor there were the mechanics' law amendments, the limitation in hours of labor, and in the age of those who can be employed in factories, and an impression upon all legislation of protection for the toiler.

While the appropriations have been upon the most liberal scale ever been taken to have the needed revenue more than two thirds; the largest partisan majority for many years, and yet little that can be called partisan legislation was adopted. The Republican leaders believed that more could be won for their party by legislation that would stand examination than by seeking partisan success through special partisan legislation. They were wise in their choice, and the result will demonstrate it—*Democracy, Telegraph.*

## LETTER FROM HARRISBURG.

Editor Middleburgh Post.

When the Legislature assembled last Thursday evening at eight o'clock to enact the final laws for the session, it met to deliberate and transact all night.

When the General Appropriation Bill was taken up in the House for consideration, it was doomed to a stormy and turbulent passage over the differences of opinions that faced it in all sections and it was tossed about in the House until four o'clock next morning before the relief of conciliation came to its succor. The portion of the Bill most objectionable and the one upon which the reasons of taking exception to it, were based by a number of Members, was that appropriating half a million of dollars for the common schools to be used for keeping them open for six months, but such counties hold only five months school were to be deprived of the benefits of the provision. This section was attacked without the slightest reservation from the first and was also warmly defended by members of the Appropriation Committee, notably Mr. Leander from Philadelphia, Mr. Wherry from Cumberland the Constitutional right of the Democratic side of the House assaulted the portions mentioned in a vigorous manner and hot speeches were made for and against it. Half of Merce one of the most intelligent and promising men in the House, a fluent and forcible speech closed the arguments in which he advised if this were not a coordinate branch of the Legislature, and the Bill was so amended, rejected.

Cooper went back to the Senate and showed the happiness of his temperament by moving the suspension of the rule prohibiting the reconsideration of a defeated Bill after the lapse of five days and the School Bill which the Senate had not long ago flung back at the feet of the House, was thus time given respectful recognition by being passed and the concession asked for of the Senate by the House being made, the solution to the perplexities which surrounded the Appropriation Bill was satisfactorily manifest to the confused heads of the parties who so violently a few hours before lent their energies to the opposition of the Bill, and it was passed and the Governor had it upon his desk at four o'clock in the morning. At midnight a session in which all the Senators, Members and Hill Officials indiscriminately joined was opened and the drooping spirits occasioned by the lively personal friction to which they were made subject, were enlivened and invigorated by a lunch, liberally supplied by cooling drinks.

An adjournment without a dissenting voice agreed to at six in the morning to ten o'clock.

The deliberations allayed unfeared by representatives, were filled with people to witness the closing of the Legislature. In the Senate the well-known and popular figure of Senator Hall from Washington was in the Chair. The venerable General Simon Cameron sat in the front row of seats in Cooper's place and despite his gray hair he looked as young and enduring as any of the Senators about him.

Colonel Dill was in his best dress and accepted no Senator or Senatorial office.

Senator Gray was chosen President Pro Tem and Senators McAllister and Allen waited upon the House, and Wolverton, Cooper and Rutan, upon the Governor to inform them of their readiness to adjourn.

In the House the Speaker was given a law library of five hundred volumes, the Chief Clerk presented him an elegant gavel with a gold band, the Resident Clerk was given a valuable tea service of silver Clark Hahn received a diamond set in a costly ornament of gold, and the Chief Clerk was given a handsome gold watch. Fitting speeches were elicited by the presentations and a few minutes past twelve o'clock the Legislature had dissolved.

The Hon. Atren S. Helfrich, representative in the Legislature from Snyder county has been a popular and efficient legislator. It is due him and the people he had the honor to represent, to say that his conduct during the past session was such as will reflect honor upon himself and leave no room to doubt the integrity, the faithfulness and the honesty of purpose with which he sought to meet the duties of his office. His course of action will stand the test of criticism and he leaves the halls of the Legislature with a spotless record. In point of

importance, the Legislation of the past year is without a parallel and Mr. Helfrich's vote was in support of that interest which is common to all men and when the members were called upon to decide whether or not corporate power should direct legislation, he registered the force of his courage against combination and voted for the public weal.

WALWORTH.

## THE HIGH-LICENSED ACT.

No recent act of the Legislature of Pennsylvania exceeds in importance the final passage of the high license bill, which undoubtedly will become a law by the signature of Governor Beaver. It is the first serious effort in many years to correct and regulate the loose, confused and unsatisfactory liquor system of the State, and to bring the traffic in intoxicating liquors under orderly and equitable restraint. Like such legislation, this measure is necessarily experimental. No one can predict with certainty just how it will work or what effect it will have in the restraint of drunkenness, which is, after all, the primary object of every liquor law. But in the general outlines it appears wise and just and practicable, and it is certainly entitled to a candid trial from officials, from liquor dealers, from reformers and from the public generally.

The act classifies liquor licenses according to the nature of the community in which business is to be carried on, instead of according to the volume of sales, which is the existing basis of classification and has been easily evaded. There is a \$500 license for cities of 30,000 population and over, \$400 license for smaller cities, a \$200 license for boroughs and a \$100 license for country hotels. The Court of Quarter Sessions is made the license granting power everywhere, the Judges being empowered to decide as to the necessity of the license applied for, according to petitions and remonstrances, and to revoke licenses on proof that a place is principally or the resort of dissolute persons. Adequate penalties are provided for the violation of the law generally, including existing prohibitions for sale on Sunday, to minors, etc., and minutely constitutes supervision of licensed places is required. The licenses are generally higher than those provided by the present law, and the proceeds are divided between the State, the county and the city, borough or township.

The act has also an immediate importance quite apart from its practical details. It is likely to postpone for the present that agitation of extreme measures of prohibition which have done so much to embarrass legislation in the cause of temperance. There are many who still believe in prohibition as the only remedy for the abuse of drink, and who will, of course, continue to advocate their views but they are at present, at least a minority, and they must see the wisdom of giving the new restriction a fair test and not encroaching upon the rights of the supporters of the new law.

Colonel Dill was not an applicant for the position and has made no individual efforts to attain it, but it has been known for some time that tendered to him he would accept it, and the President has flushed a complication of political and factional troubles by going outside of the contending applicants and just across the river outside of the district to make an appointment that is attributed to the active, earnest, best-preserved Democracy of the State, rather than a triumph of individual leaders or factions.

County Boards of Health.

A bill has passed the House of Representatives at Harrisburg to establish County Boards of Health. The bill provides, among other things, for the appointment in each county of a physician who shall be known as the medical officer of health, who shall by and with the consent of the State Board appoint one person in each township to be a deputy health officer, and this physician and these deputies shall constitute county boards of health. They shall have power to enter upon premises, make arrests, abate "nuisances," mark houses as infected, establish hospitals, appoint physicians and compel reports of various character by physicians generally. It provides for the collection of the expense of abating what they may regard as nuisances as taxes are collected, and upon refusal of the property holder to pay to

enter liens; the county boards are to meet every three months at a place which the County Commissioners are required to erect and maintain; and these same Commissioners are also required to furnish the board with just such books as they may demand; and the medical officer and his deputies are all to be paid salaries and their expenses out of the treasury as the salaries of the other county officers are paid.

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