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In short anything to feed man or beast. Furthermore, we are JOBBERS OF CARBON OIL and can save merchants money on this line, as we buy car-load lots. We are also

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ALBERT J. HILLEGASS, Berlin, Pa.

AN INTERVIEW.

Commissioner Kimmel Tells Why He Left the Scull Ring—Some Startling Disclosures.—Facts and Figures for Tax-payers.

The tyrants of the Scull ring have been pursuing George F. Kimmel ever since his re-election to the office of County Commissioner in 1896. The reason for their bitter hatred of Commissioner Kimmel is not far to seek. Mr. Kimmel is a straight, square man. Nobody knows this fact better than the Sculls. But Mr. Kimmel's backbone is too much for them.

The last sensation the Scullions have attempted to spring on Commissioner Kimmel is as thin as water. A desire to see fair play is common to most men. The editor of THE STAR went to Somerset, last Friday, to see Mr. Kimmel in person. The "fake" turned out just as we expected. The \$500.00 loan from Treasurer Winters was a personal loan from Winters to Kimmel.

"Is this the house you bought with County money?" I asked.

"Oh yes; how do you like it?" said Mr. Kimmel, laughing heartily.

"You know, I bought this house last year. I traded some timber land on it. I was short \$500.00 on the deal and asked Mr. William Winters for a loan of that much for a few days. I was expecting to get in some money in a short time. He said he would loan me the money and wrote a due bill for me to sign. I signed it and he gave me the \$500.00. He did not tell me it was County money, and Mr. Winters will not say it was County money.

After I got my money, I told him I was ready to lift that due bill. He said I shouldn't mind about that yet; he said he had all the money he wanted and did not need my money; so I did not lift the due bill till some time last month. Mr. Winters says he never told any person about that due bill, and I don't believe he did. I don't care if he did. That was a personal transaction between us, as far as I am concerned. "Tim" Scull and "Lucifer" Smith may chew at that due bill till their eyes water. Treasurer Winters would be liable to imprisonment if he misapplied the county funds. I know the point they are trying to make on me, but the Sculls can't fool the people any more. You can't make a point out of nothing. The Scull gang are mighty hard up for ammunition just now. They are like the Spaniards; they can't shoot any more. They are grabbing at straws. I don't like politics as well as I used to, and I don't like fighting so well any more, but I am fighting this year and I will fight every year, as long as the old Scull ring sticks up its head. This Scull business must be wiped out for good. The whole Scull ring is rotten to the core. The people are just finding them out. If the people would know how grasping they are, the ring would have been completely buried long ago."

"Is it true, Mr. Kimmel, that you was a Scull man when elected Commissioner the first time?" I inquired.

"Yes sir; I was one of the biggest Scull fools in the county, if I must say it myself. I used to believe they kept up the Republican party. I didn't know they worked the party and the County treasury to keep themselves up. There were lots of other Republicans just like me. I used to boast that I would never vote for an anti-Scull man. I supported that infernal ring for twenty years at every primary election. It makes me sick when I think about it. When I wanted to run for County Commissioner, they told me they could not say what they could do for me. About two weeks before the primary election they found out I would be elected, and then they came to me and said things were looking pretty good for me. That tickled me. I saw the trick. After the election they said they had nominated me. They told me to watch Sam Shober, that he was a dangerous character to associate with. That made me feel fanny. They seemed to be afraid I would get waaned. After I was sworn

into office they told me I was elected for three years. I said I knew that. 'Well,' they said, 'you must stand by our bills, George, or Shober will cut them all up.' I said I would see they got justice. Prior to this time I had never seen a Scull bill and thought their bills were all right. I had no idea they were such a set of skimmers, but I soon found out we could buy office supplies and printing for less than one-third of the Scull prices, as the figures following will show.

When I entered the Commissioners' office I found that the Sculls had been furnishing about all the county's printed matter; but when I learned of the prices they had been receiving, it staggered me, and I did not wonder that they were so anxious to have me stand by their bills. When I refused to stand by their bills and help them skin the county, they became enraged and have been persecuting me ever since. For assessment blanks and blotters the Sculls had been getting, per set, \$150, (present price \$65); tax duplicates, per set, \$70, (present price \$15); registration books, per set, \$120, (present price \$20); election blanks, per set, \$98, (present price \$30); military rolls, per set, \$53, (present price \$13); advertising annual statement, \$170, (present price \$75).

I asked them to bid on the work, but they refused to bid, and pretty soon they used their spurs on me. I wasn't used to spurs. I kicked; but they wouldn't let up on me. You have no idea how these Sculls can devil a man. They thought it couldn't be when they couldn't have their own prices and their own way in everything. One day I threatened to lick 'Bob' Scull, and then I had peace.

"Tim" Scull, Fred. Biesecker and John Scott brought in some old District Attorney bills. The bills amounted to about a thousand dollars. I asked them why they brought in such old bills. They said they had forgot to present them when they were district attorneys. I said that was strange. They then got the Commissioners' attorney to approve the bills and they brought them back and demanded us to pay them, but we refused. They got hot and said: 'Why, your attorney has approved these bills and you must pay them.' I said 'it don't matter what the attorney has done, we won't pay them.' Then they grabbed up their bills and left. I wish I had kept those bills. I could do some big itemizing on them.

You know I was defeated for re-election in 1893. In the spring of 1895, I was nominated for school director in Milford township. These ringsters came down to our township, and tried to defeat me at the general spring election. John C. Weller acting as chief bulldozer. I had no notion at that time to run for Commissioner again, but that school director fight made me spunky. I ran for Commissioner again just to give the Scull ring another dose of George Kimmel. They don't like their medicine, but what are they going to do about it?"

"Was all the time put in last year necessarily spent by the Commissioners?"

"Yes; but they stole a march on us there," said Mr. Kimmel. "We got in more time than the common run of years. I'll tell you how that was. You see the Sculls had planned their fight against the Commissioners away last year. They wanted us to get in a big number of days, so they could kick on our time. Commissioner Kretchman is their man. He did more work holding back than doing business, last year. I worked with all my might to get the business done, but we were always behind. Gabe and I pushed, but Kretchman was holding back all the time. I could not understand Kretchman. He wanted to be so particular about everything. He was straining at gnats all the time, but every now and then he would swallow a Scull camel. When I got to counting up my days I was scared. I knocked off a lot of days; I still had too many and took off some more, but still it was the biggest bill I ever had. The Scull papers pitched into me and Good, but they said Kretchman was not to blame. They excused Kretchman every time. Kretchman has a good nap. He usually comes here Monday evening on the last train and charges the county for Monday. He frequently leaves for home on the first train, Saturday morning, and charges the county for Saturday. The Sculls are not kicking on Kretchman's time, but I am determined the truth shall come out. It was the same with the assessments. Kretchman insisted on assessing all property at full value. It was the law, and we could not well refuse. Kretchman wanted to know if we could prosecute the assessors for perjury, for not making the valuations high enough.

When we got the valuations raised, the Scull newspapers set up a big howl. Then we saw Kretchman's game, and we dropped the valuations, because the people did not understand the fuss and the Sculls tried to get political advantage out of their trick. After it was dropped the Somerset Herald said it made the Commissioners lower the taxes. (What an old fakir the Herald is anyhow.) Then the Herald and the other Scull sheets said Kretchman was not to blame for raising the assessments. It just amounts to this, if we lower the valuations we must levy more mills tax. All I wanted was to get the valuations equal. It would be easier to get them equal if all property was assessed at full value; and then we could levy less mills and the tax would not be higher than it is now."

"Have you levied the county tax for 1898?"

"Yes; we levied four and a half mills for 1898."

"Will the county tax be higher than last year?"

"No; the county tax will be lower than last year to the tax-payers."

"How do you make that out, Mr. Kimmel?"

"Well, the county tax ought to come down, because we are getting more tax-payers and more property. It ought to come down lower yet. We have a new jail and the new steel vaults will make the Court house last twenty-five years longer, unless it burns down, like the Capitol at Harrisburg. The Sculls wanted a new Court house built. That is what made them hick so on the new vaults. Now go with me to the Court house and let me show you how the county tax has been reduced in the last ten years. Just take the assessment books and see for yourself. Take the assessments of 1888, just ten years ago, and compare it with the assessment of 1898. The Scull machine was running the Commissioners' office in 1888, don't forget that," said Mr. Kimmel.

The comparison fairly up-set THE STAR man. Such a startling reduction in county taxation in the short space of ten years was more than we were prepared for. To convince our farmer subscribers that they have profited by what "Lucifer" calls "Shoberism" and "Kimmelism" we have compiled a list of some of the largest farmer tax-payers in Somerset county, for the purpose of comparison. Take this list to your neighbor who is growling about increased county taxation, and rub his nose on it. Look at it, farmers of Somerset county, and give the Scull faction the everlasting go-by:

Table with columns: ADDISON, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Jacobs, Asa, Hanna, John, McCulloh, Henry C., Miller, Wm., Sterner, Jacob.

Table with columns: ALLEGHENY, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Hillegas, Wm. H., Mowry, John, Sulzer, Francis, Sarver, Wm., Tipton, Jacob.

Table with columns: BROTHERSVALLEY, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Berkley, Mrs. Sarah, Hay, Sylvester, Miller, Jonathan, Meyers, David L., Kimmel, Ed., Stoner, J. O.

Table with columns: BLACK, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Baker, John D., Critchfield, Oliver, Enos, Emanuel, Soder, Peter, Younkin, Wm. S.

Table with columns: CONEMAUGH, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Blough, Benjamin, Eash, Emanuel, Griffith, Stephen, Johns, Sam K., Kaufman, Jacob, Keim, Henry, Maust, Samuel P., Beachy, Milton J., Keim, J. B., Lepley, Adam C.

Table with columns: ELK LICK, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Keim, Henry, Maust, Samuel P., Beachy, Milton J., Keim, J. B., Lepley, Adam C.

Table with columns: JEFFERSON, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Brougner, Jeremiah, Fleck, Silas A., Hay, Wm. P., Miller, Jonathan L., Shaullis, Frederick.

Table with columns: JENNER, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Ankney, Jonas J., Critchfield, Samuel, Friedline, Adam, Hoffman, Alex., Ash, Lavada.

Table with columns: LARIMER, Year 1888, Year 1898, Tax 1888, Tax 1898. Rows include Bittner, Wm. F., Felker, Conrad.

Table with columns: Name, 1888, 1898, 1898. Rows include Knepp, William, Poorbaugh, Adam, Beal, Herman B.

Table with columns: Name, 1888, 1898, 1898. Rows include Ankney, Willis, Casebeer, Henry, Knepper, William, Shaffer, James, Arisman, Adam.

Now then, fellow citizens, it ought to be very plain to you that the royal family of Sculls and Scull henchmen are impostors and scheming pretenders. That they have been skinning the Republican party for many years, and persecuting those who refuse to bow to their selfish dictation, is a self-evident fact. Their effort to show increased taxation has fallen flat. We have searched the records and found things just as we expected. We could give you many more figures, but space will not permit. The best thing to do is to go to the Commissioners' office and examine the records yourselves, as Commissioner Kimmel has several times, through the newspapers, invited you to do. You will find that while the assessment in some cases is higher in 1898 than it was in 1888, yet the tax is nearly all cases is lower, because the millage or tax levy is lower.

The Sculls had hoped to frighten you by quoting high assessments, but they took good care not to tell you of the decreased millage. Remember the rotten Scull gang and help to turn it down at the primary, as is your duty as a good citizen. Also remember that one of their henchmen, Mr. David Wagner, the same man who is now a candidate for delegate to the State convention, was one of the Commissioners in 1888, and therefore is one of the men to blame for the high taxes of that year. The Sculls and their henchmen are all tarred with the same stick and from the least to the greatest are unworthy of your votes.

We do not ask you to take THE STAR's word for this, but go and examine the records for yourselves, as the editor of THE STAR has done; and if you don't find things exactly as we tell you, we will pay the expenses of your trip and make a retraction in our next issue. Can anything be fairer? Can reasonable, fair-minded voters demand more? The records don't lie, but the truth hurts the Sculls, and that's why they raise the cry—"you are wrecking the party!" Down with them! Their corrupt reign must be broken and will be broken.

Commissioner Kretchman's policy in catering to the Sculls is easily accounted for. His brother-in-law, Mort Welfley, is an applicant for the Elk Lick post-office, and Mr. Kretchman thinks by doing as the Sculls dictate it will increase his brother-in-law's chances for the postmastership. Now, Mort Welfley is a good citizen and THE STAR likes him. We would much rather see him get the post-office than any of the other Scull applicants. But the Sculls and Hicks will turn him down, as will be seen later on, and then Mr. Kretchman will see how he was roped in. He will then see that it didn't pay, after all, to be an obstructionist in the Commissioners' office to please the Sculls.

SAMPLE COPIES.

All sample copies sent out from THE STAR office are plainly marked as such, and for sample copies we make no charge. If you find THE STAR coming to your address, and you have not subscribed, you can rest assured that a friend has paid for the paper for you, or else you will find the words, "Sample Copy," plainly written or stamped on the margin of the paper.

Judging from clippings which we reprint from the Berlin Record, in this issue, Editor Marshall takes no stock in bogus friends of the old soldier. Mr. Marshall is an old soldier himself, and judging from his editorials, he thinks such fellows as W. H. Sanner and J. D. Hicks ought to recognize the old veterans in the matter of handing out offices as well as soliciting their votes when they want office themselves. The Record is right. All the use Sanner and Hicks have for the old soldiers is to get their votes.

THE STAR now has Hon. W. H. Sanner in the affidavit business. By reading his articles and affidavits carefully, and then reading carefully the article published in THE STAR, to which Mr. Sanner attempted to reply, it will be seen that Mr. Affidavit Sanner does not squarely meet the issue on a single charge; and furthermore, some of the most serious charges he sees fit not to reply to at all. We will give Mr. Sanner a chance to make some more affidavits before the fun is all over.