

The Highland Park News.

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ABOUT TAXES.

The most important office in this town of Deerfield is that of assessor. He and he alone, practically, determines all our taxes, because he puts the valuation on our real estate and personal property. No other officer of the town has anything to do with that; the assessor does it all, and hence he is entitled to the honor of it all, and he will have to stand the fault-finding, if there is any. The following is the way it is done, as any one knows:

The assessor goes all about town and fixes the valuation on all the real estate, the acres and lots in all the town. Then he finds out how much and what kinds of personal property each family has, and many families of course have and pay taxes on personal property that have no real estate. The assessor then puts a valuation on each man's farm or lot with or without its improvements, at about one-tenth its real value. Thus if he puts in Jones' farm at \$500, it means that the assessors value Jones' farm and buildings at about \$5000, or Smith's city lot and house at \$300 means that he regards them worth \$3000 as near as he can figure it; the same as to personal property. The assessor spends the months of May and June in making up his list for the town. Then the fourth Monday in June the town supervisor, town clerk and assessor meet and listen to complaints of such persons as think they have been assessed too high, or have not been assessed enough. These town officials spend the whole day listening to these complaints and adjusting them so far as they can. Then the books go to the county clerk in Waukegan, and at the July meeting of the supervisors they have three committees on equalization; one on acre property, one on city lots and one on personal property. Our assessor's work is turned over to these three committees, as it belongs to them; but these committees don't touch individuals like Jones or Smith or Brown—not at all. They take the town footings only in bulk. Thus the personal property committee takes the personal property assessment of Deerfield, and Shields and Waukegan and the other towns and compares them and if they decide Deerfield's assessment is too high they cut it down in bulk the whole of it, or if they think it is too low they raise it in bulk and of course their raising or lowering the assessment in bulk will affect all of us pro rata. So of the lots and acres, and this is all they do; they never meddle with individual cases, they don't know anything about them, whether they are too high or low. If any single tax payer don't get satisfaction of the town board the fourth Monday in June, he can appeal to the Supervisors in July, but he and his appeal goes before the whole board, not before any committee and usually it don't amount to much.

Now, as the chief complaint here is on personal property, and some folks seem to think our supervisors, Fletcher and Hogan, may in some way, though they can't tell how, be responsible for these high taxes, we give the names of the supervisors' personal property committee: Arthur Cooke of Wauconda, James Anderson of Lake Forest and A. N. Tiffany of Antioch, and as we have said, they never touch any individual as-

essments. Of course after the county board is through, the assessments go the state board, who equalize by counties, just as the county board does by towns, but none of them touch individual cases. Hence our own supervisors, Fletcher and Hogan, have no more to do with fixing your personal property or real estate tax than the mayor or city clerk has and instead of their putting your taxes up they keep them down all they can. Indeed the oldest members of the board who were there when we first knew them eight years ago say that Deerfield never had a man on the board who protected the interests of his town as W. F. Hogan does. He won't let a steal or snide job go through of any kind.

with any white lies in between your valuations and don't forget it is the assessor and no one else who makes up the assessment.

TENNYSON.

The usual audience crowded the hall of the Highland Park Club on Tuesday evening to listen to Prof. Rolfe's lecture on Tennyson.

Like the earlier lectures of the course it was charming in the simplicity of its style, in the delicacy of its delineations and in the justness of its conclusions. Prof. Rolfe told the story of the poet's life, and read extracts from his earlier and later writings to show his wonderful mastery of the art of versification, his appreciation of the beauty of nature and his deep insight into the

A SURPRISE PARTY.

James H. Shields decided to honor his wife's birthday Monday by a surprise party of her friends here in the Park that evening at their lake front home. So he issued verbal invitations, over the 'phone and personally, any way he could, not to let her know it, so as to surprise her that evening. The plan worked to a charm, for she never heard a lisp of it, nor did she surmise anything of the kind. The first intimation she had that the ordinary course of life was to be broken in upon was the unexpected arrival of guests, an hour or so after dinner, while the family were gathered for a pleasant evening.

There was a goodly attendance of old friends and neighbors for con-

MR. WHITE'S DEATH.

This community was shocked Wednesday morning to learn that William F. White, the Passenger traffic manager of the Sante Fe road, had died the night before. Not only was he, comparatively speaking, a young man,—only 47 years old,—but very few people knew that he was ailing, as on Saturday last he went to his office in Chicago. He had an attack of the grippelast week, but it was not considered serious and not till Sunday did any alarming symptoms appear, from which time his decline was rapid till death came, Tuesday night. The immediate cause of his death was a quick forming abscess on the lungs, which defied all surgical skill. It is one of the saddest deaths we have known for many years, a man right in the prime of life, when his business worth was at its highest, and when to all human appearance his family could not spare him; for such an one to be stricken down is unspeakably sad. He leaves besides his wife, a daughter of Gen. Stringfellow of Atchison, Kansas, five children, four girls and one boy. They are, Engenie, 19; Henriette, 18; Deborah, 16; Mary, 9. The boy, Benjamin H., is 10 years old.

The funeral was held yesterday morning from St. Mary's Church, at 11 o'clock. A special train provided by the Northwestern came out from Chicago with a large delegation, not only of Mr. White's own immediate associates of the Sante Fe system, but leading officials of other lines, who held him in high esteem. After the services at the church, the train bore the funeral party to Calvary for the interment.

Mr. White stood among the foremost passenger men of the country; not only on account of his sound and reliable judgment, but also for his well known integrity. No matter how sharp the competition, he never resorted to tricks. He began railroad-ing, as so many others have done before him, at the bottom, when the Sante Fe was a little unknown bit of road in Kansas, and so worked his way up by dint of hard work and solid personal worth and talent. From a "general hand" he became ticket agent, in 1878 passenger and ticket agent; in 1887, traffic manager and two years later, manager of the passenger traffic. When the road came to Chicago, he came with it from Topeka, and to this city about a year ago. No man in railroad circles, east or west, would be more missed than he.

Lawyer S. F. Knox has heard by cable and letter from his wife, who sailed a couple of weeks ago for the south of France, where she will spend a few weeks and then go to her childhood home in England to witness next month the marriage of one of her sisters. During her absence Mr. Knox's sisters keep house for him, and like all other bachelors he has joined the Club.

The City Council held a special meeting Tuesday evening and heard Attorney Smoot finish reading the new ordinances, the publication of which in a new pamphlet edition was referred to the Printing Committee and Attorney with power to act. The ordinance for street sprinkling was passed dividing the city into two districts, north and south of Central avenue, with a license fee of \$50 for each of the two carts for the season. Some wanted the license higher, but that would only make the charges on the citizen higher.

Victimizing Great Inventors.

(From the Electrical Engineer, New York, March 3, 1898.)

ONE of the neatest epigrams ever coined in regard to a newspaper has been that which says: "When you see it in the 'Sun' it's so." A complimentary but uncomplimentary phrase might well be applied to many other of the daily journals to the effect that "When you see it in the _____, it is not so." The recent war scare is but one example of the manner in which the absurdest lies and wildest exaggerations can be given out to the public as truthful news; and it is creditable to the press in general that such disreputable instances of yellow journalism are few and far between. The enterprise of these sensational papers is their saving virtue, but even their large expenditure of money and men they do not know how to handle to the best advantage.

But it is not alone in "war news" that the worst productions of these papers have lately been seen. The field of new invention is particularly interesting to them, and the personality of a great inventor offers peculiar charms to them as a theme around which to weave imaginary yarns. Of late Mr. Edison and Mr. Tesla have suffered greatly from the efforts made to describe their work in the lurid columns of the Sunday issues; and the effect of seeing a thing in print is such that we have no doubt both of these inventors have suffered in the estimation of the respectable public from the manifold in which their names have been associated with all kinds of foolish and crazy stories. Sometimes the articles have a genuine interest, but even then the points are made so vaguely, it puzzles people to find out just what the real idea is.

All this might not be so bad, however, but when a man is made responsible for long, "continued" stories, patience is at an end, and thus it was that recently Mr. Edison felt called upon to issue a public denunciation of the use of his name in connection with a fiction running in a New York evening journal and other papers, describing an attack from the earth on the planet Mars. But the story went on appearing all the same. Mr. Edison has always been known among the reporters as an "easy mark," he is so obliging and willing to help them satisfy, if possible, the orders of the city editor; but when his good nature is abused in this fashion he is likely to become less approachable, especially as the liar keeps shifting his energies from one subject to another. Only a week or two ago, a story went around the papers circumstantially as to the remarkable qualities possessed by Mr. Edison's magnetic ore; and an English contemporary has just been sarcastic over it at Mr. Edison's expense. We are now informed that, as was suspected, it is another newspaper lie made out of whole cloth.

An equally flagrant case is that of Dr. Elisha Gray, so well known for his many electrical inventions and the organizing president of the International Electrical Congress of 1893. It has been given out with the fullest circumstantial detail that this distinguished man had gone all to pieces financially, and was in the sorest straits. The public was invited to gloat over his agonizing struggles to keep the wolf from the door. Then as a fine touch it was added that he was dying of it all. The whole thing is a most outrageous lie. It is true that Dr. Gray suffered from the panic of 1893 and the prolonged depression, but that has not been an unusual or exceptional experience, and the Doctor is not "stripped of everything," nor has he been cheated and swindled of every dollar; nor is he living in abject poverty, nor has he had to sell his art treasures, nor is he now taking boarders for a living. Dr. Gray occupies the same house that he has been living in for 26 years at Highland Park, Ill.; he is still surrounded by all his "art treasures," and his library is intact and just as sacred to his own use as it ever was. We believe the "boarders" are his own daughter, her husband, and a grandchild, in whose company and sunshine the Doctor takes natural delight.

The whole miserable story appears to have sprung out of a wish to boom some literary work that Dr. Gray had done upon invitation, for the newspapers, dealing with electrical questions in a series of articles. The "scare head" way to interest the public was to write up, or rather "write down," the author, in a sensational and vulgar style, no matter how indignant he might be or how severely his friends' feelings might be hurt. We have no doubt Dr. Gray has protested vigorously against such abominable methods in the proper quarter; and we now venture to offer our own comments, merely adding in conclusion that one benefit of such annoying episodes must be to help prove to a man that if he is really undergoing trials there are some who will hasten to stand by him.

We come right back where we started; the assessor fixes the amount of every person's taxes; nobody else does it or can do it, or can change it, except the town board. The trouble is you let it go, pay no attention to it the fourth Monday in June and then the next spring when your taxes come you howl. If you are dissatisfied give the assessor a list of your personal property and its fair, honest value, and help him out. If you wait to kick, do so on time, June 2, this year, and kick as high and hard as you like—the board can stand it. If you fail then hold your peace and pay your taxes like a little man. The assessor's job is no easy one; help him all you can, and don't sand-

problems of human life which came to him in ever-increasing fulness as the year advanced.

The discussion following the lecture was upon Thackeray's merits, and brought out many expressions of the affection in which the greatest writer of English pure fiction is regarded.

We are glad to announce that arrangements have been made to secure Prof. Rolfe's course of lectures on American authors to be given in the Highland Park Club house, beginning early in October.

Shields has a caucus in Lake Forest this evening. Mr. Crippen wants to be collector.

gratulations and a good old-fashioned evening visit, with such modern modifications as suited the company. It was wholly informal, and so most thoroughly enjoyable. How Mr. Shields managed to get his supply of choice refreshments home and ready, without the knowledge of his wife surpasses our comprehension, for at the proper time they were handsomely served in abundance, which shows again that even a man can successfully manage such an affair when he sets about it.

Those present, we are glad to report, speak of it as a delightful evening, and one which we trust will leave only pleasant memories in the mind of her in whose honor it was given.