

Highland Park News-Letter

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SATURDAY AUGUST 4th, 1906

Candidates and Their Records

The Lake County Law and Order League has sent to every voter in Lake County a list of the various candidates for County officers, with their records, and the Leagues recommendations thereon. The circular is well worth the attention and study of every voter who has at heart the best interests of Lake County. Look over the list, select your candidates, and do not fail to go to the polls and vote.

Remember the primaries tomorrow. Do more than that—go to the polls and vote according to your convictions.

"Let Us Have Peace"

The report of the finance committee of the city council, which was authorized to examine into the conduct of the affairs of the library board, has caused an unfortunate wrangle. We deplore deeply the present state of affairs, which we believe to be unnecessary and productive of nothing but animosity.

There is nothing in the conduct of public affairs that touches more closely the members of a community than the administration of the affairs of educational institutions, and the public library well deserves this title.

It does not appear, either in the report of the finance committee or in the report of the President of the Library Board, that there has been anything in the affairs of the Board, that calls for severe criticism or condemnation. The desired end has been attained, and although the methods may not have been pleasing to some people, the severe arraignment of the Board by the Finance Committee seems to be uncalled for.

We now have a fine Library building which is finished and practically paid for. And although its cost was a little more than was estimated it is pleasing to all, and will be an adequate home for the public library for years to come.

We desire to be fair to all parties concerned in this disagreement between city officials, and as we published a few weeks ago the reports of the President of the Library Board and the Finance Committee of the City Council, we publish this week a statement by Mr. Alexander Robertson, a member of the Building Committee of the Library Board, which appeared in the Waukegan Sun of last Monday. Mr. Robertson's statement is as follows:

In the issue of the Highland Park News Letter, July 14th, 1906, appeared a report of the finance committee of the city, in which they very strongly, and I think unjustly, censure the Library Board.

Mr. Shields as a member of that committee denounced in strong and unjust terms the whole action of the board, and recommended its reorganization because of its incompetency. He has severely and

unwarrantably criticized the action of one of our most esteemed lady citizens, Mrs. G. B. Cummings, secretary of the board. He seems specially bitter against our president, L. B. Hibbard. In his arraignment of the board he charges the president with banking the Carnegie gift in his own name, instead of turning it over to the city as required by law. Mr. Shields does not seem to know what the law is governing libraries. The law provides that all moneys "other" than donations shall be turned over to the city treasurer. But why did Mr. Shields not go a little farther in his quest for law.

On page 1302, Sec. 9, of Hurd's Revised Statutes of 1905, he will find the following law covering donations to libraries: "Any person desiring to make donations of money, personal property or real estate so donated, in the board of directors created under this act, to be held and controlled by such board when accepted, according to the terms of the deed, gift, devise or bequest or such property, and as to such property, the said board shall be held and considered to be special trustees." Thus we find that while the law requires the general funds of the library to be in the custody of the city treasurer, it does not apply to donations for which the above is a special provision.

Mr. Shields is either in error, or he willfully desires to mislead the public to the prejudice of Mr. Hibbard, where he says Mr. Carnegie's gift was banked in Mr. Hibbard's own name. It was banked in the name of the library board, to their credit and signed "L. B. Hibbard, president." This is strictly in accordance with the law, and inasmuch as the draft from Mr. Carnegie was drawn, not to the city but to L. B. Hibbard, then L. B. Hibbard alone was held responsible by Mr. Carnegie for the distribution of the bequest, for the purpose for which it was intended, and no one knows better than Mr. Shields that every dollar of it is properly accounted for in the president's report to the council.

Mr. Shields also censures the building committee, of which I am a member, for not having called meetings from time to time during the progression of the work on the new building. There was nothing to meet about. There was never anything in dispute about the work or the manner in which it was being done.

In fact it is one of the best built buildings, both as to material and labor, in this part of the county. When it is finished, and before its acceptance, the committee will meet the architects and go over the work, and compare with contracts. When everything is satisfactory and final settlement made as to that fact, then and not until then will the committee report.

Mr. Shields also complains of putting up a \$17,000 building to house, as he terms it, \$1,000 worth of books. Now what in the name of common sense has that got to do with it? I have known instances where a man would have a \$4,000 barn to "house" a \$25 horse. The number and value of the books are sufficient for the present, and the building is not put up just to protect the books from the weather or to meet the present requirements only, but with a view to the future needs of the people when Highland Park will be very much greater than at present.

In his tirade against what he is pleased to term the extravagance of the library board in erecting such a building, does it not occur to Mr. Shields that the city is getting a building worth \$17,000 and up to this time they have put into it only the sum of a little over \$4,300, the proceeds of the old site. Mr. Shields did not see all the records of the board and did not report what he did see correctly. He had no right to see the records at all, neither had he nor his committee any right in their official capacity to investigate or criticize the construction of the building, as the power is vested only in the building committee.

Mr. Shields and his committee on finance can attend only to the financial end of the city's busi-

ness, and he has overstepped his duties in this matter. Mr. Shields, at the last meeting of the council, refused to confirm the mayor's appointment of the three new members, but he does not tell us that his colleague, Mr. Leaming, called upon Mayor Evans the next night, asking him to appoint Mr. Shields, which would necessitate putting out Alderman Dooley, who is well qualified for the position, as under the law only one alderman can be appointed on the board. The mayor very justly refused to accede to the request and I think will stand by his appointments.

So much for the library. Now, let us see how Mr. Shields' conduct as president of the township high school compares with that of the president of the library board. Mr. Hibbard, as president of the library board has given an itemized account of every cent in connection with his board, to be published for the benefit of the public, so that all may see and know.

Has Mr. Shields, as president of that ruinously extravagant high school done the same? Has any taxpayer, of the township of Deerfield ever at any time in the past seen a published statement of the disbursements of the school, or derived the least satisfaction at any time as to how the money was spent which brings our taxes up so high? An itemized statement should be published annually for the benefit of the taxpayers, but it has never been done. I ask why not? It is the people's right. An investigation into the conduct of affairs of the high school has long been talked about and up to this time nothing has been done, for the want of some one to take the initiative.

Mr. Shields in his anxiety to have public affairs run right has given us the opportunity long desired, and I will promise every voter and taxpayer of the township that there will now be an investigation showing how their money is spent, if I have to get a petition signed by the taxpayers of the township asking it at the hands of the proper parties. That is all I will say about it at present, except to say that those who live in glass houses should be careful about throwing stones. Facts and figures I will produce later in relation to the high school.

A. ROBERTSON.

RAVINIA PARK

Afternoons at 3:00 Evenings at 8:30

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WALTER DAMROSCH

and the

NEW YORK SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

By request, tomorrow night

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Commencing next Monday, Aug. 6

THEODORE THOMAS ORCHESTRA

FREDERICK STOCK, Director

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Thursday Afternoon, "Children's Day"

Thursday Evening, "Soloist's Night"

Friday Evening, "Wagner Night"

Saturday Afternoon, "Composer's Afternoon"

Saturday Evening, "Ball Room Night"

Sunday Evening, "Soloist's Night"

On all other afternoons and evenings a varied program will be rendered

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