

SPEECH BY GOV. BUTLER,

AT TEWKSBURY'S TOWN PICNIC ON THURSDAY.

The town of Tewksbury held its annual picnic at Bellevue grove, Andover, Thursday, and Gov. Butler attended by unanimous invitation and made a pleasant speech, which included some neighborly advice and a sly "dig" at the late deposed almshouse management. The Governor rode over to the grounds from his Belvidere mansion in his carriage, accompanied only by Prentiss Webster, Esq., and W. D. C. Farrington. The reception committee consisting of Messrs. Albert C. Blaisdell, W. O. Wing, J. P. Jaques and James Chandler, met the party at the entrance to the grove, and escorted them through the grounds, quaintly decked with gaudy wooden busts of deceased rural worthies, empty menagerie cages and the usual booths, to the roomy pavilion on the crest of the hill. Here his excellency held a reception, and about 100 people shook him by the hand. There were about 800 persons on the grounds. Many of those present had been old acquaintances of the Governor's in years gone by. Afterward, to the music of Berry's brass band of Lowell, the Governor ascended the bunting-draped rostrum at the end of the pavilion. Chairman Blaisdell in introducing the guest of the day, said that it was to be distinctly understood that the invitation to the Governor was given on no political basis. It was extended as a mark of respect for the man, as the people of Tewksbury had known him, and in that regard was unanimous. For 32 years, said the speaker, the dividing line between Tewksbury and Lowell passed between the house and the stable of Gov. Butler, and every time he went to his horse stalls he had paid a visit to the township of Tewksbury. The line has since been changed, but the citizens of Tewksbury still claim Benjamin F. Butler as a neighbor. Mr. Blaisdell also referred in flattering terms to the great services rendered by their guest to the State and nation, in peace and war.

Governor Butler then arose and said: I have to thank you cordially, Mr. Chairman, for this invitation to meet at your gathering, and I have to more than thank you for the very kind and flattering words with which you have introduced me to this assemblage. I regret that I cannot stop and spend the day with you. Before I received your invitation a meeting of the Council was called to finish up the business of the summer before adjournment for vacation. The long session of the Legislature—for which you were not to blame—has brought that vacation very late in the year, and I am obliged to leave on the 11.10 train, and I leave with great regret, because, I may assure you, it is much pleasanter here with you than shut up in a musty council-chamber pouring over matters necessary to be done, but not very interesting. I greet you all therefore in the spirit of this gathering, and if you will allow me, as one among the elders of the people, I would like to give a word of advice to the young and middle aged—to never let these gatherings flag. Come here from year to year, meet each other face to face, take the kindly shake of the hand in cordial greeting, and if there are any of those little bickerings in life which disturb us more than the great ones, they should all be settled here, and good fellowship, good neighborhood among the townspeople will be promoted, and that is one of the great sources of happiness. Life is too short to quarrel much, although you may think it a little strange that I should say so; but then I have had experience in that regard. [Laughter.] When we get older we look back upon it—there is very little of it—and we ask, what is the good of it? You have had your quarrel with somebody and are happy for it. Reflect a moment—when was the happiest moment of your life? It was when you got over your quarrel with somebody, and shook hands and said, "Now it is all over." There is not a man of you—I will not say woman, because ladies never have any quarrels—there is not a man of you who will not agree that the happiest moment of your life was when you settled a little difficulty with your neighbor and became friends and ceased to hold each other at arm's length.

Another thing: we of New England have

not had holidays enough. There are certain formal holidays that are too much decried. We have but one home holiday that is anything like this, and that is Thanksgiving, and then that brings together only families, and we need days just like this which bring together an aggregation of families, brings family with family. Thanksgiving brings that of one household together. We have the Fourth of July, which celebrates our independence. Fast Day should be devoted to the service of God and to the acknowledgment of the sins of the people, and in invoking His blessing on the common seed time and the day of the coming harvest. Therefore we have no holiday just as this is, to come together, all coming and commingling together exactly as we are here on this floor and watching the young people happily before us. Our fathers in the early days thought there was some sin in dancing. They forgot that David danced before the ark in praise of the Lord. Here you young people ought to come and dance together while the old fathers and mothers chat sociably about old times and renew their youth in seeing their children's enjoyment.

Now a word personal to myself. It has been said that I have rendered Tewksbury famous. There is no thought of a single inhabitant of Tewksbury, born and bred here, not brought here, that Tewksbury has become already famous or infamous, as the case may be. Nothing in the long and laborious investigation in which the affairs of the State institution has been shown against the healthfulness of Tewksbury, against the propriety of the conduct of its inhabitants, of the class born and bred here and gathered here outside of the institution; and it is a remarkable fact, one upon which I found my justification for which I have done more than any, that that institution, having been here for more than a quarter of a century, in the hour of its trial and need the managers of it dare not call upon a single inhabitant of Tewksbury to come into court and say whether it was a good or bad institution. [Applause] Generally, when men are attacked in their conduct or reputation, they summon in defence persons who have known them for a good many years, if they feel guiltless; and so where I have the good opinion of my neighbors they say whether I am a good or bad man; and the remarkable fact, I say, was that in that laborious investigation, that with the summonses for the Commonwealth in the hands of the defence, not one inhabitant of Tewksbury was brought in before the committee to say that this institution was well managed. [Applause.]

Now my boast has been, and it is the boast I trust of every well conducted man, that when I have asked the endorsement of anybody of either public or private acts of mine I have not gone away from my neighbors and friends, but I have asked them around me, and so long as I could receive the suffrages of the men in the city where I lived for more than 50 years, when they say that they have confidence in me, I never trouble myself and my friends to find out what other people said that did not know me. They said what they pleased. Lies and innuendoes never avail in any contest; there are always enough of them. And the good name of Tewksbury has not suffered. The fact I have told you is a sufficient justification. Now I have detained you too long. I am sorry to have to leave at once, and I wish you every success in this day's enjoyment. I want to come here again, and if I am not too old I expect to see the bright faces of your children, and I should really like to dance, and I hope next year I will have an opportunity. I have not forgotten how to dance myself, although my business has been lately to make other people dance. [Laughter and applause.] I should like to have a chance to come here and dance—and if some young lady won't dance with me, there are some of my compatriots who will dance with me, and we will have a dance in spite of the younger ones. [Great laughter.] And now I give you all my best wishes for your health, prosperity and happiness, and count me as a neighbor, and if there is anything I can do as a neighbor—if you need advice or assistance, come to me as a neighbor and I will endeavor to be what I have endeavored to be all my life, in all my surroundings, a good neighbor to do kindly and neighborly acts. Thanking your committee for their invitation, and thanking you for your attention, I bid you each and all goodbye. [Applause.]

The Governor then walked to the depot near the grove, accompanied by Messrs. Blaisdell, Chandler, of the committee of arrangements, and others, and took the train, which soon left for Boston.