

LIVES
OF THE
GOVERNORS
OF
PENNSYLVANIA,

WITH THE
INCIDENTAL HISTORY OF THE STATE,

FROM
1609 TO 1873.

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JOHN ANDREW SHULZE,

GOVERNOR UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF 1790.

December 16, 1823, to December 15, 1829.

POLITICAL organizations underwent a radical transformation during the administration of Governor Shulze. The discussions in the convention which framed the Constitution of the United States gave birth to two parties in that body. When the conventions met in the several States to ratify it, discussions of the same purport were repeated, the members ranging themselves on opposite sides as in the originating assembly. The newspapers were likewise divided, and through them the people. The one party believed that the Constitution gave the States too much power, and favored a greater degree of strength and centralization in the National Government, while the other with equal zeal argued that the States were shorn of their sovereignty and despoiled of their rights. Washington was, however, elected with great unanimity the first President, though he was known to strongly favor the Constitutional party. His Cabinet was divided, and as the terms Federal and Republican came into use as the designations of the two parties, Adams and Hamilton allied themselves with the former, while Jefferson led the latter. For a quarter of a century these parties combated each other with great ability, and often with acrimony. At the end of that period, a degeneracy, which had for some time been perceptible, culminated in a general dissolution, and the two old parties were known no more.

In the election of a Governor in 1823, Andrew Gregg was supported by the independent Republicans and Federalists,

which had twice before triumphed, the latter party in convention at Lancaster, over which James Buchanan presided, resolving that "We, as Federalists, will support Andrew Gregg, of Centre County, for Governor of Pennsylvania." The Republicans nominated John Andrew Shulze, and were again successful.

Mr. Shulze was born on the 19th of July, 1775, in Tulpehocken township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. His father was a clergyman of the German Lutheran Church, and had several congregations to which he ministered. The son received his early instruction in English and German from his father. He was afterwards put to an institution in Lancaster, and while there was under the immediate care of his uncle, Dr. Henry Muhlenberg. He completed his preparation for college in York County, under the instruction of the Rev. Mr. Melsheimer.

He received a finished classical education in the city of New York, and afterwards studied theology there with his uncle, Dr. Kunze, a celebrated divine of that day. In 1796, he was admitted as a member of the German Lutheran Synod, and was shortly afterwards ordained a minister in that church. For a period of six years he officiated as pastor of several congregations in Berks County, and was esteemed and loved by all who knew him.

In 1802 a rheumatic affection from which he had long suffered obliged him to suspend his labors in the ministry, and two years later, finding no improvement in his condition, he was induced to seek other occupation. He accordingly entered upon mercantile business in the village of Myerstown, then Dauphin County, in which he continued for several years, accumulating a small fortune.

In 1806 he was elected a member of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, and was re-elected for the two succeeding years. He was urged by his constituents to accept a nomination for a fourth term, but declined. The journals show that during the period in which he was in the House, there was no more active or efficient member than Mr.

Shulze, or one whose votes will better stand the test of minute scrutiny. He was a consistent Republican throughout, manifesting an ardent attachment to the Constitution, and the principles which he had received from a pious and patriotic father, and which characterized the whole course of his life.

His business qualifications and his probity attracted the attention of Governor Snyder, who, in 1813, appointed him Surveyor-General of the State. This office, at that time an important and responsible one, he declined. Governor Snyder then tendered him the positions of Register, Recorder, Prothonotary, Clerk of the Orphans' Court, and Clerk in the Sessions Court of Lebanon County, which he accepted. In the discharge of the duties of this office he continued until the expiration of Governor Snyder's term, when he was re-commissioned under the appointment of Governor Findlay. In the early part of 1821, though warmly solicited by large numbers of the citizens to remain in this position, he resigned, and was in October of that year elected to represent Lebanon County in the House of Representatives. In the following year he was chosen a State Senator for Dauphin and Lebanon counties, carrying the district by a large majority, though opposed by a well-organized party.

Before he had been a year in the Senate, he was selected as candidate for Governor by the Republican party, and was elected by a majority of over twenty-five thousand. He was nominated for a second term in 1826, and was elected with a unanimity unparalleled in the history of the Government, receiving over seventy-two thousand votes, while his opponent, John Sergeant, got but about one thousand. He had immense patronage to bestow, having in addition to that originally given by the Constitution, now grown to enormous proportions, that recently created by the legislation for the public works. In commenting upon this feature of his administration, a recent political writer says: "This power was exercised with great prudence and good judgment. It might indeed be said that Governor Shulze called the best sense of the State around him. His officers everywhere were capable and honest."

This was an era when stupendous plans for the improvement of the Commonwealth were adopted and put in execution. Questioning the propriety of the State assuming to execute the functions of a corporation in opening avenues of traffic, he opposed the loan of a million of dollars which was authorized by the Legislature, but was obliged to yield to the will of the people, and before the close of his second term six millions had been borrowed.

It was soon after his first election, in 1823, that the old parties were broken up, none after that calling themselves Federalists. Indeed, the term Federalist became odious; but from its ashes there sprang a party that became more powerful than any which before or since has borne sway in this country. Every Federal newspaper in Pennsylvania, except three, the *United States Gazette*, of Philadelphia, *The Village Record*, of West Chester, and the *Pittsburg Gazette*, joined in its support. In the national election of 1824, parties being in a disorganized state, there was no choice for President by the people, Crawford, Adams, Clay, Calhoun, and Jackson being supported. John Quincy Adams was elected by the House of Representatives. But in 1828, Jackson was chosen, receiving a majority of fifty thousand in Pennsylvania, his brilliant victory at New Orleans, gained with scarcely a casualty on our side, creating immense enthusiasm among the people in his favor. In 1824, the nation's early friend and benefactor, General Lafayette, revisited the scenes of his former trials and final triumphs. Governor Shulze had the satisfaction of welcoming the hero to the soil of Pennsylvania, which he did at Morrisville in a brief but eloquent and impressive speech.

In his annual message to the Legislature, immediately succeeding the election of President Jackson, Governor Shulze expresses his views of the duties of the citizen in acquiescing in the will of the majority, and of giving the successful candidate a cordial support, in a manner worthy of the most thoughtful consideration. He says, "In the organization of our government of the Union and of the State, the simple

and efficient principle which secures our welfare and repose, is, that the will of the majority shall rule, and whenever that will is constitutionally expressed, whether it be by election or by legislation, it is the plain duty, as it must always be the pleasure, to every public functionary, cheerfully to concur. To him the laws are the laws of the people; and to him the magistrate is the magistrate of the people, by them rightfully invested with authority for their benefit, and entrusted with so much power as the Constitution confers upon the office. At seasons of elections, especially for the higher stations, there will often be great excitement, proportioned to the interest produced by the occasion, and indicative of the solicitude naturally felt in the delegation of important public trusts. It is the right of the citizen freely and actively to take his post according to the dictates of his judgment. The election over, and its result known, he who has the majority is entitled to be honored and respected as the people's choice, and to be supported in his efforts faithfully to fulfil and discharge his duties. Such a season has just passed, and furnished a new evidence of the stability and excellence of our form of government. If, in its progress, there has been more than usual warmth, it is now at an end. The question which caused it is decided. Every good citizen will acquiesce in the decision, and every public functionary, governed by the same motive which influenced him to abstain from embarking his official character in the contest, while it is going on, will find himself placed in no new position, but maintaining the relation to the high officer elected, which the Constitution creates, and ready, within his allotted sphere, cordially to coöperate with him for the common good."

None of the predecessors of Governor Shulze had come to that high office with so much scholastic culture and grace, as he. He truly appreciated the value of education; and as he looked over the broad face of the Commonwealth, and saw a vast and rapidly increasing population without adequate means of school instruction, his heart was moved, and his sympathies were aroused in their behalf. He knew the will

of the founder in this regard. He knew the provisions of the organic law; and he was unwilling to rest satisfied so long as the intentions of the founders remained unfulfilled. His messages are replete with the most urgent appeals for some legislation which should secure the privileges of elementary education to all. In that of 1827, he says: "Among the injunctions of the Constitution, there is none more interesting than that which enjoins it as a duty on the Legislature to provide for the education of the poor throughout the Commonwealth. Whether we regard it in its probable influence upon the stability of our free republican governments, or as it may contribute to social and individual happiness, it equally deserves the earnest and unremitting attention of those who are honored with the high trust of providing for the public welfare. If the culture of the understanding and the heart be entirely neglected in early life, there is great reason to fear that evil propensities will take root, while, with proper discipline, there might have been a rich harvest of usefulness and worth. A knowledge of our rights, and a sense of our duties, a just estimate of the value of the blessings we enjoy, and an habitual desire to preserve them, are the wholesome fruits of that good seed, which it is the object, and, with the favor of Providence, the effect, of moral and intellectual instruction to implant. It cannot be supplied to all in equal measure, but it is hoped that the time will come when none shall be left entirely destitute. Then will the Legislature truly be in this respect, what the framers of the Constitution desired it should be, a parent to the children of the poor; and they in return will have strong inducements to love and to honor, and to do their utmost to perpetuate the free institutions from which they derive so signal a benefit, so prolific a source of happiness."

Again, in his message of the following year he urges upon the attention of the Legislature the importance of immediate action, and adduces new and weighty considerations to enforce his views. "The mighty works," he says, "and consequent great expenditures undertaken by the State, cannot induce

me to forbear again calling attention to the subject of public education. To devise means for the establishment of a fund, and the adoption of a plan, by which the blessings of the more necessary branches of education should be conferred on every family within our borders, would be every way worthy the Legislature of Pennsylvania; an attention to this subject, at this time, would seem to be peculiarly demanded, by the increased number of children and young persons who are employed in manufactories. It would be desirable for the employers and parents, as well as children, that this matter should early engage the attention, and be early acted upon by the Legislature, inasmuch as it will be easier in the infancy of manufactories, to adopt and enforce a liberal system, than it would be to establish such a system when thousands more children shall be employed than are at this time. The establishment of such principles would not only have the happiest effects in cultivating the minds, but invigorating the physical constitutions of the young. What nobler incentive can present itself to the mind of a republican legislator, than a hope that his labor shall be rewarded by insuring to his country, a race of human beings, healthy, and of vigorous constitutions, and of minds more generally improved than fall to the lot of any considerable portion of the human family!"

At the conclusion of his second term Governor Shulze retired from public life, and engaged in agricultural pursuits. His kindness of heart induced him always to lend a listening ear to those in trouble, and his counsel was often sought by the community among whom he dwelt. In 1839 he was elected a senatorial delegate to the National Convention which assembled at Harrisburg to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, and was chosen one of the vice-presidents on that occasion. In the following year he was a member of the Electoral College, of which he was unanimously chosen president. In 1846 he removed with his family to Lancaster, where he continued to reside until his death, which occurred on the 18th of November, 1852, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.