

Bureau Signal Service.

ANOTHER DEFAULTER.

THE TREASURER AND TOWN CLERK OF METHUEN ABSCOND: A LETTER TO HIS WIFE CONFESSES THAT HE IS A DEFAULTER: OVER TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLARS STOLEN: THE BASCAL SAYS HE IS OFF FOR CANADA.

LAWRENCE, MASS., MARCH 2.—The hitherto quiet town of Methuen is fast gaining notoriety. Now, Charles S. Whittier, the Town Clerk and Treasurer, furnishes the excitement, as developments made to-day prove him a defaulter to the amount of at least \$12,500. Thursday he left town, ostensibly on a visit to his mother, living in Boston, informing his family that he would return Friday. Not arriving last evening the family were disturbed, but being a man apparently above suspicion no alarm was felt by the town officers. To-day a letter was received from him by his wife, dated Boston, March 2, in which he stated that a year ago he found his accounts with the town \$250 short, but hoped during the year to supply the deficiency so as not to make it public. This deficiency, the letter stated, increased during the year to \$600. Fearing detection and arrest he fled and intended to go to Canada. He expressed great sorrow for the act, and said he could not remain, being a disgrace to his family. The letter was immediately shown to the Selectmen by his wife, who thereupon instituted an investigation, when the fact was revealed of a discrepancy in the accounts of over \$12,000. The books were examined by the Auditor of the town two weeks since and found to be apparently straight. It is known that on February 1st there were over \$11,000 to the credit of the town. Since then the taxes paid swelled this amount to over \$12,000. Whittier deposited the funds of the town with the New England Trust Company of Boston, doing business with that company through the Methuen National Bank. The Selectmen ascertained today that on Thursday Whittier drew \$700 of the money of the town from the New England Trust Company, also \$500 from the Methuen National Bank, which was all the money found to the credit of the town deposited in both institutions. Evidently he has been appropriating the funds of the town for the past two years. His whereabouts are as yet unknown, though it is generally believed that he has shaped his course towards Canada. It is known that on his departure, Thursday, he had but little money besides the \$1200 taken from the Trust Company and the Methuen National Bank. Whittier is 45 years of age, has a wife, and a son 18 years of age. He has been Town Treasurer and Clerk since the Fall of 1875, when he was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Charles Pelham. He was generally respected and held in high esteem by his fellow-citizens of both parties, and was a prominent politician and leader of the Butler element, in the town. He was nominated by the Republicans Tuesday evening last, and an effort was also made to secure his nomination by the Democratic caucus Friday evening, but without success. It is believed that a fair test he should be detected at the town meeting Monday, by the anti-Butler element party, hastened his departure from the town. What he did with the money stolen cannot be conjectured. He was a clear-headed business man, and it is not believed that the money was used in speculation. He did not live beyond his means, but was frugal and industrious. Methuen citizens are at loss to understand to what purpose the money had been devoted. He owned no property in his own name, it having been assigned to his wife about a year ago. When assuming the office of Treasurer he furnished bonds in \$25,000, Daniel W. Tenney, J. O. Parker, Leonard Wheeler and Isaac Lancy, four of the most substantial men of the town, becoming his bondsmen. Whittier was with Butler at New Orleans during the war, and afterwards was at Charleston, S. C., and later in Chicago in business, and was burned out in the great fire. Methuen was his native place, and he returned there about six years ago. He was an attendant at the Congregational Church. The affair will have a serious effect on the town meeting, which occurs on Monday, and quite likely the somewhat liberal appropriations proposed will be materially reduced. The Selectmen to-day borrowed sufficient money to meet the demands of the School Department. Whittier was identified prominently in the recent fight over the Postmastership of Methuen in the Butler interest. During the contest he frequently remarked that the town was fast acquiring history.

NEW HAMPSHIRE POLITICS.

Methuen treasurer absconds with the town funds, March 1878

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