

HON. JOHN P. ELKIN, an active and successful young lawyer, a potent factor in the present rapid development of the coal fields of Indiana county, and a prominent republican leader in the Thirty-seventh Senatorial District of Pennsylvania, is a son of Rancis and Elizabeth (Pratt) Elkin, and was born in West Mahoning township, Indiana county, Pennsylvania, January 11, 1860. The Elkin family of Ireland has long been resident in the northern part of the "Emerald Isle." One of its numerous descendants was Francis Elkin, the great-grandfather of Hon. John P. Elkin. He lived to be eighty-nine years of age, and his wife, Elizabeth Elkin, was a daughter of Joseph Hill, who died in 1844, at the remarkable age of one hundred and seven years. Their son, William Elkin (grandfather), was born in 1803, married Martha Beattie and came to Pittsburgh in 1850. Four years later he removed to West Mahoning township, where he still resides, at the ripe old age of eighty-seven years. Their son, Francis Elkin (father), was born at Omagh, county Tyrone, Ireland, May 4, 1830, and came, in 1850, to Pittsburgh, where he learned the rolling-mill trade. He soon removed to West Mahoning township, and after farming for some years, he became a resident of Smicksburg, where he built a foundry and opened a store. In 1874 he went to Wellsville, Ohio, and in company with others, founded the American Tin Plate company, and erected the first mill in this country which ever manufactured tin plate. In 1875 he returned to Smicksburg and resumed his mercantile business, in which he continued until his death, Dec. 12, 1882, when in the fifty-second year of his age. He was a member and vestryman of the Protestant Episcopal church of Smicksburg, and built the present church edifice of that religious denomination at that place. He was a republican, and served his township as school director. Prompt as a business man, honorable as a citizen and scrupulously honest in all of his dealings, he was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He married Elizabeth Pratt, who was born in 1833, in Queens county, Ireland, and came to the United States in 1851. She still resides in Smicksburg, and is a member of the Protestant Episcopal church.

John P. Elkin was reared at Smicksburg, he attended the State Normal school at Indiana and was graduated from that favorably-known institution of learning in the class of 1880. He taught in the common schools of the county for several terms, both before and after his graduation. He began his career as a school-teacher when but fifteen years of age. Many of the boys and girls who went to his schools are now occupying positions of trust in many parts of the county. As a teacher he had the reputation of being a decided success. Desiring another field of work, he quit teaching, determined upon the profession of law, and in 1882 entered the law department of the university of Michigan, and was graduated from that famous institution in 1884, where he carried off the honors of his class, being the orator at the closing exercises. After his graduation he pursued the study of law in the office of the able law firm of Watson & Telford, and was admitted to practice in the several courts of Indiana county in September, 1885. Since then he has been engaged in the active practice of his profession at Indiana. In 1884 he was elected as a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. In 1886 he was re-elected and ran two hundred and seventy-one votes ahead of the republican ticket, headed by James G. Blaine. During his first term he came into notice by championing the oleomargarine act, which became a law after a very exciting contest, between the farmers on one side and the manufacturers of bogus butter on the other. He was chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Reform, and as such had charge of the Constitutional amendment prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors. He was a member of the sub-

committee which drafted the amendment afterwards submitted to a vote of the people. He also served on the committees on judiciary general, retrenchment and reform and library. In 1887 he was a delegate to the State convention which nominated Hart for State treasurer and Mitchell for the supreme bench. In 1890 he was a delegate to the Republican State convention which nominated Hon. George W. Delamater, of Crawford county, for Governor of the "Keystone" Commonwealth. This was one of the fiercest contests in the State, and was won after a three months' canvass.

He united in marriage, on the 17th day of June, A.D. 18814, with Adda P., daughter of John Prothero, president of the First National Bank of Indiana. To their union has been born one child, a daughter, named Helen P.

The subject of this sketch is a member of the Protestant Episcopal church at Indiana. He is president of the Indiana School board and a member of the board of trustees of the State Normal school. His fine law practice and signal success in the political field have not taken his entire time or attention, for he has been largely instrumental, with several others, in developing the Cush creek coal region, and securing the construction of the Cush creek branch of the Jefferson & Clearfield R. R. He is a director of the Homer & Susquehanna railroad, which is now being surveyed with a view of connecting the Cush creek branch with the Indiana branch of the P.R.R. He is also connected with the Gilpin Coal company and various other local enterprises. The coal and coke industry is among the gigantic industrial enterprises that are centred in Western Pennsylvania. Its growth has been as wonderful as its history is marvelous. Fifty years ago it was known, but to-day it is one of the foremost industries of the United States. Some of its rich fields are those of Indiana county, which are being developed by Mr. Elkin and other public-spirited men of this section. John P. Wilkin is of the sturdy Scotch-Irish stock. He has a high standing at the bar, wields great influence in the political field, and has been, throughout the few short years of his public life, a thorough business man of earnest will and vast industry. He is pre-eminently the architect of his own fortune, as he inherited nothing save a strong body and good mind, and his remarkable success is an evidence of what those imperial qualities—energy and decision—can accomplish for their fortunate possessor.