

BY P. GRAY MEEK.

Ink Stings.

-If you didn't have spring fever, on Wednesday, you must certainly be an immune.

-There were a few trout and a great many of ANANIAS' kinsmen caught along Spring creek on Saturday.

-A few gleams of sunshine, a balmy zephyr, or two, gives the average man spring fever, and makes him wish he'd nothing to do.

-The "old man" has had a very bad week of it, but doctors SHIELDS, SHAPLEY and WATSON think they will be able to pull him through.

-It ought not to become necessary to resort to the draft to secure men to make up the 100,000 that LAWTON says will be necessary to pacify the Philippines, so long as there are so many expansionist editors in the country.

-The famous "red book" of the Keystone bank promises to shed as much light over the QUAY proceedings as did the red volume of Spanish government on the conduct of affairs at Madrid during the late unpleasantness.

-We hope the congressional committee that is in Atlantic City talking over the currency question didn't go down there to hear what the wild waves are saying; particularly if those waves are wafting any of that foreign nonsense about monometallicism.

-They can talk as they please about BRYAN's being a back number, but the crowds are still going to hear him speak and they are listening until he has finished, too. The masses are not slow to discover when a man's days of usefulness are over and the fact that they are still following BRYAN comes pretty near being evidence that they want him still.

-The citizens of Potter county, Indiana, are doing a good bit of bragging these days because they have a public school teacher out there who has no arms. She holds her books with her toes and does the finest kind of pen work with the same organs. They didn't say so, but we imagine that she must either be a crack-a-jack contortionist or else she has to stand on her head when she starts putting sums on the black-board for her classes.

-Boss CROCKER has certainly been the boss witness, up to date, in the Tammany investigation that is going on over in New York. His evidence showed very conclusively that it is personal jealousies that have prompted the investigation and the way he shot replies into Mr. Moss was calculated to get even a slower thing than a Moss back up. The people of New York are satisfied with the Tammany rule, because it is the best of any city on the globe and they regard this investigation, more as a joke than anything serious.

-The Philadelphia girl who is suing her former beau for \$15,000,000, which trifling sum she demands as a bail for her shattered heart, says he squeezed her hands until they are likely to be permanently injured. The poor, silly, dough head; he needs to be arrested. Any fellow who don't know that it is a girl's waist, not her hands, that is to be squeezed ought to be made pay for the information. Why some girls squeeze themselves until their eyes are almost popping out of their sockets and they can't take a breath more than one-fiftieth as deep and long as it ought to be.

-It is not good policy for BRYAN or any other Democratic leader to talk about organizing a new Democratic party anywhere. There is but one Democratic doctrine, that of JEFFERSON and JACKSON and talk of a new party comes dangerously near to the mark of political socialism. What ought to be done is to stir the old party up, wherever interest is flagging, and weed out the fellows who imagine themselves bigger than it is and who do not seem to know that the Democratic party won victories and made for good government long before they were even heard of.

-England puts to flight thousands of Chinese with a force of three hundred men and almost at the same time that message came another was received to the effect that we must send one hundred thousand men before we can expect a pacific condition in the Philippines. Of course we do not intend to make comparisons that would be disparaging to our arms, nor could we, for the conditions in China and the Philippines are different, but might we not be led to believe, if it is going to require so many men to conquer the Philippines now, that there have been some considerably doctored reports cabled home about the absolute conquests we have already made over there.

-Now that the Democracy of Pennsylvania has a chairman who will prove a really sagacious and discreet leader, it behooves every member of the party to put his shoulder to the wheel and make for a common strength and unification. Many golden opportunities have slipped by while one or another faction, disappointed at the failure of its favorite to rule, has tried to ruin, or left the successful wing to fight "its own campaign." We have no need for factions in the Democracy party in Pennsylvania and if there ever was a time when a chance to win presented itself it wasn't a circumstance to the present opportunity. Let Democrats be Democrats, stick together and fight the common enemy. Don't bicker and haggle the party strength away over who shall be the leader.

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The Senatorial Vacancy.

For the first time in many years the State of Pennsylvania is represented in the Congress of the United States by but one Senator. It is not certain that this is a source of regret, but it is nevertheless a fact. The Legislature has adjourned, after a session of more than 100 days and left unperformed the duty of electing a Senator. The Republicans had a majority in both branches. In one body the majority amounted to more than two-thirds, and in the other to nearly as great a preponderance. But those who represented that political organization in the Legislature were unable to agree on a Senator. They were of one mind on the question of tariff taxation. They were seemingly in agreement in reference to expansion and imperialism. There was no perceptible division in their ranks on matters of halloo and other reforms, and one faction and the other were equally assiduous in the interest of corporations. But on the matter of dividing the spoils of victory they couldn't agree. In that their selfishness asserted itself and after squabbling for more than three months, they agreed to disagree.

The question now is what will be the consequence. As Mr. QUAY said in his letter to Senator GRADY, of Philadelphia, under date of April 17th, "the State has not perceptibly suffered" on account of the failure to elect a Senator thus far. He might have added that the few Senators there are of the kind Pennsylvania Republicans have been electing the better for the State and the country. But it may be assumed that these perennial place hunters, avaricious for office and the emoluments of office, will not allow this vacancy to exist a day longer than it is necessary. But how will they proceed to fill the position? According to the accepted interpretation of the constitution of the United States the Governor cannot appoint a Senator temporarily, because the vacancy did not happen during a "recess of the Legislature." Then if that be true neither can the Governor summon the Legislature into extraordinary session in order to elect a Senator. The constitution of Pennsylvania invests the executive with that power only when the vacancy occurs "during a recess of the Legislature," and if the Governor can't appoint he can't call the Legislature to elect.

The only legal course that is open under the circumstances is to allow the vacancy to continue until a new Legislature is elected and convened in the regular and usual time and way. The Republican administration in Washington may not relish this solution of the problem, but what of that? News comes from the Philippines that 100,000 troops are needed to subdue the natives of the Asiatic archipelago and rob them of their inherent and "unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and a Senator of the Pennsylvania type might be of vast service in voting the authority to thus pervert the powers of the government and the traditions of the country. We are told that it may be necessary to throw off the mask of benevolence and reveal our real purpose to subdue the Cuban people and take possession of the "Gem of the Antilles," and a Senator of the QUAY brand would be invaluable in such an emergency. But how is the thing to be accomplished?

If the law is respected there will be no trouble about the matter at all, for the people can elect a Democratic Legislature next time and that party will choose a Senator of a character that will guarantee, not only ability but fitness for the office. During the prolonged contest in the Legislature which has just adjourned the proof of this fact was clearly made. No finger of suspicion was pointed toward GEO. A. JENKS. No man doubted the honesty or questioned the ability of that man. Even his bitterest partisan opponent admitted his transcendent merits, and two years hence the Democrats will have a majority in the Legislature to support just such a candidate and elect him too.

Among the laws passed by the Legislature, recently approved by the Governor are the following: Authorizing the courts of common pleas and the orphans' court to enter an order or decree granting to the proper officers of all benevolent and charitable institutions, asylums or corporations the right to bind out and indenture minor children who have been maintained and cared for by said institution, asylum, or corporation for a period of one year or over at the expense, either in whole or in part, of such institution, asylum or corporation; to provide for the preparation and publication of names and records of Pennsylvania volunteers in the Spanish-American war and making an appropriation of \$600 for the clerical work in connection therewith; making an appropriation of \$5,000 for the payment of the expenses of the inauguration of the Governor; extending the benefits of the soldiers' orphans' industrial schools to the children of the honorably discharged soldiers, sailors and marines of the Spanish war.

The Legislature of 1899.

The Legislature of 1899 has become a matter of history, and whether it will develop into a pleasant or horrid memory depends on the view point from which it is regarded. The session was short and that is a virtue and so far as the public is informed, it has added no really vicious legislation to the statute books already overburdened in that respect. Fewer scandals have grown out of its proceedings than came from its immediate predecessor, it may also be said, and that is in its favor. But after all these are negative virtues at best, and positive ones are more to the purpose, as well as more deserving of commendation. The merits of this type which will occur to the mind lie in the fact that an unworthy candidate for Senator in Congress was defeated, notwithstanding he had the caucus endorsement of the dominant party, and that a vigorous and fairly well-directed attempt was made to expose the villainies which had been attempted.

But the fact cannot be denied or concealed that the Legislatures of the State are degenerating, viewed from the standpoint of morality, and the session just ended has emphasized, rather than obscured the fact. In other words the Members of both branches of the Legislature are growing, yearly, more careless of their obligations to themselves and the public. For example, the oath of office to which each one solemnly subscribes, binds him to "support, obey and defend," the constitution of the Commonwealth, and the constitution prescribes certain forms of procedure in enacting legislation. But as a matter of fact these forms are almost entirely disregarded. Morally, if not legally, every such offense is perjury on the part of every Senator and Member who permits it. It may be reasoned that it is the duty of the executive officers of the bodies to enforce these provisions of the constitution. But when a Member permits the violation of any of them he fails in the "defense" of the organic law which he is sworn to make and becomes as culpable as those who actually commit the outrages.

But such complaints may seem hypercritical to the average mind, and a waste of time, when there are more obvious faults to criticize. The Legislature which has just closed was derelict in these matters but it was culpable in others. That is to say it failed in its pledges of reform and that is a sin of commission. Both parties, and all parties for that matter, have been promising ballot reform for some years. Yet during the session which ended this week every opportunity, and there were plenty of them, to put those promises into practice have been neglected. The blame is on the Republican party, it is true, and mainly on the QUAY or regular faction of that party, but the fact stands as a charge against the Legislature and the people will hold it responsible. The Democrats in the body were willing and vigilant in their efforts to fulfill this sacred pledge, but they had not the power to achieve the result by themselves, and the others failed in the assistance which should have been given. In the house the KEATER bill had a majority, but it would have been of little value without the personal registration bill, and that failed even in the House.

Moreover the Legislature of 1899 defaulted in its promises in other important particulars. It was an essentially reform body, according to the platforms on which it was chosen. But when its work is passed in review, what substantial reforms have been accomplished? No bills were passed which will afford better municipal government. No serious attempt was made to equalize taxation, or put upon corporations and wealth a just share of the burdens of administration. No blow was struck or even aimed at profligacy in public affairs. On the contrary various efforts were made, some most insidiously, to multiply offices increase salaries, and they would have been successful if it had not been for the vigilance of the Democratic minority on the floors. These are the facts revealed by the records of the Legislature and they are condemnatory alike of the party in the majority in both branches and the men who compose it. Taking it all in all, the Legislature of 1899 has been grievously disappointing, but the remedy is in the hands of the people. Vote out the Republican party which, however much its membership is divided with regard to men, is a unit with reference to measures that burden and oppress the public.

The question of what faction of the Republican party in Centre county will control things at the next county convention is already a much mooted one among the politicians. It seems to us that there is no question about it. The QUAY people have the patronage and if they can't win with such a trump card they ought to go out of business.

The Blair county fellows who were hauled up before an Altoona justice, on Monday evening, for having stolen a stone fence ought to have been discharged and rewarded for their unsurpassable nerve.

The Bribery Investigation.

The committee appointed by the Legislature to investigate the charges of bribery in connection with the consideration of the McCARRELL bill, has completed its labors and made its report. That is to say the examination of witnesses has been brought to an end, the summarizing and codification of the testimony finished and the findings of the gentlemen who conducted the inquiry laid before the House and the public. All that remains to perfect the work of exposing and punishing the crimes which have been attempted, if not perpetrated, must be performed in the courts. As was said in these columns some time ago, if the courts will be as faithful to their obligations as the committee has been, the people will have neither reason nor right to complain.

It is not surprising that two reports have been submitted by the committee which has made the inquiry in question, and it may be added that the division of the committee is not a subject of astonishment. When the matter was first undertaken, the selection of men to perform the duties was left to the Speaker of the House. He named five gentlemen, only one of whom ought to have been considered. Mr. KNEPPS had publicly denounced the enterprise as the product of the brain of political guerrillas. Mr. VOORHEES had declared his conviction that no investigation would investigate and the proposed one, like its predecessors, would prove a farce. Mr. TIGHE had nothing to recommend him for the service, except an uncoincidental sympathy with those implicated in the charges and Mr. SKINNER had previously declared that he would not engage in the work. Besides this all of these gentlemen had supported the measure, the consideration of which created the scandal. General KOONTZ, alone, of the men named by the Speaker was in sympathy with the work to be performed, and consequently was the only one eligible to a place on the committee, if the object was to expose, rather than conceal, the truth. Subsequently the Speaker named Mr. McCLAIN of Lancaster, to fill the place made vacant by the declination of SKINNER and the House, having discovered that it had been ennobled by the chair, added Messrs. POW, Philadelphia; RANDALL, Chester; DIXON, Elk, and YOUNG, of Tioga. In the reports the committee divided on the lines created by the Speaker. That is to say four of the five men named by the Speaker, after having hampered the inquiry from beginning to end, reported in favor of practically nullifying its labors, and the one fit man appointed by the Speaker and the four selected by the House took the opposite course. Candor compels the acknowledgment that there is practically no difference in the interpretation of the evidence brought out by the inquiry. Both reports admit the attempt at corrupt solicitation and fasten the offense on the same persons. That much was inevitable for the reason that the proof was overwhelming. But the agreement ends there. The majority report recommends the appointment of a prosecuting committee by the House and the other remits it to the uncertain realm of ordinary criminal jurisprudence. In other words the majority report would make the prosecution as certain and the punishment as sure as the inquiry was searching and impartial, and the other would make subsequent proceedings as uncertain as the investigation would have been farcical if it had been left to the committee named by the Speaker.

One Gained and One Lost. The Pennsylvania State College appropriation bill was finally passed by the recent Legislature in its original form, carrying \$66,557.00. The bill had been passed by the House but was cut down in the Senate to nearly \$40,000. The House raised it to the original figure, however, and the Senate concurred, so that the Centre county institution will be among the favored, if the Governor signs the bill. The CARNEGIE library bill, unfortunately was lost. It was a splendid measure and had the Legislature done nothing more than accept Mr. CARNEGIE'S offer, without making the appropriation binding it, a great service would have been done to the State. The bill was lost in committee, however, and State College has lost an opportunity for a much needed library building.

QUAY'S fight in the Legislature is ended. He lost his battle, but in doing so he prevented the election of any one else to his place. He must now go before the people of the State and win enough Legislators to insure his election at the next session, two years hence. With all the patronage at his command through Senator PENROSE and the leverage that the appointment of hundreds of census takers will give him we would not be surprised to see Pennsylvania Republicanism barter itself, body and soul, for the spoils he will have to offer.

Piling on the White Man's Burden.

From the Pittsburgh Post. The promising expedition to the south of Manila, to the region about Laguna bay, does not seem to have met with success encouraging its prosecution, and General Lawton has been ordered back to Manila, evacuating the territory and the towns he occupied. This is a reverse, and shows the Filipinos capable of determined resistance at all points so far assailed. It is hinted that General Lawton will be sent to cooperate with the column under General Americans posted on the Philippines sprung into life in their rear. An unseasoned Associated Press dispatch to San Francisco steamer gives a gloomy picture of the war a month ago about Manila, with burning houses and towns, night attacks, the uncomplaining sick and wounded and the thin line 25 miles long of entrenched soldiers. The country is described as the best possible for defense and the worst for offensive operations.

It is clear in every line of the Manila news that the gallant American army is overmatched, not alone in men, but by the climate and the jungles and swamps. It is the duty of the administration, having forced this war on the country, to support our brave soldiers in the field. Political considerations should not be allowed to stand in the way of massing an army of a hundred thousand men in the Philippines demanded by General Lawton as necessary for the work in hand. It may not be popular in a political sense, but has been made necessary in a military sense. Let there be draft if necessary to a full realization of the white man's burden in this crazy enterprise.

The Deserters Were Few.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer. In the interest of truth the War department should give us the exact number of deserters among the 100,000 volunteers in the recent war. There is a dark side to many a noble picture, and war has several such. The commutation by President McKinley of the sentences of three Pittsburg volunteers who ran away, has developed the fact that the military prison at St. Augustine contained at different times during the winter, more than one hundred men, mainly undergoing short sentences for desertion, and that there are about that many there now. But this could not have been the total number, nor were these all there for desertion. Some were sent thither for insubordination, or drunkenness and neglect of duty, and similar army offenses.

Doubtless there are some thin-skinned persons who believe that this issue should be closed, but they are mistaken in that notion. Aside from the fact that the public has a right to know how many deserters there really were, a patriotic regard for the preservation of discipline in the army makes it necessary that desertion should be made as shameful as possible. But there is another reason why we should have all the facts, for we are confident that they will show a very small percentage of deserters, and practically none where the men were actually engaged in warfare.

We Ought Not to Do It.

From the Lancaster Intelligencer. It is curious to note a sudden change of tone in the British comments upon the value of the Philippines. Lately they have been extolling these islands in order that they might encourage the new American policy of expansion, but the New York Herald and several other newspapers are kicking up some dust over a suggestion that the Philippines shall be traded off for the British West Indies. The London newspapers take this very seriously, and the value of the Philippines at once falls in their estimation. If there is a trade in the wind John Bull will not be caught napping by brother Jonathan, and the value of the Philippines must be talked down, even if the same papers have been calling them cheap at twenty millions and a native war. But, seriously, the swapping of islands does not appeal to us. We do not want West Indies any more than East Indies. The question of the day is simply, shall we or shall we not enlarge our national domain, already ample, increasing our troubles of government, already great?

Bereaved American Mothers Would be Eager for Such a Trade.

From the New York Sun. Who would surrender the great results of a little war for the return of what it has cost? -Derwickster Daem. Well Senator Hoar would, for example. So would the Hon. Carl Schurz. So would William Jennings Bryan and others. But that is not the extent of their willingness to surrender. They would surrender the great results of a little war, without even asking for the return of what the war has cost.

Now that we have a good state chairman and a competent executive committee backing him isn't it about time for all Democrats to pull together.

Subscribe for the WATCHMAN.

Spawls from the Keystone.

-Saturday evening in Williamsport, as a runaway horse belonging to Charles Snyder, of Montoursville, was rounding a corner it fell, striking its head on the stone pavement. The animal was instantly killed.

-W. H. Sweet, one of the leading coal operators of the Broad Top region, recently closed a contract with a Philadelphia firm for 100,000 tons of coal, to be delivered during the year ending April 1st, 1900, from his Dudley mines.

-At Williamsport Saturday, a horse belonging to A. S. Winner, after being unhitched at the barn, frightened by an approaching train and tried to run across the tracks. It was struck by the pilot of the engine and disembowled. The animal died in a few minutes.

-John Rohn, aged 80 years, a wealthy lumberman operating a sawmill at Three Runs, Clearfield county, has been missing for over a week, and 60 men are searching for him. He went from the mill into the woods with considerable money and it is feared that he has been robbed and murdered.

-The Elk county commissioners have fixed the salaries of the officials in charge of the Elk county poor home: Superintendent J. W. DeHass, formerly of Beech Creek, will receive 600; Dr. A. Mullhapp, \$150; matron Mrs. J. W. DeHass, \$200 and assistant matron Grace A. Chamberlin, \$3.50 weekly.

-The March pay day on the Beech Creek railroad was one of the largest in the history of that road. Nearly \$50,000 was distributed among the employes of the company, and of that amount \$35,000 was received by the employes who are located at Jersey Shore. The traffic on the road during March was immense.

-At Williamsport, Sunday afternoon, R. W. Wilbur, of Franklin street, delirious from the effects of typhoid fever and during the temporary absence of the nurse, attempted to cut his throat with a pair of scissors. He was so weak, however, that he only succeeded in inflicting a small scratch. He was afterwards removed to the hospital.

-The Clearfield lumber company, whose immense saw mill on the north branch of Blacklick creek, at Vintondale, near the old Ritter furnace, has a capacity of 60,000 feet per day, will build a railroad spur to the Blacklick branch to haul the logs to the mill at Vintondale. By loading the bark on the cars in the woods only one handling will be necessary.

-John Hoover, a Zoo keeper, at the gardens in Philadelphia, was badly torn and bitten by a treacherous tiger as he entered the cage to clean it out on Monday afternoon. The beast sprang at him with all fury and the force of the spring against the side of the cage saved Hoover's life and enabled him to escape through the door which was within reach.

-Miss Minnie Rinehart, a dwarf, daughter of Jonas Rinehart, of Potter township, Lycoming county, died at her home a few days ago, after a long illness. She was 20 years old and was only 28 inches tall. Her small size was due to an injury to the spine by a fall on the ice when the child was four years old. The accident incapacitated her from walking. Her remains were interred at Jersey Shore.

-J. Frank Gray, a prominent Quaker leader of Jersey Shore, Monday filed a petition at Harrisburg, for a rule to issue in quo warranto on sheriff J. A. Gamble, of Lycoming county, to show cause why he shall not be removed from office. The charges as filed are that sheriff Gamble's election to his office was tainted with fraud. Attorney General Elkin has fixed Tuesday, April 25th, as the day for hearing the argument.

-W. J. Nichols, who is wanted in Jefferson and Armstrong counties on the charge of burglary, was captured at DuBois Saturday afternoon. The prisoner was taken to a hotel to await departure of a train. He there eluded the officers, and jumping from a second story window, escaped. He was, however, again captured the same evening at Sabula, six miles east of DuBois, on a train going east. He is charged with robbing stores.

-There is a curious old Bible in the possession of C. A. Lamborn's family at Coalport which they prize very highly. It is known as the "Breeches" Bible and is a very rare edition, only two others being in existence, and they were printed in London in 1599. It is called a "Breeches" Bible because the word "breeches" occurs in the seventh paragraph of the third chapter of Genesis. The word is called "apron" in our Bibles. The book has been handed down from generation to generation through the Lamborn family.

-The bill providing the minimum school term to be seven months will not effect the present school term, but will go into effect after the closing of the school year ending the first Monday in June, 1899. It provides, however, that the annual term may remain as at present in districts where the maximum amount of tax allowed by law to be levied for school purposes, together with the state appropriation to which such districts are entitled, shall be found insufficient to keep the schools open a greater length of time than six months.

-It is understood that as a consequence of the recent resignation of general manager J. D. Layng, general manager of the West Shore and Beech Creek railroads, and the complete control of the Fall Brook railroad by the New York Central, the Fall Brook and Beech Creek roads will, on May 1st, be consolidated as the Pennsylvania division of the New York Central, with headquarters in New York. The Beech Creek offices will remain in the Reading terminal, in Philadelphia, but will have charge only of the fuel and freight departments which will be removed to the Grand Central Station in New York. F. E. Herriman, the present general freight and passenger agent of the Beech Creek railroad, will be transferred to New York, where his duties will relate solely to the fuel traffic, with jurisdiction over the Philadelphia office. No superintendent, it is said, has yet been selected for the new Pennsylvania division of the New York Central, which will extend from Lyons, N. Y., to Williamsport, and from Jersey Shore to Patton, in this State.