

—Chicago is to have 85c gas. It always was cheap in the Windy City.

—The ground-hog will need a looking glass today if he hopes to see his shadow.

—As a winter month January did make a miserable fist of it, didn't it?

—Unless our Legislators at Harrisburg get down to work right quick that \$500 won't see them through.

—How happy we will all be when NICK and ALICE get married. Then there will be something else to read about.

—So Mr. HEISLER is the nominee of the Republicans of Spring township for school director! How proud they must be.

—Let us hope that February will bring enough winter to relieve the suspense of the ice man and fix it up a little with the plumber.

—Every body seems to be taking a fall out of the railroads. The power of the pass that was just becoming apparent to the public.

—Think of it! There were 25,535 accidental injuries to persons on the railroads of Pennsylvania last year and 3,460 of them proved fatal.

—LEANDER GREEN says if you want the black hand society to scare the cows off Bellefonte's streets elect him to the office of high constable.

—The speediest way to stop the rebate injustice in the insurance business is for persons to write no business with companies that offer rebates.

—No, dear, it is safe to assert that no invitations to the ROOSEVELT-LONGWORTH wedding have been received in Centre county, else they would have been heard of ere this.

—Mr. defunct LEE PLUMMER has declared for local option. It was local option that killed him last fall; that is the option that every individual had of voting for him or BERRY.

—It remained for a Frenchman to drive an automobile two miles in less than one minute at the Ormond, Florida, races the other day. The French always did have the reputation of being fast.

—One baby in eight years is the record of a fashionable street in Chicago. The name of the street is not published, but it is probably some high sounding Boulevard, whereas it should be called Capon Row.

—The \$10 forfeit that the Pennsylvania Railroad company demands on mileage books means a sum of money almost beyond conception tied up in the coffers of that great corporation. It is estimated that the interest on this excess charge amounts to \$94,284 annually.

—In Milwaukee the Socialist Democrats have adopted a platform demanding that the city put bath rooms in the poor people's homes, give them free medical attendance, free hospital service and free legal advice. Isn't it funny that the Milwaukee-ites didn't ask for free beer.

—J. J. BINGHAM, of Lykens, Pa., wants to know which is more serviceable to mankind—gold or steel? Uncle RUSSELL SAGE and ANDY CARNEGIE might enlighten the gentleman in such a manner as to leave him more perplexed than ever as to the relative service of the two metals.

—A Stroudsburg baby swallowed an old PENNYPACKER campaign button and nearly choked to death, which isn't to be wondered at when we think of the number of adult Republicans in Pennsylvania who swallowed PENNYPACKER several years ago and have been choking ever since.

—The President would like to have the letters he wrote to COL. MANN about *Fads and Fancies*, that notorious black-mailing publication in New York, returned to him. Being the President his wish will probably be complied with, but being the President or any other honorable gentleman they should never have been written.

—"SCOTTY," the millionaire miser of Death Valley, California, has visited Philadelphia and the leeches down there say he is a fake because he didn't throw any of his money away. Perhaps it wasn't "SCOTTY's" fault at all. Those Philadelphia may have been too slow to get any of the wad that was as big as a piano leg.

—The total indebtedness of the borough of Bellefonte, covering everything, appears to be \$108,438.81. When it is considered that we have a water works worth \$150,000.00 at least, along with several public buildings and properties of considerable value, we can't see so much use of worry. Besides, expenses will be much lower for the next ten years, at least, and the debt can either be materially reduced or taxes lowered.

—A rather interesting phase of the silver question has developed lately, and is likely to give the free-silverite a chance for a few tawdry years. The demand for silver in Russia, China, Japan and India, coupled with the great scarcity of subsidiary coin in this country has advanced the price of silver considerably; in fact so much in excess of the supply is the demand that the poor, discredited half-priced Mexican coin, that was so persistently flaunted in the face of BRYAN ten years ago has actually risen to a premium over gold and today is selling for more than its face value. While this condition of affairs bears out the theory that the value of money is regulated by the law of supply and demand it also combats the contention that the government stamp fixes its value permanently.

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What of the Borough Debt.

The ill-informed gentlemen who are persistently circulating rumors of the overwhelming indebtedness of Bellefonte, as a result of recent public improvements that have proven both pleasing and beneficial to all, would save themselves as being branded as either liars or asses if they were to state the whole truth, instead of only half-truths, as they are doing.

The WATCHMAN has never taken a part in local politics other than to urge the election of the best men—who are usually found on the Democratic ticket—and does not propose to enter the contest this spring, but duty and candor both call for a fair and truthful statement of the borough's financial condition in order that justice may be done those who have had it in charge.

According to the statement of the auditors published on March 2nd, 1903, the debt of the borough, bonded and floating, over and above all the assets such as uncollected duplicates, cash on hand, sinking fund, etc., was \$104,319.25. The actual debt of the borough today is:

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. Includes Original Bond Issue, Special Bond Issue, Note in 1st National Bank, Note held by Geo. B. Meek, Note held by Harry Keller, Note held by Mrs. W. Reeder, etc.

From this it will be seen that today the total indebtedness of the Borough over all assets is only \$108,438.81. Three years ago it was \$104,319.25. THE INCREASE OF INDEBTEDNESS IN THE PAST THREE YEARS HAS BEEN ONLY \$4,119.56. This covers everything. No matter what others may tell you concerning the borough's financial condition this statement cannot be refuted because it is taken from the books of the treasurer and tax collectors.

With an increase of only \$4,119.56 in the total indebtedness of the borough what has been done within the last two years and see if you will not agree with us that the money has been well spent and the small increase of indebtedness warranted.

The new Phoenix pumping station has been installed at great expense, but to give you an idea of what an ultimate saving it will be we need only refer you to the auditor's statement of 1903 in which it is shown that fuel alone for the water works cost \$4,870.75. This year the full bill will be but \$300. A saving of \$4,570.75 on a single item.

1300 feet of 12 inch water main were laid from the diamond to the reservoir, thus greatly improving the water service of the North ward.

400 feet of new sewer was laid on Bishop street.

600 feet of new sewer was laid on South Spring street.

600 feet of sewer was laid on High street.

2450 feet of sewer was laid in the West ward.

The handsome new concrete and brick bridge over the race on High street was planned and built and, most important of all, and most conspicuous in its beauty and durability is the Water street wall and walk; the greatest public improvement ever made in Bellefonte and a lasting monument to the men about whose heels a lot of local puppies are barking as if mad because they have no share in carrying them to completion.

All this has been done, and more, and the borough debt has grown only \$4,119.56.

Miss Roosevelt's Wedding.

That "everybody loves a lover" is axiomatic and the movements of Miss ALICE ROOSEVELT, daughter of the President, who is soon to become a bride, are not only matters of social interest but of public concern. From all accounts Miss ROOSEVELT is a charming young woman. That is to say she is of good figure, fairly handsome in feature, marvelously energetic, and reasonably amiable in disposition. Naturally under such circumstances there is a good deal of popular desire to observe her movements and keep in view her personality. But it is also proverbial that one can get too much of a good thing.

No fair-minded man or woman in this broad land would grudge the President's daughter a scintilla of the enjoyment which her present situation affords. It is a rare period in the life of a healthy and hopeful young woman when she is approaching that change in her relationship to the social world which is marked by her marriage to the man of her choice and the hero of her imagination. As a matter of fact it transports her into what may be characterized as a sacred stage which the modest maiden worships in secrecy and dwells upon in silence. It is a happy, hopeful, enthusiastic, exclusive period in her life which shrinks from public inspection.

It is not unkind, therefore, to say that Miss ROOSEVELT has been too open in her

love affair. To the over-censorious mind it may seem that such reflections are ungracious because if Miss ROOSEVELT wants to carry her heart on her sleeve and indulge in billing and cooing in public view she has a right to do so to her heart's content. But the truth is that willingly or unwillingly she has become the representative of that modest American maidenhood which is the pride of every American man and woman and in her too public courting she does injustice to the character. Besides there is danger of the turning of the head of a girl under such circumstances.

First Duty of Reformers.

The zeal with which the machine managers in the Legislature are pressing the so-called civil service bill confirms the suspicion expressed in these columns that the purpose of that measure is to prevent a re-organization of the force in the State Treasury. From the moment the results of the election were revealed an attempt to put the affairs of the department in order has been in progress. Invalid and invaluable bonds have been replaced by such securities for deposits as will come within the provisions of the law and other forms of reform have been inaugurated. But after all there is a delinquency to be covered up and the only hope of accomplishing it is in continuing the machine emissaries in control.

In pressing the legislation the bogus pretense is made that public sentiment in this State has long demanded civil service legislation. Both parties, they say, have promised it year after year in convention platforms, which is true. But the real demand of public sentiment as expressed in the result of the last election is that the rascals be turned out and all other reforms are secondary to that. For years the machine has been perfecting a structure of fraud and building up an organization of venals. No enduring improvement in the public service can be effected until the primary work of turning them out is accomplished and the effort to defeat it by legislation such as that contained in the pending bill will be an insult to the conscience of the Commonwealth.

Every department of the state government is at present honeycombed with vice. The agents of the machine managers are entrenched in the places of power and however the head of departments may try they can't procure genuine improvement until every one of these corrupt agents are out. State Treasurer BERRY has been commissioned by the people to cleanse the Treasury department but he must fail if he is hampered by legislation which will continue the crooks responsible for the wretched conditions in power. After there has been a complete change in the personnel of the departments civil service legislation will be in order and beneficial. But for the present it can work no result other than the gravest evils and reformers should govern themselves accordingly.

The President Was Amused.

The Gridiron club, a social and more or less hilarious organization, gave the President an interesting and amusing exhibition of canal building at its annual dinner in Washington the other night. The club is composed of newspaper writers whose experience as Washington correspondents has given them a rather clear understanding of a and a tolerably clear insight into public affairs. Like all intelligent and practical men, they have formed a rather contemptuous opinion of the operations looking toward the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama and by a "skit," improvised for the occasion they expressed their notions with characteristic freedom.

The principal guest of the occasion was the President of the United States and the object of the "skit" was to show him and the others how stupidly extravagant and senseless is the work being performed on the Isthmus under the sanction of the government. The first exhibit was the appearance on the stage of a promoter with an arm full of money which was scattered about among the natives and adventurers with a reckless abandon that was amazing. After him followed press agents and sinners of various types in the character of engineers, contractors, loafers and others which put upon the affair so realistic an aspect that every incident of the long drawn out fraud was presented.

It is said that the President was greatly amused by the exhibition of his own folly and that of others, but there has been no hint that the obvious purpose of the presentation will be fulfilled. That is to say, there are no indications that the faults in the management of the enterprise will be corrected or the extravagances abated. The President laughed heartily at the wilful waste of the resources of the public but indicated no purpose to alter the methods or check the abuses. He is content, and so long as the burden falls on the shoulders of the people he sees no reason to call a halt. But there were a number of Senators and Representatives present, and they may adopt a different idea of the lesson.

Insurance Commissioner's Fees.

The revelations of the past week concerning graft in the Insurance Department are both interesting and startling. It appears that the fees drawn by Mr. DURHAM far exceeded even the most extravagant conjecture, and amounted to more than \$50,000 a year. Out of this generous sum he allowed the actuary to retain three or four thousand dollars annually. But under the law ten times that amount belonged to the actuary so that the commissioner's graft from that single source amounted to upward of \$30,000 a year. The big insurance companies paid the money willingly, we are informed. It created a source of graft for the dishonest officers of those institutions.

There is likely to be an investigation of this peculiar scandal and we hope it will be searching and thorough. The \$50,000 received through the actuary and from other odds and ends of graft do not represent the sum total to Commissioner DURHAM'S swag. It may be shown that part of the money paid by the New York Life Insurance companies for legislation through Judge ALEXANDER found its way into his pockets. In fact the president of a Philadelphia company has testified that \$7,500 was paid to the Dauphin county Congressman, a machine leader of considerable influence, to control legislation, and DURHAM wasn't in the habit of letting such opportunities escape him.

In any event we have enough information to make more attractive. Fifty thousand dollar jobs are rare and usually go to men who earn them by assiduous and intelligent effort. But it is a matter of record that Insurance Commissioner DURHAM was neither assiduous nor intelligent in the performance of his duty. As a matter of fact he gave no time and little attention to the work but pocketed the immense fees which ought to have gone into the treasury of the State or been left in the strong boxes of the insurance companies. The investigation has been ordered, however, and we shall await the result with interest if not with patience.

General Grosvenor's Reform.

Of course General GROSVENOR, of Ohio, was influenced by no just or proper impulse in proposing to strike \$10,000,000 from the appropriation to compensate the railroads for carrying the mails. General GROSVENOR is a gross spoilsman who revolts at no iniquity that does not impair his own resources or interfere with his own graft. Because, therefore, the railroads declined to continue his free transportation, he has moved to the suggestion and not for the reason that the excessive appropriation worked a robbery of the people. If the pass had been renewed the robbery might have gone on forever, so far as he was concerned. Despoiling the public was a matter of no interest to him.

But there is reason in his proposition, nevertheless. The railroads are vastly overpaid for their services in carrying the mails. For example the government builds the cars and after they are built pays the railroad companies for the use of them. Then the railroads charge for running them over the road and add a high rate of freight charge for the mail matter carried within them. These charges combined create a form of extortion unparalleled in the history of business. The treasury is melted "ooming or going" and there are ample reasons why it should be stopped. But GROSVENOR is hardly the man to lead the movement. His identity with it implies insincerity.

The mail service costs the government for carriage alone something like \$60,000,000 a year. That is not simply ten but probably twenty millions of dollars a year in excess of just compensation. But it is a trifle singular that the conscience of Congress was never touched until the railroads cut off the passes of the members and then only by a notorious corruptionist like GROSVENOR. It cannot be said that Senators and Representatives in Congress were unaware of the outrage. As a matter of fact it has been discussed on the floor of both chambers frequently and commented upon by the newspapers at various times. We hope, however, that it will be made an issue now.

WATCHMAN readers in Ferguson and College townships don't want to forget the Odd Fellows festival at Pine Grove Mills, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday of next week. These annual festivals of the Pine Grove Odd Fellows always prove very enjoyable occasions and this year's promises to be on a par with those held in the past.

Just as we go to press the new reaches us that Congressman Dresser has recommended the reappointment of Mr. John Start as postmaster at State College. This will be a surprising disappointment to our friend Philip Foster, who confidently counted that he was the fellow who was certain of this plan.

Subscribe for the WATCHMAN.

Clean Off Their Trolley.

From the Johnstown Democrat. In 1896 there was a per capita circulation of \$2. At the present time there is a per capita circulation of \$32. The present rate of gold production indicates that there will be a steady increase in the volume of money. Nevertheless the very men who a few years ago were contending that there was money enough in the country now raise the cry of "more money." Not only do they want more money, but they advocate giving national banks the privilege of "wild catting." The truth is that the "more money" wail is the last resort of a crowd playing a colossal gambling game. One set of men who have staked their all on maintaining prices is being pinched by another set bound on beating down prices, and so the "more money" cry arises. It is not money for legitimate business that is desired, but money for gambling. In fact, hundreds of "honest money" advocates of a few years ago are now strenuously insisting on a dishonest asset currency. They want a circulating medium that will stretch, an "elastic currency" if you please. It might not be impertinent to inquire as to what has become of the gold standard that was to meet all demands and present an honest foundation for "honest money"? In fact, what has become of the "safe and sane," "national honor" crowd? A few years is certainly playing strange tricks with those who plot and plan against the public good.

Triumphant Democracy.

President Eliot, Harvard University. The great movement of the world to-day is toward Democracy. The great keynote of the present century that we are just entering upon will be Democracy in all things. One hundred years from now the population of our country, which is now for the most part wilderness, will be beyond any present conception, and this great nation will be the most Democratic that the world has ever known. The progress of Democracy will be the great feature of the advance civilization in the present century.

If this is to be sound, the character of our people must be as sound as their proficiency in the arts, in commerce, in government. Though critics of Democracy claim that Democracy has destroyed some of the finer characteristics of the older days, such as reverence of children toward parents, pupil toward teacher, the people toward their rulers, there is in all these relations a more genuine relation than formerly, though these relations have changed. No nation in the world has such reverence for women as have the men of this great Republic. Our reverence for symbols has diminished, but not for the ideals which these material signs of religion and love of country stand for.

Worthy of Serious Thought.

From Address of Jas. J. Hill, to St. Paul Commercial Club. "Our public domain is exhausted. Last year over a million people came from across the Atlantic to the United States, and the natural increase certainly is a million and a half more. What is to become of these people? They are to be driven fairly into the factories and workshops and no place else. They can leave our country and go to the Canadian Northwest, as many have gone. But that country will be populated to its extent very soon, much sooner than you think. It has not an unlimited area.

"Try and cast your mind twenty or twenty-five years ahead. At that time we should have 150,000,000 or 160,000,000 of people. Where are they going? Who is going to feed them? They can manufacture. We have the raw material. We have the coal and the iron and the copper and the lead. They can manufacture. Who will buy it?"

"We have got to a point where we are selling our heritage; we are selling our rich deposits of iron and our coal and our rich soil, and exhausting it as well. People of other countries are exercising the utmost, closest intelligence in everything that pertains to economy in production.

Getting All There Is in It.

From the Montgomery Advertiser. Some of the Kansas farmers are dead bent on getting all they can out of corn. After saving some of the grain for animal and human food they make a more or less palatable brand of whisky of the remainder. Then they grind up the cobs and get from them "genuine maple syrup," after which the ground cob product is dried and sold as first-class breakfast food. Corn in Kansas is a great crop.

Boys Who Do Six Things.

Senator Dilliver's Lecture at Baltimore. I recently took a census of New York's big men, and I discovered that every one who had a hand in doing the big things came from the farm. The only man born in New York who has got big is Theodore Roosevelt. How that happened is a mystery, unless we attribute it to the fact that he got out of the city in time and went to the country.

How He Made It.

From the Chattanooga News. An editor in Ohio who started about twenty years ago with fifteen cents in new worth \$100,000. His accumulation of wealth is owing to his frugality, strict attention to business and the fact that an uncle died and left him \$99,980.

Spawls from the Keystone.

—Charles Miller, of Tyrone, a telegrapher, has patented a device for coaling locomotives while in motion, even going at the speed of fifty miles an hour.

—Owing to the crowded condition of the public schools of Mount Union, the Senior class has been put on half time and only recite during the half days.

—At the annual meeting of the directors of the Lock Haven Fire Brick company the services of C. V. Hackman, of Clearfield, were engaged as superintendent, vice David Solomon, whose continued poor health causes him to retire.

—It is at present estimated that there are fully 1,500 men, including laborers and engineers of all classes, at work on the new Franklin-Clearfield railway being built over the Beech Creek route by the Lake Shore company in Pennsylvania.

—Rev. L. B. Kephart, D. D., one of the ablest and best known Bishops of the United Brethren church, who is well known to many of our people, died suddenly last week while on a visit to Indiana Central college at Indianapolis, Ind., aged 72 years.

—James M. Edwards, of Osceola, has made a valuable find in the shape of a tract of over five hundred acres of vacant land in Bloom township, Clearfield county. The application to the State for the land has been approved by the proper authorities at Harrisburg.

—Fred Fall, a Tunkhannock young man was recently arrested on the peculiar charge of stealing hair from the tails of live horses and conveying it to prisoners in the jail to make watch chains. He was convicted, was fined \$25 and costs and sent to jail to serve time, as he could not pay it.

—Mrs. Sale Stevens, an aged lady of Shingle House, Potter county, who had been in ill health, slipped on the ice the other day and the shock led to her death. Mr. Stevens, a man ninety-four years of age, saw her as she slipped and went to her rescue, when he also fell and broke three ribs and now is in a critical condition.

—Mrs. Mary L. Merrill, widow of the late William Merrill, deceased, of Kylertown, died on Thursday evening at the home of her daughter, Mrs. D. W. Roof, in Clearfield. She was the daughter of John Welch, deceased, one of the pioneer residents of Lawrence township, Clearfield county, and was aged about 77 years.

—General manager W. W. Atterbury, of the Pennsylvania Railroad company, has announced the successor of master mechanic Geo. W. Stratton at Altoona, who will be retired according to the rules of the pension department of the company on January 31st. He has appointed I. B. Thomas, now master mechanic of the Pittsburg shops.

—While at work on his farm, a mile north of East Bloomsburg, J. P. Frederick, of Bloomsburg, discovered a vein of coal that promises to be of great value. Frederick was getting out stone to build the foundation of a house, and had dug down several feet when the black vein was struck. On examination it was found to be anthracite coal.

—Newberry is to have a new industry in the shape of a plant for the manufacture of high carbon steel fence posts. Work at building the plant has been in progress for some time, and it is expected to have it in readiness to start work in about ten days. The plant will employ about ten men and the output will be 2,500 posts per day.

—While seated with his family, Wednesday, Tobias Schindler, of Pottstown, aged 81, who had been blind for thirteen years, suddenly started them by the statement that he saw again. They were inclined to treat his startling announcement as the vagary of an aged mind; but, to their astonishment, he snatched up a newspaper and started to read it.

—Nearly all of the twenty-seven applications for license in Indiana county had remonstrances filed against them, the petitions containing anywhere from 25 to 500 names. After going through the list Judge Telford adjourned court without having disposed of any of the applications and as yet there has been no date set for granting or refusing the licenses.

—Since apple shipments began last fall and up to the present time 100 carloads of apples have been shipped from points on the Bedford division to eastern markets. This means 50,000 bushels of apples at a price which gives the apple growers about \$40,000. Think of what Bedford county can be worth. This does not include shipments from points on the Huntingdon and Broad Top railroad.

—Being an applicant for his own marriage license, issuing it and paying the fee to himself, is an honor few matrimonial aspirants are afforded, but this is the sequel to a happy event which occurred at Millintown recently, when Harvey C. Burkett, register and recorder of Millfin county, one of Lewis-town's most popular citizens, was united in marriage to Miss Louise McClellan, daughter of Captain and Mrs. Cornelius McClellan.

—Three hundred men are on a strike at the American Window glass house, at Jeannette, because of new regulations which involve turns of twelve hours instead of eight, the turn on Saturday eight instead of six hours and the men to go to work at 10 o'clock Sunday night instead of 12. The wages have also been reduced about one-third. The company is endeavoring to fill the places of the strikers and no attempt has been made to effect a compromise.

—Henry Lear, former president of the Doylestown, Pa., National bank, which failed several years ago, has been sentenced by Judge McPherson, in the United States district court, to five years' imprisonment in the eastern penitentiary for embezzling the funds of the bank. This is a minimum sentence. An appeal was immediately taken to the circuit court of appeals and Lear was admitted to bail in the sum of \$10,000, pending the determination of the appeal.

—Miss Julia Duganne was awarded a verdict for \$6,684 in the Blair county court, at Altoona Friday, to compensate her for injuries done to her nervous system by reason of acts of negligence of the Altoona and Logan Valley railway company. Miss Duganne was aboard the run-away car that dashed over the side of the Gaysport bridge and down a forty-foot embankment to the Juniata river. It was alleged that the fright from this perilous ride has left her a physical wreck.