

Just two weeks until Christmas. Tuesday sent Indian summer to the happy hunting grounds. The twelve degrees above zero weather of yesterday started more than one couple to hugging—the stove. The difference between a good fellow and a good man can very often be detected by watching where his evenings are spent. It is not surprising since Dr. PLETCHER is so daft on perfect mastication, that he should be "chewing the rag" so much about it. Anyway WILLIAM WATSON, the English poet, had the good taste to express his contempt for the ASQUITHS in right pleasing verse. With our transport stuck in the mud en route it would be a great joke if those Nicaraguans were to send a boat up to help pull it off. President TAFT wants the magazines to pay a higher rate of postage. Surely not while those South African tales are running in Scribner's. With Christmas only two weeks off you had better begin that shopping before the other people have taken the things you are thinking of buying. The Duke of the ARBUZZI has decided to come back and try it again. Faint hearted ne'er you fair lady nor one pull separate Pa ELKINS from his wad. CANNON's foes have quailed before CANNON's roar and now it is announced that they do not expect to unseat the Speaker before next session. How nice. Anyway if President TAFT didn't make any promises in his first message he will be that much better off than his predecessor who made so many and fulfilled so few. This is the time for those baseball magnates to have their war. Next summer they will be too busy playing ball to bother about who is president of the National association. If MORGAN buys up all the life insurance companies let's pass a law requiring them to pay us while we're living and we'll pay them while we're dead. We could fix them that way. That Brooklyn insurance man who got away with all of the million dollar surplus of his company is sick unto death. Probably as much because there is nothing left for him to get as because it has been found out that he got it. THOMAS LEWIS, of Butler, has brought suit against the local series of Eagles for five thousand dollars damages for a broken leg he received while being initiated into that order. It is rather an unusual case, but should prove interesting because the courts will be called upon to decide whether the goat has a right to butt any other part of a man's anatomy than the place where the butt ought to be. It cost the Hon. JOHN M. GARMAN \$1,169.00 to be elected judge of Luzerne county and the Hon. R. E. UMBEL \$19,000.00 to be re-elected judge of Fayette. The disparity is partially due to the fact that Mr. GARMAN had no opposition, but the great cost of Judge UMBEL's election indicates that he must have had very serious opposition or been up against a splendid leg pulling game. The borough of Tyrone has made application to the Attorney General to have the charter taken away from the Tyrone Gas and Water Co., because the company doesn't furnish all the water the borough needs. Inasmuch as the members of this company are to be held to accountability for the drought we would advise them to get busy with whatever means they may have at command to make more water. The man who started out on Monday evening to paint the town red and upset his paint pot on the Water street pavement had no thought of the consternation he caused when said old Presbyterian and Methodist mistook the red paint for blood and created considerable excitement over the supposition that a horrible crime had been committed. We might suggest that in the future when a man starts out with a paint pot to paint the town red he keep the lid on his pot. From the manner in which certain juvenile Republicans in this neck of the woods are getting busy it is beginning to look very much as though something is being framed up to be pushed over on the old leaders some of these fine days. It may be a bad guess, but we venture there will be a new line-up revealed when the fight comes off for congressional honors between Mr. BARCLAY and Mr. PATTON and the latter day MOSES will be seen leading the PATTON forces. The wages of the employees of the city of Pittsburgh are to be cut in order to partially meet a four hundred thousand dollar deficit that is starting that city in the face. It is at least decent that wages of all employees, from the Mayor down, are affected. But the "white wings" will have a far harder time making their forty dollar wage pay a month's bills than the Mayor will have in making his seven hundred and fifty dollar allowance pay his. After all, it does seem that Dr. RAUSCHENBUSH is right when he declares that "it is unchristian to pay the man with the hungriest family the smallest wage."

Democratic Watchman

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Mr. Morgan's Recent Purchase.

Mr. J. PIERPONT MORGAN has purchased a controlling interest in the Equitable Insurance company, according to his own statement and that of the Insurance Commissioner of New York, for the philanthropic purpose of saving the property for those to whom it belongs. Three or four years ago Mr. THOMAS F. RYAN bought it from another owner for the same reason. It might occur to a thoughtful mind that a property which requires this sort of meddling is hardly worth the trouble it entails. If a corporation capitalized at \$100,000,000 which has assets of \$460,000,000, can't take care of itself, there is something so fundamentally wrong with it that the courts ought to intervene in its behalf. But Mr. MORGAN has not been influenced by philanthropic impulses in paying something over \$2,500,000 for a property of the actual value of \$100,000 with legal earning capacity of a trifle more than \$3000 a year. There was another and more potent reason for Mr. MORGAN's action. The operation gives him control of the vast assets of the corporation and enables him to manipulate \$460,000,000 of money which at the rate of five per cent. would amount to more than \$23,000,000 a year. The policy holders in the Equitable would be safe whether ROCKEFELLER, RYAN or MORGAN controlled the corporation. But it makes a good deal of difference to MORGAN which of the three controls the assets and reaps the harvest of manipulation. ROCKEFELLER also understands this. There is something more important even than the control of the assets of the Equitable company involved in the recent purchase by Mr. MORGAN. Moreover, in view of the settled purpose of the Republican machine to fasten upon the country a Central bank, the control of the assets of the Equitable borrows significance. It becomes a potent factor in settling the question of which of the two factions of frenzied financiers shall secure the franchise to exploit the finances of the country in the future. It makes little difference, as a rule, to the plundered victim which of two robbers gets him, for robbers are much alike in their methods. But it makes a great difference to the robbers, and in securing the control of the Equitable Mr. MORGAN has obtained an advantage. If the plan to create a Central bank is consummated, therefore, the control of the Equitable by Mr. MORGAN makes him the certain shepherd with legal authority to fleece the industrial and commercial laubs of the United States. This is not a matter of conjecture. It is one of absolute certainty. Possibly he will be gentler in the operation than Mr. ROCKEFELLER, who was his rival, but there is little difference at best, for the fleece will be taken in any event and scant attention paid to the scars of the flesh which may ensue. Financial pirates are like other pirates, in the last analysis, and the wise thing is to avoid all.

Ship Subsidies on the Programme.

It is reasonably certain that some sort of ship-subsidy legislation will be enacted during the present session of Congress. President TAFT is committed to that policy and a majority of the Republican Senators and Representatives in Congress favor it. Heretofore they have been restrained by fear that the people would resent so palpable a misuse of public funds. But encouragement from the White House has removed the fear and the bargain which the late MARK HANNA made with the shipbuilding trust will be consummated before the close of the present session, unless the signs are misleading. The excuse given for this proposed raid on the treasury is that the greater cost of labor in this country makes it impossible to build ships here in competition with the shipbuilders of Europe. This is an absurd subterfuge. It is easily susceptible of proof that the greater skill and superior efficiency of American mechanics make the labor cost of shipbuilding less in this country than in Europe. What makes American built ships cost more is the greater expense of materials and this is ascribable entirely to the tariff. European shipbuilders can buy materials in Pittsburgh, Pa., for example, for \$10 a ton less than shipbuilders located in this country are obliged to pay and that is the reason that our builders are at a disadvantage. It is now proposed to recompense home shipbuilders for this difference by paying them subsidies out of the public treasury. This is the same philosophy which has been adopted in the matter of restoring the forests of this country. The tariff tax on lumber is so high that our own forests are necessarily denuded. As population increases building operations must multiply and other uses of timber increase in proportion. But instead of opening up the vast areas of timber lands in Canada, by abolishing the tariff, to the builders and furniture makers of the United States, we undertake to restore the forests by expensive planting operations. By this process we raise trees in about the proportion of one to every thousand cut down and expect to restore the forests. Any sensible man who wanted to equalize shipbuilding conditions in this country and Europe would take the tariff tax off materials used in shipbuilding just as he would preserve our forests by giving access to other forests for the use of our builders. But the Republican policy of paternalism would not be conserved in that way. There would be no claim on the timber barons of the Northwest for big campaign contributions if the logical and natural methods of conserving the forests were pursued and the thousands of officials who enjoy fat sinecures in the forest service would lose their jobs.

Some Election Figures.

In the recent campaign Mr. MUXSON, the Democratic nominee for Justice of the Supreme court, carried forty-three out of the sixty-seven counties of the State. The campaign was begun in the spirit of a forlorn hope. Some of the intimate friends of the popular gentleman advised him against making any effort for election. It was suggested that the Republican party is invincible in Pennsylvania. With practically inexhaustible pecuniary resources, a well disciplined organization and impregnable fortresses of defence, it looked like an impossible thing to dislodge or seriously disturb the enemy. But Mr. MUXSON went to Philadelphia with a majority and carried a large portion of the territory. In Philadelphia the Republican machine spent \$143,000 and upward to carry the election against Mr. MUXSON while his own party spent only \$3000. According to well authenticated statements nearly 45,000 voters were "assisted" in that city. In ninety-nine cases out of every hundred "assisted" voters are bribed voters, so that it is a fair presumption that 40,000 of the opposition were bought and would have voted the other way or not at all, if they had not been induced by corrupt means to vote for the Republican candidate. Other thousands of the vote cast for the Republican ticket were the votes of repeaters, so that it may justly be claimed that upon a fair vote Mr. MUXSON would have been elected. In view of these facts we can see nothing in the result of the recent election to discourage Democrats from effort in the future. Next year, for example, there will not be the volume of money available for purchasing votes and employing repeaters in Philadelphia that was used this year, for the reason that there will be scores of Congressional, Senatorial and Legislative districts throughout the State that will have to be cared for, and that will make a great difference in the results. Moreover the superstition that the Republican machine can't be defeated is not as widespread as formerly and if the Democrats will maintain the advantages they have acquired and are vigilant and energetic in striving for others, the Republican machine will have no certainty of success next year. In any event Democratic prospects are brighter than they have been in years.

Taft Declares War.

From the Johnstown Democrat. President Taft through Secretary Knox has declared war on Nicaragua. No other interpretation of the sensational act of the State department in handling the Nicaraguan charge by its passports is possible. Yet under the constitution congress alone is empowered to declare war. All that Secretary Knox says in regard to Zelaya and to his reckless course as a breeder of trouble may be true. On this point the country is not well informed. There are charges and counter charges. The evidence is conflicting. The facts upon which a fair judgment might be based are so confused with partisan exaggeration and interested testimony that a just decision of the merits of the case is almost impossible. Yet the Taft administration has jumped to a conclusion and has done so in a manner without precedent perhaps in the history of civilized government. There can be little doubt that Mr. Taft has undertaken to forestall the action of congress. He has recognized the Estrada revolt; he has declared the government of the republic unworthy to be dealt with by civilized nations; and he has brought about a status as nearly that of actual war as need be to effect his purpose; and so congress when it convened on Monday faced a fait accompli; it will either have to accept the situation created by executive action or take a course which would rebuke the head of the nation before the whole world. This course congress cannot be expected to take, no matter what the private judgment of its members may be. In an emergency of this kind the legislative branch feels bound to stand behind the executive; and Mr. Taft understands this; he has taken advantage of the opportunity to create a situation from which there can be no retreat without an apparent lowering of the national dignity. Yet the congress thus in effect abdicates its high prerogative and abandons one of its most important functions? We are far from feeling that the last word has been said in Secretary Knox's amazing letter to the Nicaraguan charge. The country should know all the facts embodied in this extraordinary case. What American interests have been threatened? Who are the Americans who have been clamoring for the overthrow of Zelaya and what are their actual grievances? What secret understandings exist between the American authorities and the revolutionists who have commended themselves to Secretary Knox? Who has been furnishing the money to finance a revolution which the American government has made almost indecent haste to recognize and approve? It is to be hoped that congress will inquire thoroughly and without flinching into this curious matter. There is every reason to believe that there are other facts than those which have thus far reached the public, important in making up a final judgment. What these facts are we do not pretend to say or do we even venture to guess. But we cannot avoid the suspicion that the shooting of Groce and Cannon are but convenient pretexts for an action which otherwise could find little if any justification.

Grand Army of Federal Employees.

From the New York Sun. It appears from "advance notices" of this striking publication, the government "Blue Book" for 1909 that triumphant rearmory is marching on at the double-quick. In 1907 there were some 306,000 federal hired men and women. In 1909 there are some 370,000—an average annual increase of 23,000. The gain is somewhat more than 10 per cent. a year. At this rate—and there is small reason to suppose that it will not be increased, since the passion for government regulation and interference shows an increasing momentum—the grand army of placemen will soon amount to a million; and still it will go marching on. The Zelaya diversion has come up most timely, therefore, for that wing of the Republican party which finds being on the defensive all the time a good deal of a strain.

Why Not Knock Out the Graft?

From the Philadelphia Record. Under the present tariff schedule, imposing a tax of \$1 90 per hundred pounds on refined sugar, it is in the power of the Sugar Trust, whatever fines may be imposed by the courts upon its managers, to reimburse itself by assessing the amount upon buyers of sugar. The only way to teach the rascals is to put them in jail. That is a punishment to fit the crime. It cannot be shifted so as to fall upon underlings or underservers.

Expressed in a Sentence.

From the Kansas City Times. "I will die," Speaker Cannon said in his speech to the Knute and Fork club, "with- out ever having turned my back on a friend or my face from an enemy." Which seems to present in a sentence the theory on which the congressional organization framed the tariff bill, and on which the speaker sought to reward his friend, ex-Representative Littauer, with an increased duty on gloves.

Spawns from the Keystone.

Three hundred girls were given employment when the first shirtwaist factory in Shenandoah opened Monday. Fleetwood, Berks county, now owns its own water plant, having bought it for \$55,000 from the Fleetwood Water company. Tramps returning for the winter season have increased the enrollment of the inmates of the Berks county almshouse from 290 to 325. Over \$175,000 has been spent the past year to increase the capacity and to better the manufacturing plants of Mount Union. John Papalish, aged 29, was pulled into a furnace at the Shenandoah Valley steel plant at New Castle and roasted to death. He tried to balance a wheelbarrow on the top of the cupola. South Fork will not need to ask aid of the State in fighting the scarlet fever epidemic, it is thought. There are now forty cases in nineteen residences and guards are stationed day and night to see that the quarantine is kept. One hundred and twenty-five acres of timber land near West Middletown, Washington county, were bought from the Essex Coal company of State College, by L. F. Sette and Dr. L. F. Rin, of Indiana. The consideration was \$12,500. The new owners will develop the tract at once. A franchise has been granted by the Delaware Gap borough council to the Stroudsburg and Delaware Gap Street Railway company to extend its lines through the Gap to connect with Portland. This will make a through line by trolley to the Gap from Philadelphia, something that has been desired for a long time. It is alleged that there is a shortage of \$1,100 in the accounts of Mrs. Truman Campbell, postmistress of Cammal, Lycoming county. The office is now in charge of F. F. Bonnell, one of her bondsmen. The woman has disappeared and it is thought that she has gone to the mountains to escape arrest. Her husband has advanced \$400, all the money he had, to cover part of the shortage. Professor E. L. Watts, of State College, has withdrawn his suit against the Berwind-White Coal company for the destruction of the springs on his two farms near Scap Level. On one of the farms he conducts a green house, piped for water, and on the other is a dwelling. The mining operations completely ruined the water supply of these places. The coal company settled with the professor out of court. Chas. Flanagan of 2607 5th Ave., Altoona, has been offered \$65,000 by Pittsburgh capitalists for a horse feeding box that he has invented. He planned the box while lying in the Johnstown hospital about a year ago, having had both legs cut off. By means of the box, horses can be fed without unbiting the box, measuring eighteen inches square, holding enough feed for three meals for two horses with also a water chamber. The preliminary work in connection with the filling in of the several trestles on the Phillipsburg and Susquehanna Valley railroad was commenced on Monday, and by tomorrow it is expected the new steam shovel will be "making the dirt fly" in reality. The Deatur trestle will be the first to be filled in, and the dirt for each one will be taken from the hill this side of Deatur. This work is a big proposition and will be a great improvement. Middletown is to have a new industry in the Union Furniture Manufacturing company, which will give employment to fifty men and boys or more. The concern bought the old shoe factory buildings at the lower end of Patterson borough, near Middletown, from the Middletown and Patterson Improvement company, and will remodel them. The furniture concern is of McClure, and is capitalized at \$1,000,000, which amount will be raised in a short time to \$1,500,000. Four burglaries in a week has stirred the citizens of Jersey Shore to action, especially since no arrests have been made in any case. On Thursday night Sallada's department store was robbed; on Friday night the home of William Hoover, an engineer, was visited and a sum of money stolen. On the same night Joseph Mick's store and Cameron & Lambert's planing mill were also robbed. The local police are not able to catch the thieves and an additional force of special officers have been sworn in for night duty. John Warren and Thomas Filbrin, who recently pleaded guilty to the charge of breaking into the New York Central station, entering the railroad tool house and breaking into the Jersey Shore postoffice, were sentenced each to a maximum of twenty years, and a minimum of five years' imprisonment in the eastern penitentiary, as well as a fine of \$300. Joseph Manton was given a maximum of ten years and a minimum of two years and six months and a fine of \$100 for the same crime. He would not admit his guilt. A suit for \$50,000 damages against the American Car and Foundry company will be tried in the United States circuit court in Williamsport, in January. The plaintiff is Oscar Thornton, of Berwick, formerly of Danville, who lost one of his eyes as the result of an injury sustained in the accident of the car company at Berwick. Clarence E. Sprout, of Williamsport, represents the plaintiff, and it was upon his application that the case was transferred from the Columbia county court to the United States circuit court. Paul J. Sherwood, of Wilkesbarre, represents the defendant. The trio of burglars who robbed the New York Central railroad depot at Jersey Shore Junction and then finished their night's work by blowing open the safe in the Jersey Shore postoffice some time ago, have just had their trial in the Lycoming county court. It will be remembered that the men were later captured on the McKinney farm, near Avis, after the jail at Williamsport after a hearing at Jersey Shore. The desperadoes gave their names as John Warren, Thomas Filbrin and Joseph Manton, and the first two were given intermediate sentences ranging from five to twenty years, and Manton was given from five to ten years in the penitentiary. Fines amounting to \$500 were also imposed on the men.