

INK SLINGS.

—So far as groundhogs' residing in this vicinity are concerned they certainly had no chance to see their shadows on Tuesday.

—European fiction-writers seem to have taken charge of the correspondence bureau and to be putting in extra time on the job.

—The physician who declares that it is possible for a man to hold his breath for two minutes, evidently has no personal acquaintance with Secretary BRYAN.

—That New York charity organization that spent \$1432.92 in salaries and only \$90.00 in relief work last year, is evidently a believer in the doctrine that charity begins at home.

—If things keep going on as they have been, a lot of fellows now in the trenches throughout the European war zone won't be bothering about the condition they are in when the spring fighting begins.

—"A Long Way to Tipperary" was written by HARRY WILLIAMS, a resident of Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1912. Knowing this there doesn't appear to be a very flagrant violation of neutrality in any American's singing the song.

—From the result of that shooting just across the border in Mexico, a few days ago, we should judge that General VILLA was neither seriously injured nor suffering from his wound. In fact, reports tell us he was only about "half shot."

—It is now reported that Mr. PALMER will refuse to be a candidate for re-election to Congress nor will he accept an appointment by President WILSON. The latter statement only shows how little the fellow who started the report knew the individual he was talking about or cared whether he told the truth or not.

—The notice of the Postoffice Department to post masters all over the country to reduce expenses wherever possible without impairing the efficiency of the service is rather interesting. If any compliance at all is possible it is equivalent to an admission that there has been waste and mismanagement in the offices affected.

—Happy sounds are these that we are beginning to hear favoring the abandonment of so many commissions in our government. The WATCHMAN has always believed that we send Congressmen to Washington and Members to Harrisburg for the purpose of making laws, but in recent years it seems to have been the fad for them to take their seats, draw their salaries, then turn the work over to some commission or other. We don't recall any commission excepting the one that was appointed to codify the school laws of the State, that has done more than spend barrels of the people's money and are still of the opinion that we ought to do away either with Legislatures and Congresses or Commissions.

—While Dr. Orr's Monday night talk in the army on "Faith" was so simple and so splendidly illustrated that it ought to have been understood by all, some of his side trips into the psychology of religion must certainly have startled a few of his congregation. "Experimental religion" is as real to some as it seems impossible to others. Rarely do we find two people with the same perspective and the same temperament and while there can't be anything else than unanimity of thought as to the fundamentals of christianity there will always be a difference in the manner in which people give expression to their conception of them. After all religion in itself is merely the outward form a christian employs to express what he feels, there it seems to us perfectly natural that it should vary in exact accordance with the characteristics of the individual christian.

—We said repeatedly during the campaign last fall that we couldn't understand what Mr. HARRY SCOTT, of Phillipsburg, wanted to go to Harrisburg as a Legislator for. We tried our best, of course, to save him from himself, but the people wouldn't have it our way and now he is the Honorable gentleman who represents us in the General Assembly. With the hope that Mr. SCOTT will do some work that will really merit the handle we will take pleasure in attaching to his name ever after this, the WATCHMAN makes the suggestion that he become the originator of a propaganda among his fellow Members to build nothing but brick roads in Pennsylvania. Believing that in the last analysis brick will be found to be most durable, cheapest and most satisfactory some one ought to start the agitation and keep it up and years hence it may be a great honor to be referred to as the father of brick highways in Pennsylvania. Macadam roads vary in cost from \$8,000.00 to \$12,000.00 per mile. Brick varies from \$12,000.00 to \$16,000.00. But it costs \$1000.00 per mile per year to properly keep up a macadam road whereas the cost of upkeep of a brick road is only \$75 per mile per year. Knowing these facts anyone can see which would be cheapest in the long run, aside from the inestimable comfort of having freedom from dust. Think the matter over, Mr. SCOTT, for here is a chance for you to do something worth while and enduring.

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President Wilson's Veto.

In vetoing the Immigration bill President WILSON followed the example set by President CLEVELAND and concurred in by President TAFT. The literacy test was the reason given in each case. It is obnoxious to the spirit of our institutions and the traditions of our government. It is un-American and un-Democratic. If it had been adopted in the beginning thousands of excellent citizens would have been denied the right of asylum and the development of the country would have been retarded. It is a vicious growth from the seeds of prejudice and bigotry and has never prospered and will never prosper in a soil of liberty and independence. Let us hope that it is now stifled forever.

The purpose of our naturalization laws is to keep out of our population the criminals, paupers and infected people of foreign lands. The literacy test doesn't achieve or even make for that result. The criminals who seek entrance are not, as a rule, illiterates. The anarchists who come to plant the poison of their evil purposes are well equipped educationally. The indigents who apply for admittance are sometimes well read and well informed. Both of these objectionable elements could meet the literacy test easily. But industrious, thrifty and well disposed men and women who are seeking opportunities to live well and lead just lives would be rejected because the conditions they left denied them educational facilities.

The measure which has been vetoed would not improve the quality of immigrants. It would simply decrease the quantity. The anarchists, forgers and murderers would have no trouble in answering the questions which would be put to them. But the healthy and hopeful young men who came from the rural regions of the old world where there are no public schools would be deported and the country would be the greater loser. Some of the children of illiterate immigrants have been among the best and most useful citizens of this country and legislation which would exclude that type is not only undesirable but actually harmful. The President will be commended for his act.

—The encouraging news comes from Washington that the leaders in Congress favor economy and think of cutting appropriations "to the bone." That is the only wise way to deal with revenue deficits and we hope that the "pork barrel" will be smashed.

Our Public Charities.

The report of the Board of Public Charities, submitted to the Legislature on Monday evening, is an unusually interesting document. It shows the expenditures of the State for charitable purpose for a period of sixty-five years and the rapid increase in recent years is astonishing. For example in 1850 the total was \$124,934 while the appropriations of the last Legislature reached the enormous aggregate of \$12,728,766. In the early period covered by the report, however, the increase was comparatively trifling. In the 90's the high pressure was put on when political exigencies required large campaign contributions. Then hospitals and other charitable institutions were created for trading purposes.

But the merit of the report centres in the recommendations for future operations. The habit which has grown common of appropriating large sums for improvements in institutions not under State control is condemned and a more rigid account and closer inspection of the semi-public institutions is suggested. That will not impair the efficiency of either for the service they are expected to perform but it will work a considerable saving to the people of the State. Money appropriated by the Legislature to private institutions operated for profit is misused, however honestly it may be disbursed. The people should only be asked to pay for operating expenses of State institutions.

Commissioners are not inclined to adopt a cheese-pairing policy, either. They wisely recommend liberal appropriations to charitable work and indicate a purpose to maintain the public institutions at a high standard of efficiency. This will also meet with popular approbation. Pennsylvania is rich in resources and her people are generous in mind. The unfortunates like the poor, "we have always with us," and suffering must be alleviated. Therefore the people will rejoice that there is not likely to be any curtailment of the volume of charity, though happily there is a prospect of improvement in the method of dispensing it. No deserving institution will suffer.

—Whether the ground hog saw his shadow or not on Tuesday is a matter of little concern to the fellow with a fairly full coal bin.

Hopeful Indications of a Change.

President WILSON delivered an address to the American Electric Railway Association, in session at Washington, last week, in which he expressed a truth that he might himself ponder, if his purposes with respect to Pennsylvania patronage have been accurately stated in the public prints. "I have always maintained," he declared, "that the only way in which men could understand one another was by meeting one another. If I believed all I read in the newspapers, I would not understand anybody. I have met many men whose horns dropped away the moment I was permitted to examine their character." The horns had been developed by misrepresentation and malice.

In some way and at some time President WILSON fell under the influence of a group of selfish political mercenaries of this State, who poisoned his mind in relation to the faithful Democrats who had borne the burden of the party organization during its long period of adversity. These party traitors had opposed the candidates of the party in every campaign in which they were not represented on the ticket and gave it scant and insincere support even when one of them had a nomination. But when President WILSON was inaugurated they got his ear and maliciously traduced and deliberately slandered the very men who had put them in place. And President WILSON, not knowing the facts, accepted their statements and fed their selfish ambitions.

If President WILSON understood the men who contributed their time, energy and money to the maintenance of the Democratic party and the preservation of its principles during the time it was in a hopeless minority and who unselfishly relinquished to others their claims to party favor when their industry and fidelity worked out a victory, now and then, the horns which malignant traducers have developed in his imagination would drop out of his mind and the traders and traitors would be scourged from his confidence. We sincerely hope that his appropriate figure of speech will be applied to the party conditions in this State and feel certain that in that event there will be a change.

—BILLY SUNDAY is recruiting the army of prohibition in Philadelphia with startling rapidity but it's a long, long way to the election and results are uncertain until the official count is completed.

Proposed Ballot Law Change.

It is universally admitted that the non-partisan provision in the election laws, so far as it relates to judges, is an absolute failure. It has not eliminated politics from the choice of judicial officers and has vastly decreased the opportunity of the voter to make wise selection of candidates at the ultimate test. In the selection of municipal officials in any city of the third class, it is little, if any, better. The officials are chosen on political lines and being fewer in number than councilmen under the old plan, each of them is capable of doing greater harm, and as a rule, according to the newspapers of cities of that class, he exhausts the possibilities in that direction.

The truth of the matter is that our election laws have deteriorated in the ratio that so-called reformers have been allowed to create them. The BAKER ballot law was the product of an agitation begun by reformers who knew nothing except how to complain. Of course it proved a failure and every change which has since been made, and all have been made at the instance of reformers, have made things worse. The politicians pervert the electoral conditions to their own use and in every case are able to make the restraints in voting cloaks for fraud. If intelligent men, with some understanding of politics would draft a ballot law there might be some hope of getting honest elections.

But the deficiencies in the existing laws do not justify the drastic measures which the Republican machine is said to have in contemplation now. Such atrocious political deals as took DRAPER LEWIS off the Washington party ticket and substituted the candidate of another party, and one who couldn't possibly have been nominated by the Washington party, ought to be prevented. But a law making independent parties impossible and independent candidates out of the question would work harm instead of good. The ballot laws are bad, but changes must be made with the view of improvement rather than impairment and men of understanding instead of professed reformers must do the work.

—Possibly Mr. ROCKEFELLER has given \$250,000,000 to philanthropy, as his son declares, but it is a safe bet that he kept enough to live comfortably the rest of his life.

Concerning the Constitution.

The expense of a constitutional convention is not a valid reason against it. If a new organic law is needed the million dollars, estimated as the probable cost, should not stand in the way. Amendments to the present constitution have cost nearly that much in the last six years and are likely to cost that much more in the next half dozen years, if it is allowed to stand. The present constitution was adopted in 1874. It served its purpose admirably for several years though the Legislature failed to provide for the enforcement of many of its most important provisions. But the numerous amendments proposed within the past few years indicate that it has outlived its usefulness.

There is a good deal of hazard, however, in undertaking a framing up of a new constitution. For the past several years the public mind has been in a sort of frenzy and some of the follies which demagogues have brought forward would be practically certain to insinuate themselves into any fundamental legislation which might be framed at this time. The initiative and referendum, the recall and other populist vagaries might be provided for in a constitution prepared and adopted at this time, whereas it is practically certain that within a few years all these caprices will have passed out of the popular mind. For that reason it might be as well to wait awhile. Public sentiment will be in a better frame later.

The reasons given by the author of the pending bill for wanting a new constitution will hardly excite enthusiasm, however. Mr. RONEY gives as the principal reason his desire for "the establishment of a State wide Common Pleas court." Unless such an arrangement would curtail the number of Judges we can see no merit in it. A "graded system of taxation" might be of doubtful utility, though the "removal of restrictions that now hamper labor legislation," and "home rule for cities and incorporated boroughs," are desirable and would be worth the cost of a convention. There is also merit in the proposition to standardize election laws and need for the better regulation of State charity appropriations.

—"Ezekiel, let that woodchuck go!" Let him scamper around to his heart's content. Even if he roamed around all day Tuesday he failed to see his shadow, so was not frightened enough to go back into his hole and pull it in after him. And now we'll see if there is any truth in this old groundhog saw. Everybody can remember that the hog saw his shadow last year and we certainly had six weeks of hard winter afterwards. So far we have had nothing but a hard winter since Thanksgiving day, even last Friday and Saturday mornings being below zero. But now the groundhog prophesies milder weather and an early Spring and that at least is comforting. Easter this year comes on April 4th, and that also presages an early Spring, so be an optimist and look for better weather, more work and better times in every way.

—We have heard the name of J. LINN HARRIS, of Bellefonte, mentioned among the possibilities for appointment to Commissioner of Forestry under the BRUMBAUGH administration. While we do not know that Mr. HARRIS is even in a receptive mood, so far as the acceptance of such a post is concerned, we do know that should Governor BRUMBAUGH prevail upon him to take the head of the department he will secure to the service a man who will render a splendid account of his stewardship. Practically all of his life Mr. HARRIS has been active in the lumber business and during the past four years most earnestly interested in the work of forest conservation, so that he would bring to the office a degree of intelligent administration most desirable.

—Judging from the names we hear mentioned as possibilities for Republican candidates for county office we are led to believe that the opposition is laying plans for a wonderfully aggressive fight in Centre county next fall. Some one with an eye to workers, locality and money seems to be making bullets pretty fast, but of course there is always the question as to whether the rank and file will shoot them.

—In another month RICHARD PEARSON HOBSON will be a private citizen and meantime every body else has something to look forward to gratefully.

—The war has cost nearly six billion dollars already, without counting the incidental expense of lost commerce and high living.

—Everybody in authority in the war zone continues to deny responsibility for the war. Probably it just happened.

The Issue of "Hallism."

From the Lock Haven Express.

Already the reorganizer Democrats have resurrected their old ghost from the closet and are putting in shape their celestial choir for a grand rendition of the old scare chorus "Hallism." The people of this county are perfectly familiar with the results of the recent election, and at the same time they know that the "judge from the extreme opposite end of the district" took no part, directly or indirectly, in the contest in this county. There was no bi-partisan combination between Democrats and Republicans, but there was a mighty revolt within the Democratic party itself. When the smoke of battle cleared away the confident reorganizers were found to be lying on the flat of their backs, kicking up in the air like a lot of roaches.

What else could be expected to happen a self-appointed leadership that set up a little oligarchy of its own prior to the primary election, and decreed who should be permitted to run and who should be boycotted and side-tracked for the nomination for local or district offices? This arbitrary action on the part of the Palmer and McCormick beneficiaries naturally resulted in a wave of indignation that took on practical and concrete form at the polls in November. Having nominated their slate by the help of automobiles, a slush fund and other despicable (but at the same time notorious methods in some of the rural districts) the new Board of Governors of the Clinton Democracy began to harp on the old string "Hallism," notwithstanding the fact that a few years ago, when the war was more in the ascendant, you could not separate them from hanging on to the coattails of the president judge with a dynamite bomb. Judge Hall, however, did not come into the county, the old line Democrats, who were denounced as rank bipartisans, held their peace, but when election day came they quietly went to the polls and exercised the right of franchise as granted them by the Constitution.

Veto of Immigration Bill.

From the Altoona Times.

No matter what action he might take on the immigration bill, with its much-discussed literacy test, President Wilson was doomed to be damned. Now that he has vetoed the measure, following the example and adopting the reasoning of former Presidents Cleveland and Taft, he is not more severely censured than would have been the case had he approved the bill. Sentiment is squarely divided, and there could be no compromise when the difference between advocates and opponents of the literacy test is irreconcilable. As President Wilson stated in his veto message, the effectuating of the drastic bill with its restricting features would have completely changed the policy of the United States toward immigration. He does not believe that a majority of the people of the United States seek or are ready for this change. And we believe that the President has accurately gauged public sentiment.

While as a general proposition we believe that the literate immigrant is more desirable than the illiterate stranger at our gates, we are not satisfied that education is always an assurance of many desirable citizens and leave in many educated individuals a sense of superiority, at the best, it comes with rather poor grace to make demands upon the seeker after an enlarged opportunity that would bar many of our own people were they to knock for admission. If the literacy test had been in effect a century ago, the ancestors of many of those who are now demanding its enactment would have been turned back when they landed at our shores. Some of us approach the subject of immigration as though all our ancestors had always resided in this country.

Mr. Hearst Approves the Veto.

From the New York American.

In his veto of the immigration bill President Wilson has done and said precisely the right thing. It is deeds, not words, that count, and in view of this action Mr. Wilson's earlier remarks about "the worthless immigrants who come to our shores" can be forgotten. Indeed if his present position should be due to a desire to counteract the effect of his earlier utterances, that should not in the slightest degree detract from his credit. It is, perhaps, more to his credit that he changed his mind in the right direction. It comes with the better grace and the more convincing effect from a President who, because of his own academic cultivation, might have been expected to take the side upon which so many of the collegians have ranged themselves.

German Atrocities Discredited.

From the New York World.

Information in possession of the State Department in Washington shows that of the thousands of Belgian refugees in England, none are victims of German atrocity. This confirms the results of the World's own investigations. We have run down report after report of atrocities and have yet to find one that stood the test of investigation. The charges of fiendish mutilations committed by German soldiers seem to have a little substantial foundation as the German charges that Belgians were in the habit of cutting out the eyes and cutting off the ears and noses of German wounded.

Help! Murder! Police!

From the Columbia State.

As we understand the situation, this is the first White House baby since Theodore Roosevelt was there.

—Have your Job Work done here.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—Daniel Carpell, who was shot some days ago by John McKenzie, a Johnstown desperado, is dead and McKenzie faces the death chair.

—Williamsport is just now suffering from an epidemic of whooping cough, measles, chicken-pox and other minor contagious diseases.

—Mrs. Canno Hall, residing at Ernest, Indiana county, while ill wandered away from her home one night last week and was frozen to death. She was aged 33 years.

—Cherry Tree is expecting a big boom in business next spring. The mines are working better time already and the iron company's orders are increasing.

—John Houser, a well-known lumberman, while engaged in loading logs near Wallaceport, dropped dead from heart trouble. He was aged 43 years and is survived by his wife and three small children.

—The Blairsville enamelled ware plant, which has been closed for some time on account of financial trouble, has been taken over by H. L. Taylor, its largest stockholder, and will soon resume operations.

—An incendiary placed oiled waste in almost every room of a vacant house in Patton, the property of F. C. Strimatter, and kindled several fires. Yet the blaze was discovered and the house saved from destruction.

—It is said that engineers are about to go to work on the proposed road between Johnstown and South Fork, the construction of which is urged by the Johnstown Chamber of Commerce and prominent residents of South Fork.

—At this late day one Balmo George, of Mount Union, advertises that he lost the sum of \$230 last October. The lost money, covered with cloth, was enclosed in an envelope bearing the address, "Harbison-Walker Refractories company."

—By a contract closed between Thomas A. Edison and the Cambria Steel company, the former has obtained the right to build a plant to extract benzol from coke gas. Construction of the plant, costing \$250,000, has been started.

—A gas explosion at the residence of Mrs. Mary Harter, in DuBois, resulted in the death by suffocation of Miriam Catherine Harter, the 2-year-old grand-daughter of Mrs. Harter, and the almost complete destruction of the house.

—Van Horn, the murderer of aged Mrs. Fulmer, of Williamsport, says his crime was the result of a sudden notion while he was in Mrs. Fulmer's home telephoning. He admits that he has been a loafer all his life and accuses rum of undoing him.

—His mind unbalanced by a religious mania, H. H. Woods, a B. & O. telegraph operator, located at Harmony, Butler county, Pa., shot and killed his wife, aged 35, and three daughters, aged respectively 15, 6 and 2 years, and then killed himself.

—The Methodist church at Oriole was destroyed by fire Sunday morning, entailing a loss estimated at \$2,500, of which \$700 is covered by insurance. The parsonage was on fire several times, but was saved through the efforts of a bucket brigade.

—The Rev. J. Max Lantz, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at Curwensville, was recently arrested charged with having killed a doe during the hunting season. The offense was committed in Centre county and the fine was paid at Snow Shoe.

—Julian Crozier, formerly treasurer of the Clearfield Textile plant, has been killed in the fighting in France. He left Clearfield about six months ago to join his regiment in the French army and was struck and killed by a fragment of a shell the day before Christmas.

—Fifteen residents of Kittanning have brought suits aggregating \$150,000 against the Kittanning Water company for damages incident to a scourge of typhoid fever which swept that town last fall, due the plaintiffs allege, to impure water supplied from a contaminated storage reservoir.

—Mrs. A. L. Ritchey, of Bullskin township, Fayette county, has brought suit in the courts of that county to recover \$50,000 damages for the death of her husband, who was killed on the Pennsylvania railroad near A. O. tower a year ago. The Ritcheys were residents of Youngwood at the time.

—It is said that one Jesse Lee, of Mahaffey, Clearfield county, was befooled by a widow whom he sent \$5 to pay her car fare to Mahaffey, she having made Mr. Lee think she was eager to marry him. It may comfort him to know that it cost the handsome widow \$1,000 for this and similar tricks.

—Charles A. Phillips, who murdered Emanuel T. Leib, at his home in Muncy, may not be tried until the June term of the Lycoming county court, as he is said to be in a serious condition physically. Van Horn, who murdered Mrs. Fulmer, is likely to be tried. First degree verdicts will be asked for in both cases.

—A modest Lancaster county miller, with 25,000 bushels of wheat in his mill, that cost him a trifle less than a dollar a bushel, is contemplating \$7.50 a barrel for flour with some degree of complacency, while he looks around his neighborhood to invest a fortune the European war has made him. It's an ill wind, indeed, that blows no good.

—William C. Gessner, captain of company D, Fourth Infantry, N. G. P. of Allentown, was arrested on Monday on a warrant issued on complaint of a surety company, charging him with the embezzlement of about \$800 of State funds. He gave bail for a hearing. It is understood that he has been dismissed from State service by Adjutant General Stewart.

—Thomas A. Pridoux, of Smith Mills, Clearfield county, aged 75, collapsed in the Masonic temple, Williamsport, while attending a consistory meeting, and for a time was in a serious condition. His sons, Dr. H. T. Pridoux, of Cresson, and Dr. W. A. Pridoux, of Twin Rocks, Cambria county, were summoned and after he had recovered somewhat removed him to Cresson.

—F. W. Zettle, residing on the old Reeder homestead in Georges valley, Centre county, was deprived of the sight of his right eye recently by a singular accident. He was attempting to tie a calf which had already grown short horns when the animal threw up its head, one of the horns penetrating his eye and cutting a hole in the eyelid. It is hoped the other eye will not be affected.

—Samuel Rosen, of Northumberland, a clothing merchant, has been held without bail for trial at court by a magistrate of that town on the charge of arson. On Monday night of last week a fire of suspicious origin, destroyed his stock, valued, it is claimed, at \$1,500, upon which he had an insurance of \$3,000. Suspicion rested upon Rosen and the state authorities were notified and a deputy marshal was sent to Northumberland, who found that kerosene had been placed near a stove and on electric light wires. On this evidence Rosen was arrested.

—Thirty of the 100 head of white tail deer contracted for from large Michigan preserves for propagation and restocking purposes in the woods of Pennsylvania by the State Game Commission have been received and set at liberty in the covers chosen for them. These deer are hard to catch, but they are being shipped 10 at a time as they are caught and turned loose at once so that they will not be injured by being kept in captivity too long. One or two out of every bunch of 10 are bucks, the remainder being does. Ten have been turned loose in Fayette county, not far from Uniontown, 10 have been assigned to Jefferson county and 10 to the northern part of Cambria county. More will follow, most of which will be distributed in western Pennsylvania counties.