

Democratic Watchman.

BY P. GRAY MEEK.

INK SLINGS.

—A white Christmas makes a lean grave yard.

—Anyway, we've passed the shortest day of the year.

—The Christmas spirit is abroad in the land. Are you looking it and living it.

—Somebody might give the hospital ambulance a new coat of paint as a Christmas gift.

—Of course peace can't be expected in Europe until it has been determined who is to get the biggest piece.

—Don't look for the "Watchman" in your mail next week. It will not visit you again until Friday, January 5th, 1917.

—If you want a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year just let your life be true and clean and your words full of good cheer.

—Charles H. Smull, of Rebersburg, has been appointed mercantile appraiser by the County Commissioners for the year 1917.

—If you are passing around Holiday wishes just wish the chief burgess-ship on W. Harrison Walker. No present you could give him would please him more.

—Those of you who had thought of sending us a Christmas present disabuse your mind of the idea. All we want is your good wishes and any back subscription that might be due.

—If it were ours to give your Christmas season would be the very happiest you have ever known and your New Year prosperous beyond your wildest fancy. This is our message to everyone who chances to read this paragraph.

The child is the whole of the Christmas theme. It embodies all that is dear.

The innocent, sinless, beautiful life.

It is the real message, Good Cheer!

May there be something for every one.

And may not one of them say:

On Christmas night, when the day is done,

That Santa wasn't round their way.

—While Troop L and the Boal mounted machine gun Troop will miss the joys of Christmas at home the order that directs them to leave the Border by January 5th will be received by the boys as quite the nicest gift Santa could have dropped out of his bag for them.

—The Board of Pardons, at its meeting on Wednesday held under advisement the applications of Henry Ward Mottern and Ernest Haines, the youthful Jefferson county murderers who want a rehearing, and Fred Christy, of Mercer county, who wants his sentence commuted to life imprisonment.

—The President's proposed appointment of Ida M. Tarbell as a member of the new tariff commission is a splendid one. It at once silences charges that the body might be partisan, recognizes the growing importance of woman in our government, and secures to the Commission the services of an acknowledged expert on business and business conditions in this country.

—This is the first time in a great many years that the "Watchman" has not issued a special Christmas edition. It is a greater disappointment to us not to be able to publish one than it can possibly be to you not to receive it. In the first place we can't get enough gas with which to run our machine to set the type necessary and in the second, even if we had the gas, we actually have only enough paper in the place on which to print this edition of the regular size.

—The State Highway Department announced Tuesday with much satisfaction over its achievement that it had put forty thousand automobile license tags in the mail that day. It seems to us there is a lamentable lack of judgment somewhere. When mails are congested and postal employees overburdened already with Christmas offerings the Highway Department might have had consideration enough to have held its tags until the day after Christmas, at least. That would have given them all sufficient time to have reached their destination before January 1st.

—Really, we are being overwhelmed by the responses we are receiving to our letters to subscribers asking for prompt payment of bills. It seems to be so much of a pleasure for the readers of the "Watchman" to come to its rescue and so many have been the expressions of good will that we genuinely regret our inability to reply personally to each one of them. It is a wonderful satisfaction to be thus assured that our work is appreciated; especially so when it is realized that "Watchman" readers are of the class competent to express intelligent judgment on such matters.

—Of course our opinion is only that of a peace loving citizen, but we certainly don't agree with General Scott and Wood in their statement that the National Guard is a failure as an auxiliary to the army. And we don't propose to exploit the propaganda of bringing the regular army up to such strength as they advocate. Military training for every one would doubtless be a splendid thing, not only for its military value but because of its physical value as well, but when it comes to asking every taxable to carry two or more soldiers on his shoulders, as Europe has to do, that is a different matter and we are not for it.

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Democrats Arrange a Program.

The Democratic Senators and Representatives-elect to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania met in Harrisburg on Saturday for the double purpose, presumably, of getting acquainted and preparing a programme of action for the coming session. The meeting assembled at the call of acting State Chairman, Joseph F. Guffey, of Pittsburgh, and in addition to a considerable number of the Senators and Representatives who will compose the minority in the next session of the Legislature, there were present National Chairman Vance C. McCormick, acting Chairman Guffey and former State Chairman Roland S. Morris, National Committeeman A. Mitchell Palmer and Fourth Assistant Postmaster General Blakeslee were unable to attend. A letter from Mr. Palmer was read, however.

These distinguished gentlemen enjoyed a feast at one of the leading Harrisburg hotels and wisely determined to have a programme of their own during the session and refrain from "entangling alliances" with either of the Republican factions. It seems that Governor Brumbaugh had made overtures to some of the Democratic Legislators to join him in his purpose to elect one of the Vares creatures to the Speakership of the House of Representatives, which were justly and indignantly declined. The Democratic Representatives, of whom there are thirty-seven, will nominate and support a candidate of their own. They have plenty of good material from which to select and are entirely capable of choosing wisely. In any event they will avoid scandals by this course.

Certain measures of legislation were also properly discussed on this auspicious occasion and it was determined to support an amendment to the election laws which would eliminate the "helper's clause," admittedly the greatest source of electoral fraud. Needed reforms in the methods of dispensing charities were also eloquently advocated and unanimously agreed to. There has been much waste in this branch of the public service and it is gratifying to learn that the Democrats propose to press for reforms. Another action was taken, however, which we don't understand. Acting Chairman Guffey was authorized to appoint a committee composed of Senators, Representatives "and others," to prepare legislation for the Democrats to support. Why the "others?"

General Scott's Effective Answer.

Testifying before a sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs in Washington, on Tuesday, Major General Hugh L. Scott, Chief of Staff of the army, completely answered the most vicious, the most unpatriotic and the most inexcusable employed by the Republican machine during the recent campaign. Senator Brady, of Idaho, Republican, asked the witness whether or not he thought the mobilization of the National Guard on the Mexican border "was beneficial for our country?" General Scott promptly replied: "I do. It was very beneficial. It prevented an attack and gave protection to American lives and property on the border for the first time in five years."

The reply was disappointing to Senator Brady, no doubt. He probably expected and would have much preferred an answer to the effect that the troops on the border had imposed a cruel hardship upon the men without any resultant good. That would have discredited the Mexican policy of the administration and in a measure justified the criticism that assumed the form of encouraging mutiny in the camps and inviting the Mexican bandits to further raids, additional rapine and the multiplication of murders. But General Scott declined to serve the traitors in that way. He is not a politician, has no prejudices between candidates or parties and gave truthful testimony as he understood it.

The mobilization of the National Guard on the Mexican border imposed a hardship upon the men. It took them from their occupations and subjected them to the severe labor of training under war conditions for actual war service. But it saved the American families on the border from all sorts of outrages and prevented a war which might and probably would have cost hundreds of thousands of lives and thousands of millions of treasure. The vicious lie expressed in Senator Brady's question was the product of a traitorous heart cultivated to the full limit of possibilities during the campaign but now happily settled by General Scott's answer for all time and to eternity.

"Public Office is a Private Snap."

Last week Governor Brumbaugh asked for and obtained the resignation of A. Nevin Pomeroy, of Chambersburg, who has been Superintendent of Public Printing for a dozen years or so. Mr. Pomeroy asked for the reasons that influenced the Governor to his action and was assured that it was not because of inefficiency or other malfeasance in office. It is purely a matter of politics. Mr. Pomeroy didn't do much to promote the Governor's ambition to be President, last spring and seems equally indifferent to the Governor's desire to make one of the Vares emissaries Speaker of the House during the coming session of the General Assembly. In the Governor's opinion that is ample cause for removal.

According to Harrisburg gossip the Governor intends to ask for the resignations of Banking Commissioner Smith, of Philadelphia; Assistant Attorney General Hargest, of Harrisburg; Superintendent of Public Grounds and Buildings Rambo, of Philadelphia; and Chief of the Department of Mines Roderick, of Hazelton, within a short time. These officials have also been long in the public service and with the exception of Roderick have not been offensive partisans. But they have been efficient officers, according to current estimate, and were retained through succeeding administrations on that account. They failed to hustle for Brumbaugh last Spring, however, and have not helped him in his fight for the Vares candidate for Speaker now in progress.

Of course we have no interest in the personnel of the Brumbaugh administration in Harrisburg or any other Republican administration. But we had imbibed and assimilated the notion that "public office is a public trust," and that fidelity to duty and efficiency in service is a guarantee of tenure. During the recent campaign candidate Hughes made a national issue of the fact that President Wilson had allowed some officials to resign and removed others and condemned the action as a grave offense against civil service and civic duty. But Brumbaugh shows that the opposite is true. Political servitude rather than public service is the test and "Public Office is a Private Snap."

Judge Quigley Again Sustained.

The Superior court on Monday handed down a decision in the case of the Commonwealth vs. B. Paul Swartz, of Centre county, being an appeal from the sentence imposed by Judge Henry C. Quigley, in which the judgment of the lower court was confirmed and the appeal dismissed at the cost of the appellants.

"Watchman" readers will recall that at the February term of court, 1916, B. Paul Swartz, of Howard, was convicted on the charge of sending threatening letters and attempted extortion. His counsel applied for a new trial but at the May term of court this was refused and Judge Quigley sentenced Swartz to the penitentiary for a term of not less than ten years nor more than fifteen. This sentence was considered exceptionally heavy by Swartz's attorneys and they took out an appeal to the Superior court. The case was heard by the latter court the first week in October but the decision was delayed until Monday.

Under the above decision Mr. Swartz will have to serve his sentence in the penitentiary. He has now been in jail since early in June, but his jail term cannot be counted on his penitentiary sentence, so that he had better accepted the sentence at the time and his incarceration would have been six months shorter, at least.

The heart of every Democrat in Pennsylvania will turn in sympathy to the bedside of Jere S. Black, of York, who is critically ill in a Baltimore hospital. Mr. Black is the surviving head of an honored family of Pennsylvania and the entire population of the State will share in the hope that his recovery may be speedy and permanent.

Now that Roosevelt is relieved of the obligation to select a Cabinet for Mr. Hughes he might be induced to help some of the European governments to frame cabinets. They seem to need help.

President Wilson's Cabinet is a good piece of furniture but it could be changed in some particulars without impairment of its excellence.

Real Cause of the Factional Quarrel.

It appears that the real purpose of the present factional fight in the Republican party is not to determine whether Dick Baldwin or Ed. Cox is to be Speaker of the House of Representatives for the session of 1917. That is an interesting public question and might justly challenge public attention for a time. As we have previously indicated Baldwin is the reactionary of his day and generation. He has never voted for a reform measure or listened for even a moment to the humanitarian side of legislation. On the other hand Cox is merely a pawn in the Vares game of politics. He hasn't personality enough to assert positively that he is living. He is a servile creature of the Vares machine.

But the pending bitter factional fight between the Republican machine is to determine who shall be the Republican candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania in 1918. The Vares, Ed and Bill, have enjoyed for a season the luxury of "owning a Governor," a luxury which the late Senator Quay coveted for many years and died before it attained the full fruition. Brumbaugh has been their servile slave from the moment they forced his nomination in 1914, but they have never been easy in the possession. Now they want John R. K. Scott as the nominee because they know that in the event of his election, they will be able to run ash carts through the executive mansion in Harrisburg and the corridors of the capitol.

Senator Penrose is bad enough, heaven knows, but there are depths of depravity which he will not sound. He refused to let Bill Vares become Mayor of his native city a few years ago and the signs plainly indicate that he will not consent to the elevation of John R. K. Scott to the office of Governor of his native State. His fight to make Baldwin Speaker is to avert such a humiliation of the pride of the people of the Commonwealth. Possibly he may not offer any one better qualified, mentally and morally, but it is certain that he couldn't do worse. If he had saved us from Brumbaugh, as he might have done, we would be the more willing to trust him now. But Baldwin is a bitter pill.

Millheim Had Water Famine.

Millheim has been dry since April 1st, but it was dryer this week than ever before, owing to the pipe line which conveys the town's water supply a distance of two miles from the reservoir in the mountains freezing up Tuesday, and the stream which runs through the town freezing dry. When the new eight inch pipe was laid during the summer about a mile of it was laid in the creek, which is now frozen solid, and it is the supposition that the water in the pipe was in a like condition.

A shortage of the water supply was first noticed on Monday and on Tuesday it was very low. By Wednesday morning there was no water at all and an investigation showed that the pipe line was frozen up. The only place residents of the town could get water was from Elk creek in the Narrows, about a mile and a half away. The freezing of the pipe line compelled the closing down of the knitting mill and the town was also without any fire protection. Workmen were engaged on Wednesday and water was from Elk creek in the knitting mill, and the town was also that night succeeded in thawing out the pipes.

Senator Penrose is worrying his heart out because he's afraid of a revenue deficit next year. The Senator should not let such things bother him. If he'll take care of Vares the Democrats in Congress will see that the government obligations are paid.

Great Britain seems to be entirely willing to pay the freight but is unalterably opposed to filling the coffins. But Great Britain will have to do her share of the fighting or Germany will offer terms of peace later on which will be accepted.

Probably the shorter crop brought bigger returns this year but as a rule it doesn't work that way. The safe and sane method is to get all that is possible out of the soil and if prices are not as high as they might be the goods will keep.

For high class Job Work come to the WATCHMAN Office.

Independent Press Hit Hard.

From the Johnstown Democrat.

The high price of print paper presents one of the gravest menaces this country has ever known. No one has yet succeeded in explaining why paper is so high. It is not our intention to offer an explanation, but simply to call attention to the dangers of the present situation.

The independent press of the country, the papers that are not controlled, the publications not backed by the interests but which day in and day out are fearless in their advocacy of the principles of fundamental democracy, are not the papers that have barrels of money back of them. The independent, fearless paper in a community is likely to be the one that has the least wealth back of it. That is generally the case whether the community is a large one or small one. Consequently, in any test of financial endurance, the independent paper would eventually be the one that went to the wall while the publication backed by the interests would survive.

If the present prices for print paper continue it is practically certain that more papers will go to the wall next year than went to the wall this year. The papers that succumb will not be the ones that have made alliances with the interests. True it is that not all of the virile independent publications will pass out of existence, but the independent press will be badly handicapped.

The high price of print paper, if continued over a period of years, would do more to curb the activities of the independent press in a decade than the interests have been able to do in the last 50 years. The small dailies, the paper in the town of eight, nine, ten, and twelve thousand people are the ones that have been hit the hardest by the prices charged for paper. They have been operating on the narrowest margins. The more fearless and independent they have been the narrower the margin in many instances. The Democrat is not prepared to charge that the high price of paper is due to anything except economic considerations, but we do affirm that if the special interests of this country were engaged in a campaign of destruction formed for the purpose of doing the largest possible amount of damage to the independent press of the country about the cheapest way to go about the matter would be to obtain control of the paper mills and starve the "independents" to the point where they would either have to make terms or die.

Are the Germans Insincere?

From the Harrisburg-Star Independent.

It is now asserted that Germany made her peace proposal with no expectation that it would be accepted; that her initiative was merely a ruse to blame a continuance of the war on the Entente Powers who the latter would reject the Imperial Government's offer, which was a foregone conclusion. While Germany's offer has not yet been formally received by her enemies through the diplomatic neutral channels chosen to tender it, there is nothing to prevent Great Britain and allies in preparing a counter proposal to the Central Powers, stating the exact terms upon which the Entente would agree to an armistice pending discussion of the difficult problem as to how the war can be terminated.

The trend of sentiment in the countries at war with Germany appears to be in favor of pursuing a relentless course in warfare until the latter is finally and completely subjugated, thus compelling the vanquished to submit to any parceling of the spoils as dictated by the victors. Be that as it may, there is faint hope that the war will not be prolonged for many more months if the Entente Powers agree on that course of procedure. If the latter refuse to make a counter proposal to Germany, then the enemies of the Teutonic Powers bid fair to lose a great deal of the confidence the people in the world at large apparently have had in the prosecution of the war by England and her allies.

It is the consensus of opinion that the ruthless slaughter on the battlefields of Europe should be brought to an end as soon as possible. It is now up to the Entente Powers to at least submit terms on the basis of which the war would cease. Any other course would be looked upon with disfavor by neutrals, since Germany has made her proposal, no matter how seemingly impossible the acceptance of the latter would appear.

For an International Brotherhood.

From the Springfield Republican.

A Quaker professor in Pennsylvania has concluded that only a new international university could be depended upon to abolish war; and he wants one right away. He may not be so crazy as he seems if an international university could be depended upon to create an international mind to dominate the world with the conception that all men are brothers.

To Which We All Agree.

From the Pittsburg Dispatch.

After all, is there any better explanation of the cause of high prices than the unanimity of judgment among certain thrifty gentlemen that they need the money?

The young ladies holding clerical positions in the court house were made happy last Saturday when county treasurer David Chambers gave each one of them a five dollar gold piece as a Christmas present.

The residence and store of Craig Hunter, of Fillmore, was totally destroyed by fire on Sunday morning. A defective flue is supposed to have been the cause. Mr. Hunter had \$1800 insurance.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—Several herds of cattle in Lycoming county, on farms lying to the east of Montoursville, have been found to be infected with anthrax.

—According to a telegram from Baltimore, Charles M. Schwab intends to give an endowment of \$2,000,000 to St. Francis college, Loretto, his alma mater.

—A number of Johnstown merchants, it is reported, will discontinue the sale of oleomargarine with January 1. The increased price is the reason alleged.

—A big black bear recently visited the house of Samuel W. Evans, two miles south of Ebensburg. He was seen by Miss Evans, who was too much surprised to call her father until after Bruin had departed.

—Editor John F. Short, of the Clearfield Republican, has been sued for criminal libel by Thomas D. Stiles, of Janesville, Socialist, who alleges that Short assaulted him unwarrantedly in certain issues of his paper.

—It is reported that Mayor Fischer, of Williamsport, is about to ask the city council to make an appropriation providing for a municipal cure for town drunkards. It is said he has tried the experiment with encouraging results.

—Early Saturday morning John Horwatt, a miner of Lucerne mines, Indiana county, was struck on the head by a beer bottle in the hand of Matt Posich, after an all night spree, and probably fatally injured. Horwatt's skull was fractured and his right side is paralyzed. Posich is in jail.

—On the last day of the hunting season W. H. Overdorf, a well known architect living in DuBois, was accidentally shot when the gun of his hunting companion, John Rupert, was prematurely discharged. The bullet passed through one of Overdorf's legs just above the ankle, badly shattering the member.

—An auto truck was required to haul to the office of Phillipsburg's Chamber of Commerce the goods found in the house recently occupied by Luella Brandon, now in the Clearfield jail, charged with larceny, with her brother William. Luella lived on the Clearfield side of the line and her house was apparently a clearing house for thieves. Several other arrests have been made.

—Three Hughesville persons may each lose an eye as a result of three different accidents. While working at a quarry, a piece of stone knocked one of Clyde Weaver's eyes out. Donald Confer, aged 10, was accidentally shot in an eye by a playmate, and Charles Weaver, was injured when a can of tomatoes he was trying to open burst and a piece of metal struck him in one eye.

—The suit of George M. DeHass against the Pennsylvania railroad company for personal injuries sustained in the Tyrone wreck three years ago, which began before Judge Bell at Clearfield on Tuesday morning, the 12th, was completed the following evening when the jury brought in a verdict for \$6,084.00, the extra \$84.00 being for medical attention. H. A. Murray, Esq., attorney for the railroad company has filed an appeal from the verdict.

—Willis Brandon, of Chester Hill, in Clearfield jail on the charge of stealing and butchering a cow, before Judge Bell at Clearfield court on Tuesday, the 12th, entered a plea of guilty to attempted jail breaking and was sent back to jail to await trial at May court on the charge of stealing and butchering Harry McKonish's cow. His sister, Luella Brandon, who is also in jail will be tried at the same time for receiving the stolen meat.

—Arthur L. Cole, aged 59, one of the most prominent lawyers in Western Pennsylvania, member of the Clearfield bar for over 30 years, died at the Clearfield hospital early Sunday morning following several operations for stomach troubles. He was a native of Potter county. His widow and three daughters and one son survive. The funeral was held Tuesday morning from his residence and interment was made in DuBois, where he resided for 35 years.

—Deputy State Fire Marshal Thomas G. Ryan, of Danville, on Monday obtained a confession from Frank Holden, aged 22 years, recently arrested on charges of setting fire to state forests and other forest tracts of land in Lycoming county, and now in jail in Williamsport, to the effect that Holden had not only set fire to such tracts of land but had also, during the years of his boyhood, set fire to several buildings. He stated that he did this not with any malicious intent, but "just to see a fire."

—That the theft of a bushel of potatoes is a serious crime was made clear when Thomas Wharton, of Bradford, got a sentence of from one to two years in the Western penitentiary, in addition to a nominal fine, after his conviction. When Wharton stole the potatoes they were selling at a record price. Spectators gasped when they heard the sentence, and as Wharton was being led out of the courtroom, he said to the deputy sheriff: "I wouldn't have gotten any more time had I stolen a bushel of diamonds."

—Jersey Shore was visited by a disastrous fire at 6 o'clock Monday morning, totally destroying the handsome three story brick and brown stone Masonic hall, together with practically all the contents. The first floor was occupied by Abe Allen with a gents and ladies' outfitting establishment; the second floor was used for office purposes and the Masonic Club rooms, while the third floor was used by the Masons as a hall in which they held their meetings, banquets, etc. The loss will be about \$50,000, on which there is an insurance of less than \$25,000.

—Three of the quartette that broke jail at Lewistown on Thursday evening and had been widely sought by the authorities over the week-end, have been captured. One of these, Samuel Holmes, colored, was found hiding in the prison cellar. Two of the men, Fred Brock, a deserter from the navy, with Joseph Murphy, serving a six months' term for illegal liquor selling, were arrested Saturday on the grounds of the iron mills near Duncan, by Pennsylvania railroad officers. They were taken in custody about 9 o'clock and were put aboard a train shortly afterwards and taken to Lewistown. John Kern, the fourth member of the quartette, and the only one still at large, had been arrested as a trespasser and was serving but a short sentence.

—The peace proposition is worth all it cost Germany and might have yielded a vast profit. But it didn't fool anybody and brought home no bacon.