

-If we have nothing else, oh Lord, give us the Christmas spirit.

-Pork being only nine cents on the hoof and thirty-five in sausages its easy to see what's in this kind of a skin game.

-At this time last year we were all trembling because of the announcements that sugar was headed for sixty cents a pound.

-And would you believe it two messes of savory venison have found their way to this office and there was enough currant jelly and that other condiment in the house to prepare them just right. My, what wonderful creatures friends are.

-By way of a gentle hint, it might be well for some of our readers to take a glance at the label on their paper and see if it reads well up into '21. If it doesn't a little mazuma before Christmas will be looked on with especial favor in this office.

-In eight days the Christmas festival will be here. We will have only one more opportunity to advise you about that shopping and then it will have to be of the eleventh hour variety and we speak from annual experience when we say that that is horrible.

-On Sunday the Rev. Dr. Alexander McColl told his congregation in the Second Presbyterian church, Philadelphia, that the conscience of a community should be its law. Some one must have slipped the eminent divine a copy of last Week's "Watchman."

-While speaking to a crowd of fellow socialists in Philadelphia on Sunday, Jim Maurer, Reading's Socialist member of the Legislature, silenced one of his hecklers by telling him to use his head for something more than a hatrack. Maurer's glib retort was probably well to the point but just there lies the menace of Socialism. The heads of its leaders are Utopian, but those of its voting strength are mostly "hat-racks."

-To some the announcements as to what the incoming administration may and may not do, that are being sent out from a rolling chair on the Atlantic City boardwalk, every day, may seem presumptuous. Of course they give the impression that the President-elect is condescending at the seashore and not wholly well at Marion, Ohio, but what if they do? The people of this country elected Harding in November, but who can say that they will not get Penrose in March?

-Our old friend Harry Rumberger, whose departure for a new home in Scranton reduced Centre's Democratic vote by far more than his own, is curious about the balance of \$13,32 that Charley Watson, the treasurer of the Republican county committee, reported as having in hand after they cleaned up last month. Probably after reading how they cleaned us up "Rummy" can't understand how they had anything left. And to be frank, we can't, either, so we join our Scranton friend in the suspicion that the only reason treasurer Watson had \$13,32 over was that "it wasn't good money" and couldn't be used.

-Since reading the lay sermon the "Watchman" preached last Friday several persons have suggested that we might do better in a pulpit than we are doing in a sanctuary. We own a doubt as to what they really intended to convey by the piousness. If their idea was that we might command a higher salary it is quite evident that our friends know something of the country newspaper business but very little of the small town preaching game. Editors and preachers and teachers always have been and probably always will be expected to keep their respective communities pleasant places to live in while the rest of the population gets the money. No sir, if we ever change, we'll take Charley Rowland's advice and go to something there's something in.

-Now that the "Watchman" has acknowledged that it was in error in stating that the court house doors were locked when they were only temporarily barred we presume indignation at our having told such "a dirty, malicious lie," as one of our near-friends called it, has subsided to the point where it will be safe for us to essay a suggestion to the Civic committee that was appointed to clean up Bellefonte. Why don't you try the Yonkers plan? The city of Yonkers, N. Y., had just the same conditions that obtain here except they were in the ratio of about twenty-five to one, since it is a city of one hundred thousand population. The ministers and the good people generally got going but found that they were accomplishing nothing. All at once some one woke up and remembered that Yonkers had constables, policemen, magistrates, state's attorneys and sheriffs, all of whom had sworn to obey and defend the constitution of the United States, of the Commonwealth and enforce the laws, federal, state and municipal. Then they quit bringing actions themselves and devoted their time to gathering evidence and presenting cases thoroughly substantiated to the proper officials. No cognizance was taken of the actions at first, but when the Civic committee instituted impeachment proceedings the officials woke up and Yonkers is a much cleaner city than it ever was before. All this is done quietly over there and Tom Blythe, in the Saturday Evening Post, says it has worked wonders.

Democratic Watchman

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President Wilson's Annual Message.

President Wilson's last annual message to Congress has the merits of brevity, beauty of diction and force. It occupies less than three columns in newspapers that printed it in full and opens with an appropriate and sublime quotation from President Lincoln, whose faith and patience had been put to the acid test. He made few recommendations for the reason, probably, that he realized the futility of addressing advice to a Congress dominated by such bigots in politics as Senators Lodge and Borah and Johnson. But those he makes will appeal to the conservative public mind and make an impression that will be enduring though they will not be adopted.

He renews his recommendation of a year ago that a budget system be adopted in order to simplify and clarify the business and financial operations of the government. He urges the generous care of "former members of the military and naval forces who are sick or disabled as the result of their participation in the war. These heroic men," he adds, "can never be paid in money," and "the nation's gratitude must be effectively revealed to them by the most ample provision for their medical care and treatment as well as their vocational training and placement." He recommends aid in the shape of a loan to Armenia, but of course Congress would rather see the butcheries and brutalities of the Turks go on than follow the advice of a Democratic President.

Plainly the last paragraph of the message in a sort of farewell address to the people of the United States. "I have not so much laid before you a series of recommendations, gentlemen," he states, "as sought to utter a confession of faith, of the faith in which I was bred and which it is my solemn purpose to stand by until my last fighting day. I believe this to be the faith of America, the faith of the future, and of all the victories which await national action in the days to come, whether in America or elsewhere." And impartial history will show Woodrow Wilson as, next to Thomas Jefferson, the apostle of that sublime and enduring faith.

The luntheads who control the policies of the government of Argentina will have to find some more effective way of obliging Kaiser William. Their attempt to break up the League of Nations was a failure.

Penrose's Opinion of Hoover.

Senator Penrose, whose voice appears to be growing stronger as his health increases in vigor and his spirits improve, would think it a joke if Herbert Hoover were appointed to a cabinet office in the Harding administration. A good many others would be more inclined to regard it as a tragedy. Mr. Hoover has done nothing to entitle him to the consideration he has received. President Wilson gave him an opportunity to perform some important service during the war which might have been done quite as well by hundreds of others. In return for the favors bestowed upon him he joined with a group of evil minded traders to vilify the man who brought him into public notice.

Senator Penrose has his faults and they are grave enough but he is not a hypocrite. He understands Hoover and properly appraises his merits. The Food Administrator came back from the war singing the praises of President Wilson. Penrose quarreled with him because he approved every thing the President did. He was particularly strong in his endorsement of the President's appeal two years ago for a friendly Congress and Penrose was quite as determined on the other side of that question, though nobody has ever been able to find out why. Two Republican Presidents had expressed the same anxiety under like conditions and nobody complained or protested. But Penrose and others of his type objected to everything President Wilson did.

In the early stages of the campaign for President this year some persons freely discussed the availability of Mr. Hoover as the nominee of either party. This apparently swelled his head and the Republican party being the stronger he aligned himself with that organization and became as vituperative against the President as any of the other malignants of that political faith. It is not likely that Penrose's aversion to him is ascribable to that cause for the reason that the Senator cordially hates the President. But he also despises ingratitude and scorns hypocrisy and because he probably deems Hoover an ingrate and a hypocrite he believes his appointment to a place in the cabinet would be a joke.

With Colonel Harvey and Colonel Bryan on hand the people of Marion, Ohio, ought to have plenty of work for all purposes.

Usurpation by Party Bosses.

The Democrats of the Seventeenth Senatorial district, composed of Lebanon county and part of Lancaster county, who read the associated press news in the morning papers, learned, on Tuesday morning of this week, that the Democratic State executive committee had met in Pittsburgh recently, and nominated a candidate for Senator for whom they may vote at a special election to be held soon. The Democratic voters of the district had no voice in the selection of the candidate and so far as the published facts show, didn't even know when or where the selection was to be made. But they have the full liberty of supporting the candidate or remaining away from the polls so as to give the opposition an unopposed election.

Home rule is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Democratic party. In the platforms of the party until recent years it was expressed in a pledge that local control of police powers is inviolable. The aim of party leaders, until within a few years, was to get as close to the people as possible. "In the multitude of counselors there is wisdom," was a political axiom wherever Democratic thought was in the ascendant. If a party boss or group of party bosses would undertake to usurp the functions of the voters he or they would be promptly and soundly rebuked. But things have changed under the direction of the self-appointed leaders who are now in control and the voters are treated as slaves.

Under what authority the so-called State executive committee, sitting in Pittsburgh, selected a Senatorial candidate for the Democrats of the Seventeenth district is left to conjecture. It may be said that the rules for the government of the party framed by Mitch Palmer and Charles P. Donnelly convey that power. But no rule can be valid which subverts the fundamental principles of the party and destroys the purpose for which the party was created. The Senatorial voters of the Seventeenth Senatorial district have the right to select their own candidate and the usurpation of the authority by a group of selfish and probably sordid bosses ought to be resented in the most drastic manner.

More champagne is consumed in Germany now than ever before which accounts, in some measure, for the difficulty in paying the indemnities provided for by the peace treaty.

The Most Absurd Suggestion.

The most absurd suggestion in relation to the incoming President's cabinet which has been offered to amuse or irritate the public mind is that James M. Beck, now a corporation lawyer of New York, be made Secretary of State. Mr. Beck's first appearance in public life was some twenty-five years ago when he made a few Democratic speeches in Pennsylvania. He was then a law partner of the late William F. Harry, of Philadelphia, and a "boy" orator of considerable force. In 1903 he was appointed United States district attorney for the Eastern district of Pennsylvania and in the campaign of 1906 supported General Buckner, the so-called "gold" candidate for President against Bryan and McKinley.

After the elevation of Theodore Roosevelt to the Presidency Mr. Beck, who had become a full-fledged Republican, was appointed an assistant attorney general, where he served the corporations so faithfully that upon the expiration of his term of office he was induced to settle in New York to become counsel for some of the corporations he had served. As the Republican party is the "nurse" of predatory corporations he naturally became active in support of that party. Since the inauguration of President Wilson his activities have greatly increased, for Wilson is the "pet aversion" of predatory operators. During the last few years his principal work has been abusing the President.

On the somewhat sinister but purely commercial principle that "to the victors belong the spoils," Mr. Beck is entitled to something at the hands of the Harding administration. But nobody with the least sense of proportion would think of him in connection with the office of head of the cabinet. He might be able to hold down the office of federal district attorney for New York or chief of some bureau somewhere that had comparatively little to do and would give him opportunity to speak frequently. But any office of great importance would be a misfit for him and in that of Secretary of State he would be as absurd as Senator Vare would be as Pope of Rome or Bishop of the Methodist church.

Of course a billion dollar navy will eat up taxes but those who insist on scrapping the peace league must pay the price of preparation for war.

Who is President?

The esteemed Philadelphia Ledger professes to be greatly perplexed over the question: "Who is President-elect? Does he live in Marion or does he adorn the Atlantic City boardwalk?" As a matter of fact there is no President-elect at present. Some time in January the electoral colleges will assemble in the several State capitals and a distressingly large majority of them will vote to elect a gentleman who lives in Marion, Ohio, to the office of President. Subsequently the result of this vote will be canvassed in the Senate and Mr. Harding will be declared President-elect. Now he might be properly designated as the President-to-be except for the uncertainty which has confused our contemporary.

The distinguished gentleman who lives in Marion was nominated for President by the Republican National convention because the equally distinguished gentleman who adorns the Atlantic City boardwalk wanted a submissive "rubber stamp" in the White House pending the transfer of the government from the people to the control of the special interests and predatory corporations, and unless our Philadelphia contemporary is even more stupid than its leading editorials would indicate, it must have known this at the time. The gentleman who adorns the Atlantic City boardwalk has a large capacity for manipulation but is without faith in his springtime ability so that he prefers to work through a dummy.

While the campaign was on the esteemed Philadelphia Ledger cared little or nothing where the President-elect had a home and habitation, or whether his name was Harding or Penrose. What concerned it was the eviction from the Postoffice Department in Washington of a man who had curtailed the graft of certain periodical publishers who had been looting the treasury to the tune of several million a year before the Wilson administration called a halt and either Harding or Penrose could be depended upon to do that. Meantime it gives us pleasure to inform our contemporary that the President-to-be lives in Marion but his manager adorns the Atlantic City boardwalk, if a sick man in a rolling chair is an adornment.

The lessons of history are wasted on the mind of Congressman Kahn. He favors universal military training as a guarantee against war with Japan. Before the war Kaiser William felt confident that it was a sure guarantee against all kinds of war.

Clutching at Straws.

The old adage "drowning men clutch at straws" was verified in Washington, the other day. The news dispatches from Geneva conveyed the information that the Argentine delegates to the League of Nations had withdrawn from the body. They had demanded an amendment to the covenant, presumably in the interest of Germany, admitting all States applying to membership. The covenant provides for certain conditions prerequisite to the admission of Germany which the Argentine members desired to remove. Upon the refusal of the League to make the amendment Senator Pueyrredon wrote President Hymans that he and his colleagues would no longer participate in the proceedings.

When this information reached Washington Senator Knox declared that "the inevitable disintegration of the League of Nations has begun," adding that "it comes a little earlier than I had expected." Senator Lodge was equally delighted. "It seems to me," he said, "that some of the Nations represented are beginning to find objections that we discovered nearly two years ago." In both cases "the wish was father to the thought," Lodge representing the ordnance makers and woolen and cotton mills of New England and Knox speaking for the steel industries of Pittsburgh, want wars at frequent intervals in order to enrich their employers, and to that end hope to "scrap" the League of Nations.

But their sinister hopes will be disappointed. The League of Nations will endure and work its beneficent purposes notwithstanding the absurd action of the delegates for Argentina. In fact the incident which so gratified Knox and Lodge scarcely made a ripple in the tide of progress which the League is making. No doubt Germany will be admitted in the course of events. Her statesmen being intelligent men are as anxious to get in as the leaders of the American Senate are to stay out, and it may safely be predicted that before long Germany will be admitted. But she must first "prove her faith by works." She must fulfill the condition of the armistice and that done she will be admitted.

Subscribe for the "Watchman."

Home Newspapers.

From the Ohio Farmer. It is not difficult to prove to farmers the advantage that they enjoy in having agricultural publications devoted especially to their own territory. In fact, so well has this idea been developed that the most influential division of the farm press comprises what is known as territorial publications. They cater to the interests of the agriculture of a certain region defined by natural conditions and render their readers a full measure of service that is designed particularly for them. The people of the smaller cities and towns should appreciate this same idea as it pertains to the weekly, semi-weekly and daily papers that are published in their midst. A good newspaper is a fine thing for a locality. It is a real asset. It gives the news that is of special interest to the folks at home and forms the hub about which the wheel of neighborhood activities centers. Many of the papers published in our smaller cities carry more news of general interest than is to be found in some of the big city dailies which too often sacrifice real news of value for mere sensational stuff which would be better left unmentioned. If the news of the locality is presented with a proper degree of editorial consideration it not only keeps the local people well informed as to what is going on about them but also adds a dignity to affairs in general that might otherwise be lacking. We have known this at the time. The gentleman who adorns the Atlantic City boardwalk has a large capacity for manipulation but is without faith in his springtime ability so that he prefers to work through a dummy.

Cork in Ruins.

From the Philadelphia Record. All that the American public is able to gather from the latest dispatches from stormy Ireland is that the business section of the city of Cork is in ruins. There seems to be no doubt whatever of that. But of the events leading up to this tragic incident the information vouchsafed to us is decidedly vague.

Why has it been so difficult to secure details of the alleged ambush of "Black and Tan" auxiliaries, with heavy loss of life, which is said to have been the direct cause of this act of heavy reprisal? That it was an act of reprisal, at first freely admitted, is now, apparently, being seriously questioned by newspapers friendly to the British government, and some are described as "frankly skeptical," suggesting that "the fires might have been caused by explosives such as others found on Saturday in Dublin. Others indicate their belief the fires were a reply to the establishment of martial law in Southwest Ireland." This last explanation would be comical if it were not connected with a matter so serious.

A point to be remembered is that Cork is under martial law, and that the sources of information, together with the telegraph cables which are the instruments for the dissemination of information, are in the hands of the British government. It is ridiculous to suppose that the people of Cork, enraged at the imposition of martial law upon them, deliberately set fire to their own city. Until the whole truth of the matter comes out there is nothing to believe except that this is another outburst of that panic rage which has so often visited suffering upon the innocent for the sins of the guilty whom the authorities are not willing to apprehend.

In any event, the British government has an ugly case to explain; and Lloyd George's "double policy," meantime, has brought peace no nearer.

Harding Has Promised One Job.

From the Boston Globe. President-elect Harding has made at least one promise of a job, and to a Democrat. More than a year ago Senator John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, predicted to the Senator from Ohio that he would be the next President, and he asked for appointment as Minister to Portugal under the new administration. "I'll do it, if you insist," Senator Harding replied, "provided your vision comes true. But may I ask you why you want such a place?" "That's simple," John Sharp answered. "I've figured it out that Portugal is the last place in the world that will go dry."

Senator Penrose's objection to Elihu Root for Secretary of State is based on something else than Root's sympathy for the League of Nations. It will be recalled that Root is the author of the statement that the Penrose machine is "a criminal conspiracy masquerading as the Republican party."

Mitch Palmer's annual report may persuade some of the very credulous that he earned his salary during the year just past.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

Hazleton merchants have named a committee to pass on all projects for canvassing of funds for charitable or other purposes.

Samuel Troup, of York, charged with having failed to send his two children to school regularly, paid a fine and costs aggregating \$17.

Miss Pearl Miller, of Beech Creek township, teacher of the Plunketts Run school in Bald Eagle township, Clinton county, and all the pupils of the school, numbering fourteen, are ill of whooping cough as a result of which the school is closed.

Mrs. Ellen Shelbert, of Bellair, was found guilty of being a common scold, by a jury in criminal court at Sunbury last week. She was sentenced to pay a fine of \$25 and the costs of prosecution, and warned to stay out of court in the future or go to jail.

George Y. Hemler, a former county commissioner of Adams county, died at his home in McSherrytown from paralysis, aged 86 years. He was one of the organizers of the Farmers' and Merchants' bank at that place and one of the directors for many years.

William Walker, of Cameron, while crossing a street in Emporium last week, was struck by an automobile and run down. He was taken to the Lock Haven hospital in an unconscious condition. He sustained a possible fracture of the skull and a lacerated wound on the forehead.

Edward Cooper, of Jeannette, is in danger of losing his right eye, as a result of a hunting accident recently. He and Peter Davis, also of Jeannette, were hunting and Davis was walking ahead with his gun on his shoulder and in some way the weapon was discharged, the shot striking Cooper in the face.

After twenty-eight years' activity in the equal suffrage fight, the Woman's Suffrage society of Philadelphia county disbanded last Thursday. The records were ordered turned over to the Pennsylvania Historical society, and \$13,000 in the treasury will be donated to the Anna Howard Shaw Memorial fund.

A burglar fashionably attired in women's clothes, is believed to be one of two who ransacked the apartments of Samuel Handwerk and Charles Moyer, drug clerks, who live in Allentown, on Saturday afternoon. Cash, jewelry and clothing to the value of more than \$700 were taken, but about \$600 in German marks was thrown aside.

George Dolman, the colored youth who set fire to the Nicklas building in Chambersburg on November 1st and caused a fire, with a loss of \$100,000, was sentenced to twelve years in the penitentiary by Judge Gillan, on Saturday. He admitted that he tried to fire the same building on the night of October 30th, and said that when he did set the blaze he was drunk on hard cider.

Heir to a fortune of between \$50,000 and \$75,000, left by his uncle, Alfred W. Thompson, who died a week ago from grief following the death of his mother and sister, Edwin Thompson, formerly of Allentown, is in the Philippines, ignorant of his good luck. During the world war he served in the United States Engineers in France and decided to remain in the army, being sent to the Philippines.

Two children were burned to death and their mother, Mrs. Samuel Antilla, was injured at Monessen last Thursday when fire destroyed the Antilla home. It is believed that the fire was started by the children, who had been playing near a stove. Mrs. Antilla was injured when she was forced to jump from a second story window of the burning house with a baby in her arms. The baby escaped injury.

One of the largest blasts ever touched off in Blair county was exploded in the Jones & Laughlin quarries, near Williamsburg, last week, and loosened 100,000 tons of rock. The blast made little noise, but the hills for miles around were shaken as with an earthquake. Water in the Williamsburg borough reservoir, half a mile away, was disturbed by the explosion sufficiently to make it muddy. Seven holes were drilled, the deepest being 196 feet, and 1 1/2 tons of dynamite were used.

Crashing into the waters of the Quacmahoning creek when the superstructure was working on collapsed at the Border dam, Somerset county, at 10 o'clock last Thursday morning, Jesse A. Feather, aged 27 years, of Johnstown, but until July of this year a resident of Duquesneville, swam about until overcome by exhaustion and probably heart failure and sank in water between twelve and fourteen feet deep before fellow workers, who had seen his fall, could reach him. His body was not recovered for three hours.

Mrs. Alice M. Roland, wealthy widow of Lancaster, took her fourth husband last week when she wed C. M. Stack, general yardmaster of the Midvale Ordnance company, of Coatesville. Her first husband was a printer and his death occurred several years ago. The second husband was William H. Roland, an attorney in Lancaster, who, when he died, left her an estate worth \$300,000. The third husband was Doctor Rohrer, a veterinary surgeon, from whom she obtained a divorce two weeks ago. Mrs. Stack built in Lancaster a \$80,000 home, which is a show place on the Lincoln highway, called Grandview.

Shot in the neck from behind as he walked along a back street in Sunbury Sunday night, George C. Meiser, 35 years old, a married railroad man, escaped death only because his sweater and overcoat retarded the bullet. It entered near the backbone and was found lodged in the flesh under the right ear. Doctors at the Mary M. Packer hospital say the wound is not serious. According to Meiser's story, he was returning from work when he heard a man walking behind him, but paid no attention to him. When within a few feet of Meiser, the fellow fired and then ran across lots and disappeared. Meiser declares he has no known enemies.

Practically the entire night turn of the Standard Steel works at Lewistown has been suspended for the present and the gates in the fence surrounding the works are locked at 5:40 to 6 p. m., and remain locked until the day turn go on in the morning. Only about one-third of the day turn usually employed are now in service, but the general opinion prevails that the first of the new year will again see the plant in full operation. The Standard began to cut in the number of employees immediately following the signing of the armistice and up until about six weeks ago had disposed, quietly, of about one-third of the entire force. The Logan steel plant at that place, however, is still in full operation.