

Democratic Watchman

INK SLINGS.

—Spring is surely on the way as the familiar honk! honk! of wild geese flying northward was heard on Tuesday night.

—This winter has been a great one for all kinds of game that had to depend on the great outdoors for their food supply.

—Sugar dealers are already trying to work up a scare over a predicted shortage in raw sugar, evidently for the purpose of running up the price on the consuming public.

—The Sinn Feiners in Ireland indulged in the pleasant pastime of ambushing a train the other day and killing eight innocent passengers, and still they wonder why they are not given self-government.

—The Pennsylvania Legislature will take a holiday all next week because of Washington's birthday on Tuesday. This will at least delay the passage of a lot of bills that few people have any interest in.

—And now the Republican muckrakers in Congress want President Wilson to account for that one hundred and fifty million war fund voted him by Congress during the late war and for expenses at the peace commission. Why not let Dawes tell it?

—It is rumored that Attorney General Palmer will take up his residence in Washington permanently after March 4th and engage in the private practice of his profession. It will probably be a good thing for Pennsylvania Democracy if the rumor proves correct.

—Reports coming to this office from the farmers throughout Centre county indicate that the wheat never looked better this time of year than it does right now, which ought to be proof that a heavy covering of snow is not essential to wheat wintering in good shape, especially when the winter has not been any colder than the present.

—Only fifty-six days until trout fishing season opens and the ardent disciple of Isaak Walton is already looking up his fishing tackle, etc., preparatory to that big annual event in piscatorial sport. And while most of them will have no trouble in making the tackle size up to the emergency the big majority will be woefully short on the "etc."

—Sixty year old Dr. Evan O'Neil Kane operated upon himself for appendicitis at the Kane Summit hospital on Tuesday, and three hours later declared he felt very comfortable. Dr. O'Neil claims he performed his own operation mostly for experimental purposes, but as he has removed some four thousand appendices during his active practice he may have had an eye to the saving of the fee usually charged in such cases.

—Let us hope that Penn State is taking too long a look into the future. This thing of adding a course in cooking for men to the curriculum of that institution appears too significant for our peace of mind. But come to think of it, since the country has gone dry and the bright lights have lost their lure many an "old man" is spending his evenings at the place that he once thought was "nothing like this" so he might as well be peeling potatoes and skinnin' fitch for breakfast, because he's in the road anyhow.

—Only fourteen more days of the good old Democratic administration and then the reins of government will be turned over completely to the Republicans. And won't there be a scamper of the hungry horde for offices under the new administration, from the most insignificant postoffice to the best paying job at the chief executive's command? And we'll venture the assertion that house cleaning this year will begin quite early in the new administration; so early in fact that the present office holder who is a Democrat should begin right away to look up another job.

—President-elect Harding has advised Representative Longworth, of Ohio, that he does not believe he should be granted exemption from paying an income tax on his presidential salary, but he hasn't said he wouldn't accept exemption if Congress sees fit to pass the bill recently introduced to that effect. The income tax on the President's salary would amount to approximately \$18,000 a year, and that is rather an attractive sum to relinquish for any ordinary man, and so far the President to be has not displayed any characteristics that justify putting him in the extraordinary class.

—The capture of another cargo of booze at Graysville last Friday by the state police should awaken the authorities to the fact that Centre county has been for months past an open trail for booze runners between the northwestern part of the State and Blair and Clearfield counties. For months these illegal traffickers in wet goods drove their truck loads of whiskey right through the streets of Bellefonte without fear of molestation, but as the grip of the law began to tighten they changed their course and have been using the Bald Eagle and Pennsylvania routes, preferably the latter, as it offers a better chance of escape from officers who might be on the lookout for them. While a few of them have been caught and their cars and cargoes confiscated, it has had no appreciable deterrent effect and this wholesale traffic of booze through Centre county will not be broken up until local officers in every community become more active in their endeavors to catch the bootleggers.

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STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

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Something the Matter With the Work.

The fact that deficiency bills aggregating several millions of dollars are necessary is ample proof that something is the matter with the fiscal processes of the State. The last Legislature appropriated funds for the expenses of government upon estimates made by those charged with that service. Small differences either above or below the figures might have been expected and accounted for by unlooked for conditions. But a general deficiency bill of nearly four million dollars and other deficiencies that make a total of nearly eight million dollars are so extraordinary as to create surprise and demand investigation. Such a difference between estimate and expenditure is just cause for suspicion.

Because expression had been given in the newspapers of such suspicion Governor Sproul called a secret conference of three men and cut three or four hundred thousand dollars out of the general deficiency bill. But in the absence of an explanation why that much excess was needed in the first place, that cutting was not satisfactory and the newspapers continued to talk. Thereupon complaint was made that criticism of this kind is "attacking Governor Sproul's program." Possibly that is true, but a welfare program which cannot stand the process of inquiry may be set down as a spurious welfare which would better be checked in the beginning. Secret programs are always dangerous.

There has been something going on during the past two years that cost large sums of money and was not authorized by law, or else something is contemplated in the future which it is necessary to conceal from the public. The tax payers of Pennsylvania have a right to know exactly what is done with every dollar they put into the treasury and covering up profligate expenditures by blanket deficiency bills is not a satisfactory way of transacting the public business. If any department of the State government has been "eating up" money the fault should be revealed and the responsibility placed. Demanding this right for the public is not attacking any welfare program worth protecting.

—The truth will find its way out. The Buffalo Times has discovered that eighty-four per cent. of the business failures during 1920 "were of firms that didn't advertise."

Valid Objections to Crow Plan.

Mr. E. Lowry Hume, special assistant Attorney General of the United States, scores a strong point against Senator Crow's plan for a constitutional convention. The Crow bill provides for the appointment by the Governor of one-fifth of the membership of the proposed convention. Mr. Hume says: "This 20 per cent. will undoubtedly be the balance of power on all disputed questions. Consequently it will be within the power of one man to determine what rights the people shall surrender and what limitations shall be prescribed for the security of their liberties." No such attempt to monopolize power has ever been made before in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hume is not equally forceful in his objection to the selection of the other members of the convention. From the beginning our government has been one by "party" and the proposition to elect delegates to a constitutional convention by the same methods that members of the General Assembly and Congress are chosen can hardly be condemned as subversive of the principles of popular government. Members of every previous constitutional convention held in this State have been chosen in that way. In the convention of 1873 a number of delegates at large were chosen on a non-partisan basis by agreement and there was provision for minority representation. But party lines were drawn in the elections.

It would be a sad thing indeed if at some near or remote period in the future a constitutional convention should be made up of "representatives of certain industrial groups or religious denominations and disqualifying from participation all those not properly affiliated with the groups or denominations in control." But we have no fear that such a condition will ever exist in this country. The constitution of the United States stands as a guarantee against such a misfortune, and though bigotry has been putting spurious patches on that immortal instrument in recent years, it is not probable that such an absurd limit will ever be reached.

—England's pathetic plea that her war debt to the United States be remitted places our old friend John Bull in the attitude of a mendicant.

—We can see no actual harm in the fact that railroad executives have been notified that they are not "the whole cheese."

Good May Come Out of Evil.

Governor Sproul's purpose to increase the State revenues by levying new taxes is meeting with hard knocks. In the first place a considerable number of Legislators in both branches of the General Assembly are coming to the opinion that with proper business methods employed and reasonable economy exercised, there will be no need for additional revenue. This view of the subject has been advanced frequently by this newspaper and other close observers of events, who have expressed surprise that the fiscal agents of the State have never given it a thought. Money has been spent as freely as if it grew on trees with the result that experts have been kept busy hunting up new subjects of taxation.

The chances are that if there had been no factional quarrels in the Republican party the old order of things would have been continued and the Legislature would have proceeded with the enactment of such legislation as the Governor recommended. But Mr. Grundy and Senator Crow disagreed upon certain subjects involving labor legislation two years ago and Governor Sproul enlisted under the Crow banner. Because of this Mr. Grundy made up his mind to punish Sproul and the available means was in attacking his legislative program. The conditions favored this for the reason that the Sproul program contemplated taxing manufactures and coal and the manufacturers of the State feel that industry is not in shape to bear additional burdens.

So far as the tax on coal is concerned it was felt that it was futile. It was attempted during the Pennypacker administration and though it caused a considerable increase in the price of coal it never put a cent in the State Treasury. With shops and factories closing down all over the State the prospects of getting revenue from a tax on manufactures seemed equally hopeless and that left the entire Sproul program open to attack. It is now charged that Grundy is behind the demand for investigation of the deficiency bills, which is not denied, and that intensifies the bitterness of the factional fight in progress. If it will result in economy of administration, however, the public will regret it.

—Mr. Fordney promises the tariff mongers "the highest tariff in the history of the country." The Aldrich tariff also enjoyed that distinction and look what it did to the Republican party.

Big Fox Hunt Scheduled for Rush Township.

The Philipsburg and Rush township division of the Centre County Conservation Association are planning to pull off a big fox hunt on next Tuesday, Washington's birthday. Dogs will be used in the hunt and according to information reaching this office yesterday those who have originated the affair expect at least four hundred men to take part. Hunters from all over that section are lining up for the big event and if the plans do not miscarry it should prove an innovation in sport circles that may become an annual institution.

The hunt, by the way, will not be the kind of a fox chase pulled off in England in olden times, or one similar to that indulged in to this day down in Chester county, where a captured reynard is turned loose and hunters and hounds chase him to the death. This is to be a real hunt after the wild animal and the purpose is to rid the woods of this beast of prey. The hunters will go forth for the intent purpose of killing foxes, and not for the glory of capturing the brush.

This will be the first event of the kind to be pulled off in Centre county since the organization and under the auspices of a unit of the Conservation Association, and the outcome will naturally be awaited with considerable interest. It is the aim of the Association to conserve game of all kinds, birds, forests, etc., and in doing so it becomes necessary to destroy the enemies of game, that will undoubtedly be in the direct line of conservation.

And this is but one way in which the great work of conservation can be carried on effectively in Centre county. There are many other ways, of course, but the Conservation Association has already become so deeply rooted among the enthusiastic sportsmen of the county that we feel certain that its work in the future will prove beneficial in more ways than one, and the way to help it along is to become a member at once.

—It is to be hoped that General Dawes didn't visit Harding for the purpose of making apologies for his plain talk to the smelling committee of Congress.

—Subscribe for the "Watchman."

Deposits of State Funds.

The suggestion recently made by Auditor General-elect Lewis that the deposit of State funds be based on contract rather than favoritism is already in process of crystallization. A bill has been introduced in the General Assembly requiring the board of revenue commissioners to place the funds with the highest responsible bidder. The plan is to advertise for bids and award the favor to the highest. Under the existing system depositories of State funds are required to pay two per cent. interest on balances. Mr. Lewis imagines that this may be increased to three per cent. or more without impairment of the security. If that be true the innovation would be an advantage.

The revenue derived from State depositories now averages something over three hundred thousand dollars a year. It is estimated that this might be increased about two hundred thousand, which is a worth while improvement. It seems, Mr. Lewis says, that individuals and corporations get considerably more from banks through their deposits are in lesser sums. But Mr. Lewis overlooks the fact that banks are not expected to make campaign contributions in consideration of individual and corporation accounts while the Republican machine would be greatly disappointed if not actually incensed if managers of a bank generously favored by State deposits failed to meet the campaign collector with a liberal contribution.

But we can see no reason for objecting to the Lewis plan on that account. The practical politicians who manage the Republican machine will find a way to "get the money" necessary to finance the campaigns of the future, as they have in the past, and if good will come to the public without great harm to the politicians by it the experiment is worth a trial. Mr. Lewis states that his plan is in operation in Ohio with excellent results, which reminds us that it was one of the improvements introduced by Governor James M. Cox, recently the Democratic candidate for President, and the people of Ohio gave his opponent for the office a majority of several hundred thousand.

—When Thaddeus R. Hamilton walked into this office on Tuesday morning we immediately realized that another year of life had been chalked up to his credit, because he makes it a point to come here just as regularly as he celebrates his birthday, although this time he was two days ahead of time, as his anniversary was yesterday, when he was just eighty-five years old. For the past ten or fifteen years friends of Mr. Hamilton have been complimenting him on how well he carries off his age and it is really beginning to seem as if he were going backward in years instead of forward and his friends ought to wait until he begins to grow old before they talk about how well he is carrying the weight of years. And how he has managed to do it so easily and gracefully is a secret that many a man, and woman too, would like to have. At some time in his strenuous career he must have taken a drink from the spring of life without knowing it and is now reaping the benefit. Candidly speaking, Mr. Hamilton is a splendid example of the fact that hard work will kill no man, and he has been a hard worker all his life and today at eighty-five, is able to do a better day's work than many men are willing to do.

—Judge Henry C. Quigley will soon establish a reputation in Pittsburgh that will naturally make him feared by criminals if he continues to hand out such salty sentences as he did on Tuesday when he sent a nineteen year old youth to the penitentiary for an indeterminate term of not less than fourteen years nor more than twenty years for the theft of an automobile.

—Senator S. J. Miller on Tuesday sponsored a bill introduced in the State Senate appropriating two million dollars for carrying on construction work of the new penitentiary at Rockview.

—It is officially stated that cattle on the farms have diminished in value a couple of billion dollars within a year, but cattle on the butcher's block have not decreased in price in proportion.

—The Harding cabinet may be a trifle shy in intellectual equipment but in the matter of boodle it will shine resplendent.

—When Germany defaults on the late Kaiser's allowance we may begin to think she is too poor to pay the war indemnity.

—Get your job work done at this office and get it right.

After the G. O. P. Landslide.

By Horace V. Blue in Philadelphia Record.

It is just wonderful how the great Republican landslide continues to circumvent the United States. Those people, particularly the wage-earners, who were clamoring for and voted for a change are getting it in leaps and bounds. To say, as some do, that we are still under a Democratic administration, is obviously misleading. From the moment the Sixty-sixth Congress (elected in 1918) began to function, and the Senatorial oligarchy "breathed forth contagion," and Senator Lodge with a nasal accent, said, "I am fighting Wilson," and hell-roaring Hi Johnson let loose the dogs of war, and the wild man, Senator Borah, of Idaho, started on a rampage, the executive or Democratic branch of the government was powerless.

The fact that the greatest prosperity ever enjoyed by our people and the highest wages ever paid in the country took place under a Democratic administration, and also the fact that the greatest war in the history of the world was brought to a successful conclusion under a Democratic administration, brought the Old Guard and their satellites to a degree of desperation unknown in the history of American politics. With the aid of an unlimited amount of money, wrung from certain tender and susceptible business interests in the good old Mark Hanna way, a subsidized press, and the horde of hungry office-seekers, who have been kept away from the pie counter for nearly eight years, a propaganda was so successfully spread that they elected a President by a tremendous majority; but the landslide continues and the Labor Department survey shows that 3,473,466 people are unemployed, and we might add that a large number of banks and banking institutions have also gone Republican. At least, they have been closed. And so it goes; and it is very likely, highly probable and extremely possible that when Mr. Harding is inaugurated with Jeffersonian simplicity on the 4th of March, we will be almost back to "normalcy."

It was indeed a g-r-r-and and glorious victory. I wish to say, however, that the ranks of the nine million (100 per cent. American) men and women, God bless them! who voted the Democratic ticket because they believed in the League of Nations, and hoped to bring about and make operative that magnificent plan of "peace on earth, good will to men," will be greatly augmented. Even now the hosts are marching; already we hear the thunder of the tramping feet, and emblazoned on their banner is that immortal sentiment, "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Job-Hunters.

From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

It is not difficult to detect in Senator Penrose's remarks on the present activity of office-seekers an undertone of regret for the days when no vexatious civil service legislation checked the aspiration of loyal partisans to get on the payroll of the government. Carrying on the Civil war was for Abraham Lincoln a less laborious task than apportioning the postoffices. Mr. Penrose appears particularly restive under an order of President Wilson which, if it stands, will prevent the Republican party from rewarding the faithful with postoffices. Its obnoxious effect is to prevent a clean sweep of postmasterships for the sake of those who expect to enjoy an open season of bloody reprisals.

Nothing is more difficult than to persuade an Old Guard politician that public office belongs to neither party and is for the service of the country. The politician professes to be quite unable to detect the slightest ethical obliquity in filling public places to pay off his private political debts. He bitterly resents the impertinent intrusion of taxpayers upon his selections. There is to a silent and a static partnership; they provide the salaries and he provides those who are to receive them. Sometimes we blame ignorant immigrants for submitting with such docility to the yoke of the padrone. Yet we meekly bow to the dictates of a political system which, in certain spheres, is quite as absolute as any industrial despotism.

Make It Unanimous.

From the Detroit Free Press.

The Rhode Island Board of Agriculture claims to have discovered a fertilizer that will grow grass and kill weeds at one and the same time. Couldn't they get up an improvement that will also mow the lawn.

Killing a Sport.

From the St. Joseph Gazette.

The doctor who prescribes permanent of potash instead of whiskey for snake bites has taken all the thrill out of snake-hunting.

News Notes.

From the Des Moines Register.

The ticket agent at Marion, Ohio, is going to sell some tickets to Washington, D. C. very shortly.

—Upon "sober, second thought" the Republicans in Congress have concluded to make no change in the plans for the navy at present.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—H. Frank is the oldest citizen of Punxsutawney, and perhaps of Jefferson county. He is 96 years old, erect, straight of limb, eyesight keen and hearing only slightly impaired. He looks to be twenty-five years younger and believes he can add twenty-five more years to his age. "And why not?" he asks, "my grandfather lived to be 120."

—A quarrel over boarding house biscuits ended on Sunday in the death of Sylvester Williams, of Uniontown, from a bullet and the serious wounding of Benjamin Brown with a knife. Williams and Brown were at the table when the former made a remark about the quality of the biscuits. This was resented by Brown, who is said to be an admirer of the cook. A fight followed.

—Notices have been posted at the locomotive shops of the New York Central railroad at Avis, that the shops will close on Saturday until further notice. These shops have been working day and night shifts and employing 550 men. The order to close was not accompanied by any further information than that it would be indefinite. The car shops at Avis have been closed since January 15.

—The season for sap, maple syrup and sugar has arrived, and work was started last week in many of the sugar camps in Columbia county. Hundreds of trees were tapped and the tapping will continue for several days. The season is about a month earlier than usual, and owners of the sugar camps are of the belief that spring is here. Early reports are that the sap has begun running in as great quantities as when the trees are tapped in the middle of March.

—Describing high heels on women's shoes as a "menace to the human race" and the cause of specific injury to health, members of the Blair county Osteopathic Society, in convention at Tyrone last week, unanimously adopted resolutions asking the Legislature to pass the bill prohibiting the manufacture, sale, display or wearing of heels more than one and one-half inches high. The removal of mechanical interference with health is the aim of the bill, say the physicians.

—Earl Webster, aged 14 years, of Tullytown, died last Thursday in the Harrisman hospital, at Bristol, Pa., a victim of complications which arose after the boy, an invalid, had jumped into the Delaware and Lehigh canal, near his home, and rescued three children who had broken through the ice while skating. The heroic action of the boy, who sacrificed his life for his young friends, is to receive recognition by a medal, subscription for which is to be taken up by residents of the borough.

—Just before submitting to an operation for appendicitis in an Easton hospital, Bill Faust dictated a will disposing of a \$200,000 estate. He gave the attorney who drew it a bad check for \$75, and, while convalescing, lived in luxury, with three nurses working eight-hour shifts, and several extra waiters. He had Congressman Kirkpatrick draw up a power of attorney for two men to tap his security boxes in a Reading bank, and bring the contents, some \$200,000, to Easton. He is in jail all right now, but he fooled many wise and some few otherwise people.

—Only a few inches space separated John and Charles Noy, brothers, as they walked side by side to their work at the Mill Creek colliery, at Tremont, last Thursday, yet John was killed by a falling boulder and nearly every bone in his body crushed, while Charles was not touched. The boulder, weighing several tons, descended with crushing force, leaving the uninjured man without a scratch, but breathless from his narrow escape from death and prostrated with grief over the sudden death of his brother. John was active in P. O. S. of A. circles. His father and a number of brothers and sisters survive.

—Theft of mail containing money from lock boxes at the postoffice in Bloomsburg that may run into hundreds of dollars was revealed Thursday when postal authorities caught a small boy rifling mail from a box. They refused to divulge his name, as he has implicated a half dozen others. Money, stamps and checks mailed to business men, and particularly to County Treasurer Dresher, have miscarried. Business men have complained that letters, torn open, have been found in their boxes and that some had been delivered to them without the money. Two checks were found on the street last week, each made payable to the county treasurer.

—A Glen Campbell, Indiana county, man was locked up in the borough jail at Punxsutawney, Jefferson county, after he had consumed a goodly portion of the white mule brand of liquor popular in the latter town. Not many iron bars or locks are required to hold a victim of Punxsutawney white mule, so when the prisoner was thrown into jail both the outside door and that of the cell were left unblocked. While the fellow from Glen Campbell was sleeping it off, a Punxsutawney youth entered the jail and demanded the valuables of the prisoner for safe keeping, claiming to be an officer, securing \$1.25. The following day the young man was rounded up and fined \$7.75 for robbing a prisoner in jail.

—After N. R. Buller, State Fish Commissioner of Pennsylvania, finished a speech urging a company of sportsmen representing Union, Northumberland and Snyder counties in session at Lewisburg last Friday evening to support the proposed tax of \$1.00 fishermen which, he said, would give his department sufficient funds to do efficient work, Harry S. Strine, a borough councilman of Milton, took the floor and stated very determined opposition to the tax. When put to a vote of the assemblage the proposed tax was overwhelmingly defeated. The sportsmen took the ground that when the fish commission could show some drastic action looking toward the end of stream pollution the fishermen would gladly pay such a tax.

—The man who contemplates mortgaging his property to the limit of his ability and fails to take friend wife into his confidence had better take into account a bill that the Pennsylvania Federation of Women's clubs is about to have introduced in the Legislature. The measure, which has the backing of practically every woman's organization in the State, would require the written consent of the spouse before a husband could take out a mortgage. Women behind the bill declare that numerous instances have come to light where widows, in settling up estates, found to their surprise and chagrin that their late husbands had burdened his possessions with mortgages. In consequence the widows were left high and dry on the financial rocks.