

INK SLINGS.

—So far as headlines are concerned the Altoona papers probably count that day lost that does not produce a local shooting or hold-up sensation.

—If the corn in Centre county keeps on stretching skyward farmers who merely top it will have to use step-ladders when they do their husking.

—Surely there will be a flood on east Bishop street if the rather rotund gentleman of the cloth who is deriving so much pleasure from the new Hughes out-of-door swimming pool is permitted to catapult himself into the water from that ten-foot diving platform.

—The Senate has passed the House bill prohibiting the prescription of beer as medicine. As soon as the House concurs in an amendment attached to it the amended bill will probably be passed finally and then the doctors of the country will lose cases without number.

—The Secretary of the Treasury has announced that ordinary governmental expenditures for July, 1921, were \$322,000,000. Inasmuch as this was \$15,000,000 more than was spent for governmental purposes in July, 1920, the last year of the Wilson administration, we rise to remark that Mr. Harding is getting back to "normalcy" like the old woman kept tavern out west.

—President Harding's much promised lessening of the burden of taxation turns out to be all for the rich and nothing for the poor. The excess profits taxes of the great corporations and the surtaxes of those whose incomes run from fifty thousand to a million a year are to be cut out entirely and to make up what the rich won't have to pay higher tariffs, and consequently higher prices, are to be put on the things the poor have to buy to subsist on.

—The elimination of the "nuisance" taxes will naturally make a favorable impression on the public, but it is like throwing dust in our eyes so we can't see that the taxes on the essential things have not been lowered. Ice cream sodas, sporting goods, etc., may all be classed as luxuries and the tax on them is only trifling, though because we purchase such things daily it becomes irritating and assumes far more importance in our minds than it should have. It is a foxy play and will accomplish exactly what it is being made for by convincing all light-heads that substantial tax revisions are being made.

—Our senior Senator has had himself interviewed on prohibition enforcement, especially as it affects Pennsylvania. He has gone on record as favoring most drastic enforcement of the law, and is shocked at the reports that many enforcement officers have become rich through connivance with bootleggers and illicit dealers. He has issued orders that the entire force be dismissed and others assigned to the work. We would be inclined to applaud the Senator's stand if we could bring ourselves to believe that he is less concerned about what crowd is getting rich through illegal traffic than he is about violations of the Volstead law.

—Congressman Keller, Republican, from St. Paul, Minnesota, has just made public a statement to the effect that President Harding has already "assumed more power than any of his predecessors." He declares that his party organization is bound, hand and foot, to Wall Street, and that the public may expect nothing good to come of "its stupid, selfish, short sighted policy." We are not quite ready to cry: "We told you so!" The President hasn't had a fair chance yet, but with governmental expenses running higher even than they did last year and plans for tax revision that will save for the rich and mulct the poor the President and the First Lady will have to cut out posing for cameras long enough for the former to make good on a few of the promises he proclaimed with such sincerity from the front porch last year.

—Chautauqua, so far as Bellefonte is concerned is probably gone "floey." At least only sixty-three guarantors could be secured last Wednesday and as one hundred are required the prospects of a course next season are poor. It has long been a question in the writer's mind as to whether Chautauqua really fills the mission it was conceived and projected for. In Bellefonte it certainly has not and, in all probability, other towns in the course not so vaunting in their ambition to leave an impression of intellectuality, are little different from our own. It is a sad commentary on our search for knowledge but it must be admitted that the great majority of those who have attended Chautauqua here have enjoyed and approved it only according as its amusement features have compared with those of Lyceum bureaus or regular theatrical offerings they have seen and heard before. The splendid lectures and the daily talks of the superintendents have fallen on very few willing or receptive ears and the general atmosphere of the tent has given the impression, time and again, that they were only being endured because of the lighter diversions to follow. The Chautauqua movement is a splendid one, but Bellefonte is really too much occupied with bridge, one-piece bathing suits and what old Mrs. Grundy "seen and done" to see that the big tent on the school grounds was raised for some other purpose than to show off a troupe of performing Japs or a cage of trained lions.

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Extra Session Probable.

The not too cheering intelligence comes from Harrisburg, through the medium of press dispatches, that it may be necessary to assemble the Legislature in extra session in order to clear up the financial confusion in the fiduciary affairs of the State. Experts called into service by the Auditor General have exposed the fact that appropriations made by the last Legislature, added to hold-overs of former sessions, will exceed the revenues by many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The revenue expectations of the State administration have been sadly disappointed and demands on the treasury are so pressing that State Treasurer Snyder acknowledges the situation is embarrassing.

In order to bring the Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly into what he considered a proper state of servility to suit his purposes Governor Sproul encouraged all sorts of profligate appropriations. He justified himself in this extravagance by recommending tax legislation on every conceivable subject. Tax on anthracite coal, gasoline and several other subjects have not yielded generously. The tax on coal has been held up absolutely and that on gasoline has proved almost equally futile. But the expenses on the princely scale provided by law continue to run with the result that an extra session of the Legislature alone promises hope of relief. And even that promise is precarious.

This state of affairs has existed for many years and no doubt has been known to the party managers for some time. But it was kept under cover as long as possible "for the good of the party" and the advantage of those taking profits out of the operations. Some time ago an investigation by expert accountants revealed the embezzlement of funds from one of the departments. The culprit attempted to commit suicide and almost "spilled the beans" with the result that the investigation was called off. The other day another official was exposed, who confessed, and thus ended that inquiry. But the payment of bills due cannot be avoided indefinitely and may force an exposure that will end the inquiry.

—There is always somebody and some way to take the joy out of life. Just as Governor Sproul had come to the hope that he would own a constitutional convention the treasury embezzlement bobbed up and showed the people that he is not a superman after all.

Naughty "Andy" Mellon.

The incorrigible boy of the Harding administration is Secretary of the Treasury "Andy" Mellon. He simply won't "stand without hitching" and positively refuses to be tied up. This is probably because he is more a business man than a politician. And he is some politician at that. Not long ago the United States district attorney for the Pittsburgh district started an inquiry into the relations of some Pittsburgh politicians and capitalists to the distilling industry in that section. It is known that before going into office Mr. Mellon was rather intimately associated with one of the big distilleries. He got out of it in some way but a good many people think that it was an "accommodation deal."

In any event the court official in question was getting exceedingly "warm" in his search for the facts in relation to the Pittsburgh "whiskey interests." It has been said that if the inquiry had not been stopped it might have led the searchers close to the vaults of the Mellon banks. But it was stopped in a timely, if not exactly a dramatic way. The district attorney was removed from office and Mr. Mellon himself took the commission of his successor to Pittsburgh and superintended the transfer. Quite as suddenly as the official investigation was discontinued and has not been heard of since. Possibly this was an accident. But probably it was part of the plan.

But this was more a business than a political affair and while Mr. Mellon is amenable to reason and rule in business he is different in politics. It is said there was an implied understanding in Washington that taxes would be greatly decreased by the present Congress in order to fulfill the promises of the campaign, and that the evil consequences could be cured by deficiency bills after the next Congressional election. But Mellon positively refused to join in the sinister enterprise. He boldly declared that any reduction of taxes would create a deficiency and that would be bad business. He furthermore demands an increase in taxes and that will be ruinous. Naughty Andy.

—We were never going to have anything to do with the League of Nations or any instrumentality of that iniquitous creation but Ambassador Harvey is "sitting in" in the Supreme Council in Paris.

Wisdom of Washington's "Best Minds."

The Pennsylvania Republican State committee treated the woman voters of the party rather shabbily in making them eligible to some unimportant places in the organization. In the appraisalment of the Pennsylvania Republican State committee the women voters of the party are "easy marks." Flattering one or two with bogus badges of leadership appears to those party leaders amply sufficient, and Mrs. Barclay Warburton was made vice chairman of succession in case of vacancy in the chairmanship, as full compensation for the services of the entire sisterhood. Recent events, however, indicate a different condition of affairs in other States.

We learn through the press dispatches that the Republican leaders in Congress place a higher estimate upon the value of women votes. The House committee on Ways and Means, in revising the tax laws of the country, sends out an appeal to the women voters of much greater potency. That committee has tentatively agreed to reduce the luxury tax on women's bonnets which cost over \$15 each, to the extent of ten per cent, and a corresponding decrease on the tax on silk stockings that cost over \$2 a pair; on shoes that cost over \$10 a pair and on waists, petticoats and kimonos that cost over \$15 each and nightgowns and pajamas that cost over \$5 each. It is inferentially admitted by these "best minds" that such articles costing less are not luxuries and must pay.

It used to be said that men's hearts may be reached through the stomach and there is at least a semblance of proof of this statement in past experience. The Republican members of the House committee on Ways and Means seem to think that the short cut to the heart of the woman voter is by way of her pocket. Women are proverbially averse to paying taxes and equally eager for finery in dress. The Republican leaders in Congress probably put these facts into conjunction and deduced the brilliant idea that the greater part of the female vote could be corralled by reducing the tax on gewgaws and fripperies dear to the heart of women. Besides the party had promised tax reduction on something.

—The information that Russia is sending \$2,000,000 to help Mustafa Kemal to maintain his usurped authority is likely to dampen the ardor of those benevolent persons who are begging money to save Russian children from starvation.

Expensive Official Luxury.

The head of the publicity bureau of the Republican National committee during the Presidential campaign was a man named Lasker, of Chicago. He is one of those who for one reason or another acquire the title of "live wire." The burden of his complaint against the Democratic party was the extravagance of the war administration, and he published thrilling stories of needless expenditures for army and navy equipment and supplies which appealed strongly to the tight-wads of the country. As a reward for his services to the Republican machine in that way he has since been appointed chairman of the United States Shipping Board, a war emergency corporation which spent vast sums during the war.

Chairman Lasker was before the House committee on Appropriations, the other day, to give reasons for his demand for \$300,000,000 to meet the requirements of the board for the next fiscal year. He acknowledged that there are 200 auditors at present on the pay roll of the board but said it was necessary for him to employ forty expert accountants at salaries ranging from one hundred dollars a day to ten dollars a day, and three attorneys at \$25,000 a year each; one at \$20,000; five at \$15,000 each a year; one at \$12,000 a year; four at \$10,000 a year each and one at \$9,500, making a total of \$216,500 a year for his legal staff, besides special counsel without limit as to number or expense.

The salaries of the officers of board or bureau or whatever it may be called are also on a princely scale. The published report of the affair doesn't state the amount of Mr. Lasker's salary, but being a "live wire" it is probably somewhere in the six figure class. There are three vice presidents of the organization, two of whom draw down salaries of \$35,000 each and the third \$25,000 and the vast army of other employees eat up money so voraciously that the \$300,000,000 demanded by Lasker appears like a modest sum. Of course the board has other sources of revenue to keep the wolf from its office door. The millions realized from the sale of ships are used by it without regard to accounting.

—Senator Penrose knows that the Vire machine has been robbing the people of Philadelphia of millions of dollars annually but he hasn't courage enough to call a halt.

Governor Sproul's Vaulting Ambition.

Governor William C. Sproul has been in control of the affairs of Pennsylvania for two years and a half. He came into the office he occupies with a reputation for business experience and ability that inspired absolute confidence in the minds of the people of the State. Previous to his election as Governor he had served upward of twenty years in the State Senate which gave him, or ought to have given him, a thorough understanding of the conditions of the State as well as the needs and evils of administration. There were signs here and there of sinister motives and dubious influences in his actions but it may be said that fully as much as any of his predecessors he enjoyed public confidence.

But soon after his induction into the office Mr. Sproul began to reveal an unexpected element in his make-up. He became a candidate for President before he was warm in the seat of the Governor and disappointed in that ambition set out to achieve other distinctions at the expense of public interests. Apparently he had conceived the idea that the people have no care for expenses so long as great results are achieved and he plunged into ambitious projects in educational lines, road building, welfare schemes and other enterprises which kept him on the front page of the newspapers, plunged the people into hot water of fear of the costs, which finally petered out because of an empty treasury.

The principal, and on the whole the most dangerous, ambition of the Governorship is that to own and control a convention assembled to form a new fundamental law. No other Governor of Pennsylvania and no Governor of any other State has ever let ambition vault to such dizzy heights as this. It might invest him with power to control the destinies of the Commonwealth for half a century and no human creature should have such power in a free State. If he had proved a super man as Governor he might have some excuse for such ambition. But according to the best information obtainable he has approached no such high estate.

—A friend of the "Watchman" tipped us off to a good bear story early in the week, and we confidently anticipated giving it to our readers with all the thrills, etc. It had to do with a big, black bruin, which suddenly made its appearance when two men were held up in the Woodward Narrows as the result of a punctured tire, and instead of being frightened at the dead fliver proceeded to make a close inspection. Now it just happened, according to the story, that he devoted his attention to the rear tire which suffered the puncture and he evidently didn't like it as he deliberately proceeded to give it a good clawing, ripping big holes in the tire with his sharp claws. He then snifled around the machine and turning tail ambled off up the mountain. The story in detail was a good one but unfortunately our attempt to confirm it met with poor success. The proprietor of the garage where the men were to have had their tire replaced admits that such a car was in his place the latter part of the week, and came there with the tire wired together, but he did not tell him the trouble was caused by a bear.

—Uncle Sam is gradually getting the whip hand of his family of forty-eight children who have reached the dignity and supposed independence of Statehood. By pampering here and spanking there he is insidiously taking their rights away from them so that ere long we will have no semblance of true Democracy.

—The new moon is lying away round in the southern skies, so that the weather doers will say that we will have a period of warm weather.

—Senator Newberry will be whitewashed all right but the coat will not be thick enough to conceal the black spots on his Senatorial toga.

—If the Harding disarmament conference accomplishes nothing else it can be relied on to increase the public debt and add a trifle to taxes.

—Because of Harding, Hughes, Hoover and Hays some simple minded Washington correspondent calls it a h— of an administration.

—Ireland is enjoying a rest anyway and for that reason the negotiations between Lloyd George and De Valera are worth while.

—Let us hope that in sending American prisoners home Russia will not slip Emma Goldman across the water to us.

—Some early risers are still convinced that they saw a light frost on Monday morning.

Meddling and Muddling.

From the Philadelphia Record.

Almost any one of the American prisoners in Russia, just released under the agreement between Secretary Hoover and the Soviet, will be a more dependable source of information as to the character of the Lenin-Trotsky regime than Senator Joseph I. France, if we may believe the report of the latter's behavior in Riga on the eve of his departure for Berlin.

Senator France early last spring deserted his seat in the United States Senate, from which he is supposed to look after the interests of the State of Maryland in particular and those of these United States in general, and with a great blare of trumpets announced that he would investigate Russia. Later, of course, the world was to be told the true story and to be advised as to its future duty to that distressed country. David R. Francis, it is true, had attempted this, but Francis was a Wilson Democrat; so naturally he failed. It took France longer than Francis to go into Russia. He knocked at Lenin's gate quite a while before he was admitted. When he got in, finally, he was personally conducted about the country by the Bolsheviks, and though his story was much shorter than that of Mr. Francis, he heard—if he didn't see—more. The Soviet officials were at his elbow to tell him everything.

About a week ago we heard that Senator France was ready to come home. Then came a dispatch that he had been favorably impressed by the present government of Russia. To many of us this seemed a premature and impolitic expression, and probably not authorized. But the Senator's unseemly explosion at Riga on Tuesday night, when he publicly accused Dr. Ryan, the American Red Cross Commissioner in the Baltic States, of having instigated the revolt of Kronstadt winter, utterly spoiled the beans. According to the belief of men acquainted with conditions in the disturbed Baltic section, there is no truth in the accusation against Dr. Ryan. Senator France admitted himself that he had no proofs in hand, but he had been promised that they would be forwarded to him from Moscow. Under the circumstances it is rather surprising that the redoubtable Dr. Ryan was able to refrain from carrying out his reported threat to "punch Senator France's head."

That head appears not only to have been too easily filled at Bolshevik pumping stations, but there are indications, that it is otherwise unworthy of the Senatorial toga draped below it. To make publicly a serious charge against a reputable official, without tangible proofs to back it up, constitutes behavior considerably more paranoic than parliamentary.

Tax Reduction for the Rich.

From the New York World.

President Harding has always taken pains to emphasize that the tax revision to which his party is pledged includes and means also tax reduction. What is presumably the Administration's plan of tax revision has now been submitted to the House Ways and Means committee by Secretary of the Treasury Mellon and it does include a large measure of tax reduction.

It would repeal the excess-profits taxes, much to the relief of the more wealthy and monopolistic corporations, which are about the only ones left making any profits in this era of Republican prosperity. It would repeal all of the income surtaxes above 40 per cent, to the great relief of the very rich whose incomes run from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 a year and over. To this extent tax revision by the administration plan does mean tax reduction and in an aggregate amount so large that no one concerned cares to put out estimates.

But beyond this point tax revision is to mean nothing but a still heavier burden upon the backs of others than the very rich. The surtax rate on incomes from \$6,000 to \$50,000 would be increased by his plan. Letter postage increased to 3 cents is an added tax to be borne by the great masses of the people. Still higher taxes are to be levied on automobiles, regardless of value or power, would be relatively small for the high-priced machines and large for the low-priced. And finally, the plan embraces an upward tariff revision which means a large and general increase in taxes on the living needs of the people instead of on their wealth and ability to bear.

Representative Garner, of Texas, declares that every one of Secretary Mellon's proposals constitutes "a shifting of the tax burden from the classes to the masses." It is not too strong a statement.

They Should Pay.

From the Port Alleghe Reporter.

A United States Senator junketing in Germany writes that the debts owed us by foreign governments are paralyzing trade with this country. If that be the disease, it would seem that the logical remedy would be to pay up.

Peerless Leaders.

From the Utica Observer.

Fordney is a confessed failure as a leader of the House Ways and Means committee, and Lodge is a notorious failure as leader in the Senate. Mr. Harding has several jobs rolled up in one to take care of.

—Get your job work done here.

SPAULS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

Twenty suits against owners of dogs in Perry county who had failed to secure licenses for their animals were started by the State Department of Agriculture.

Clearfield county is credited with having 4066 persons who can not read nor write, in a map showing the extent of illiteracy in the various counties of Pennsylvania, which has just been issued by Thomas E. Finegan, state superintendent of public instruction.

Robert, three year old son of Robert Schechterly, of Nescopeck, is seriously burned as a result of grasping the end of a fallen live wire. He was knocked down twice by the electricity and grasped the end of the wire the third time. The wire carried 2300 volts. He will recover, doctors believe.

When Mason Buckman, 70 years old, a farmer residing along Nescopeck mountain, did not come home for his supper one night last week, his housekeeper, Mrs. Mary Sorger, went to the barn to look for him and found the aged man dying on the barn floor. He had fallen thirty feet from the hay mow.

John P. Gray met with a horrible accident while at work in the Helvetia mines, Clearfield county, last week, when his overalls were caught in a pump and his foot slowly drawn into the gears and crushed so badly before the power was shut off that it was necessary to amputate the leg a few inches below the knee.

While Dr. G. Stahl, a noted Bucks county nerve specialist, his wife and baby were soundly sleeping, burglars entered their bedroom early Monday morning and stole the physician's trousers and \$1200 which were in the pockets. A ladder was used by the burglars and they entered the doctor's sleeping quarters by removing a screen.

R. G. Dunn, 60 years old, died suddenly at Lewistown Saturday night while seated in a car on the Lewistown and Reedsville electric railway on his way home from the Viscose plant, where he was employed as a machinist in the reeling department. Dunn was a former railroad man and spent years in the train service of the middle division.

The county treasurer of Schuylkill county has entered suit against fifty-five merchants for non-payment of mercantile taxes. More than 450 others are also to be sued immediately. The merchants against whom proceedings have been brought will now have to pay the taxes with the cost of former delinquency, which will practically double the tax. Many are objecting to increases made in the tax valuations by state agents.

In endeavoring to save his automobile from destruction after it took fire, Harry E. Cron, of Columbia, Pa., pulled the gas tank from under the seat and threw it into the street. The flaming tank struck Valentine Rossman, a 12 year old boy, who was passing. The flames ignited the lad's clothing, and he was seriously burned all over his body before Cron and others succeeded in pulling the flaming garments from the boy's body. The automobile was only slightly damaged.

With his congregation already gathering to hear him deliver his last sermon before starting upon his vacation, the Rev. E. McGill, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at Homer City, dropped dead in his study shortly after 10 o'clock Sunday morning. His daughter in an adjoining room heard him fall and went to investigate. Medical help was summoned, but found life extinct. Apoplexy was declared to be the cause. He was 66 years old.

Relatives of John Buglonas, 50 years old, of North Scranton, who died at Hillside Home last Thursday, fought so violently over possession of the body that the police were called to quell a near riot. The former boarding mistress of Buglonas claimed the body, asserting she was a cousin. Buglonas' sister had the body removed to her home, from which it was taken by an undertaker representing the cousin, during which procedure blows were delivered on all sides.

The reunion of the old canal boatmen which is to be held at Sunbury on August 27th, promises to be of unusual interest and will be attended by some 3000 members of the Association of Former Canal Boatmen and a sprinkling of "raftsmen." Lieutenant Governor Bell will deliver a modern address, but the talks with old captains, their comparisons of notes and personal experiences along the line of primitive navigation on the Susquehanna.

Coal of excellent quality, mined nearly half a century ago, is to be at once placed on the market at Pottsville, Schuylkill county. The culm banks are the richest in quality of any in that region and were the product of the old Gumbolt colliery. When abandoned the colliery was operated by King, Quinn, Ernst & Co. The culm banks contain more than 1,000,000 tons of coal. The Buck Run Coal company has acquired the colliery. The Philadelphia and Reading Railway will begin laying tracks to the banks at once.

Burglars forced an entrance to the general store of G. S. Appley at Hyde, Pa., on Saturday night by using a "jimmie" on the front door. They secured a large stock of candy and tobacco, with a few pennies that had been left in the cash register when it was balanced the previous night. The burglars left a trail of candy from the store to the farm house of D. C. Grove, several miles distant, where a pair of bicycles were stolen on which they made their get-away. The officers are on the still hunt for a pair of colored men seen loitering about the store.

Ray L. Riley, vice president and general manager of the Valley Iron Works, Incorporated, Williamsport, is going with a party of Pittsburgh men to northern British Columbia, where they will hunt big game during August and September. They will go to Vancouver and thence by boat to Wrangell, Alaska. At Wrangell they will transfer to a powerboat, in which they will travel 150 miles up the Stikine river to the point where they will secure guides, horses, food and other additional equipment, after which they will move into the mountains of northern British Columbia.

Laasdale borough council "swiped" about \$3000 from the borough electric light department, paid some bills with it, and then announced that, so far as working capital was concerned, the treasury was "busted." It seems that when a check was received recently by the electric light department, which is conducted by the borough, the amount was, through an error, placed to the borough's credit. In a scramble for money to pay current bills, the borough depleted its working capital, and the light plant money was part of that drawn. The borough has dug up \$8000 and the light plant will get its money back.