

—Senator Fisher's withdrawal from the Republican gubernatorial race leaves only Alter and Pinchot in the field.

—Farmers are just getting rightly started at spring plowing, whereas most of them were through and some were sowing oats at this time last year.

—Germany doesn't blubber over paying millions to her ex-ruler half as much as she does over paying reparations for the desolation his vanity brought upon the world.

—If you are going fishing tomorrow remember that you must have a license, if you are over age, that it is illegal to take trout under six inches in length and that anything on the hip is very much to be desired but very dangerous to be caught with.

—The Lord willing we are going fishing tomorrow and such a thrill of joyful anticipation flashes through us that we would promise each and every reader of the "Watchman" a mess of trout for Sunday breakfast if it were not for two things: The law will permit us to take only twenty-five and if we have our usual luck we won't take that many.

—The stage is set and the fight is on. Our Republican friends are to have a monopoly of the fun, for our candidates are fixed now. The primary is a mere formality for them. All they need do is sit back and load up with the ammunition that Alter, Pinchot and Fisher will supply during their heated contest for the nomination on the Republican ticket.

—While General Alter is the best of the two possible Republican candidates for Governor he is not what Pennsylvania wants and needs at this time. There is something big wrong at Harrisburg. Something so big that the most fearless, the most upright Republican ever born just couldn't permit the skeleton to be dragged from his party's closet in its hideous entirety. It's a vacuum cleaner not a Bissell that Pennsylvania needs. It's a Democrat, not a Republican, however estimable he may be.

—John F. Short is back at his desk in the sanctum of the Clearfield Republican, after three years and a half of service as United States Marshal for the western district of Pennsylvania. While we have long been curious to know just how John ever got that job as Marshal, for he never wholly "went along" with any of the plum dispensing factions in our party, we do know that he filled it well. He returns to his newspaper with the satisfaction all men must feel who have given the best they have in public service.

—The more we think of it the more convinced do we become that this country needs a ten year legislative holiday far more than it needs a ten year naval holiday. Every new council, every new Legislature, every new Congress has its quota of cranks, fadists, dreamers and shallow brains who succeed in getting something into the laws that add to the mental unrest and financial burden of government without apparent compensation in public weal. If we don't stop soon and take account of stock government will govern itself clean out of existence.

—Two of the high lights in the expenses of Centre county for the year 1921 is the cost of assessing the North and South wards of Bellefonte. No wonder Herbie Auman wanted to be tax collector. If he could take down within \$14.59 of as much for merely assessing the North ward of Bellefonte as the assessment of all three wards of Philipsburg cost he must have had millions in his mind when he had himself elected to the position he now holds. Commissioners Austin and Yarnell and Harter had better move to Bellefonte and become assessors. They work all year for a thousand while Herbie got \$737.50 for making the assessment.

—The auditor's statement of the condition of Centre county, published on another page of this issue, speaks for itself. Read it carefully, maybe you'll be able to get a grain of comfort out of it like we did. When we discovered that the county was further in debt on January 1st, 1922, than it was January 1st, 1921, we perked up a lot for we realized that we had company. And this reminds us to remind you that if you owe the county anything get busy and pay it. If you owe us anything send the real iron boys in now and don't save them for flowers when we have worried ourselves into a premature grave trying to make a paper run on hope.

—Probably there will be many Republicans who will not vote to make Attorney General Alter their nominee for Governor because he is being backed by the Vares, Magee, Leslie, Eyre, Baker and other notorious machine politicians. As a rule a man is known by the company he keeps, but in this case General Alter is not keeping company with the men who have combined to make him Governor. They rallied to him not because they feared him less, but because they hated Pinchot and Grundy, Fisher's backer, most. We believe General Alter will be the nominee, though the withdrawal of Fisher will make his fight a very hard one unless the Grundy strength finally goes to him because his candidacy offers more hope to it than that of Pinchot.

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Senator Pepper's Idea.

Mr. George Wharton Pepper formally opened his campaign for Senator in Congress on Saturday and it is no exaggeration to say that it was "some opening." The occasion was a luncheon at the Bellevue-Stratford, and the audience was the elite of the city and a few millionaires from outside. Mr. Ira Jewell Williams was chairman, and he is a word painter from "away back." In presenting Mr. Pepper he said: "Imagine all the qualities of wisdom and courage; add a fervor of patriotism, a passion for service and then crown all with crystal clearness of thought, the rare gift and consummate power of convincing speech and all the grace and charm of a great-hearted, gallant gentleman, yet this is not a moiety of what we have learned to know and feel about our friend and leader, George Wharton Pepper."

There is some oratorical and panegyric high stepping for you but Pepper was equal to the emergency. "As I have studied the problems that come before the Senate," he replied, "I have come to the conclusion that what is needed is a man who recognizes that every question with which government concerns itself resolves itself in the last analysis to a conflict of interests, and what is needed is the man who, with something like the certainty of a worker in the laboratory, can analyze the question for the purpose of determining what interests are concerned, can readily appraise each of the interests in its relation to the others and feels sure in himself that he has really tried to take account of all the interests and fix them in their proper perspective." Can you beat it? It is as clear as mud.

Then Mr. Pepper amplifies and elucidates. You must have method and it must be a method "in which you begin with reverence in the presence of great problems." Of course George Wharton has methods and plenty of them and he understands interests and their relations to others. It was because of this that the corporations had him appointed to the Senate and hope to keep them there. And he understands perspective and can fix the relation between master and man "with one hand tied behind his back." He knows the value of party organization, too, but his information on that subject has been acquired since the Vore-Sproul conspiracy began bestowing favors upon him. But he learns fast, as his fulsome eulogy of bossism in Albany and Lancaster indicates. He is ready to go the limit in anything now.

The truth of the matter is that Mr. Pepper is a glutton for office. During all his life he has been trying to break into official position but the late Senator Penrose, whose mental vision could penetrate the false pretense of bogus reformers, wouldn't stand for his ambition. Then he denounced the organization of the Republican party as a monstrous conspiracy and the men managing it as outlaws. But a change has come over the spirit of his dream and now Senator Vore typifies his highest ideal of statesmanship and the Newberry method of conducting campaigns represent his notion of political morality. He is a fraud and an instrument of predatory corporations and every working man in the State, irrespective of party, should vote against him.

—Our friend John Todd writes from Philipsburg to the effect that he is sending us enough money to pay for his paper some time in advance because he says if he has "another year's business like the last has been" he "won't have enough left to pay for a Dutch almanac." Cheer up, John, and forget the almanac. The end of Harding's administration will slip around far quicker if you don't count the days.

—A special election was held in the thirty-seventh New York Congressional District on Tuesday and the Republican candidate has apparently squeezed through by the narrow margin. In 1920 this District gave the Republican candidate a plurality of 29,760. It is a sign of the reaction that is to bring Democracy back into power.

—And to think both the Athletics and the Phillies won their openers. Let us hope that their first victories will not be the last for this season.

—Harry Mackey declared his independence of Boss Vore very boldly at long distance. But in close contact he is quite servile.

—Let us hope that no killing frosts come to blight the blossoming fruit trees.

—We rise to inquire what the juvenile court officer gets \$275.00 a year for.

General Alter's Handicap.

The real friends of Attorney General George E. Alter will regret beyond expression the fact that his candidacy for the Republican nomination for Governor is handicapped by an unwholesome environment. His sponsors are said to be Senator Vore, of Philadelphia; Senator Eyre, of West Chester, and Senator Leslie, of Pittsburgh, three active road building contractors. In view of the other fact that the Highway Department will have \$100,000,000 to disburse during the tenure of the next administration the activity of these contractors in the selection of a candidate assumes a sinister aspect. It will be difficult to overcome the popular suspicion that the favor is "a gift from the Greeks."

Those who know Mr. Alter feel that he is impervious to sinister influences. But they are forced to admit that the tax measures which needlessly multiplied the burdens of the people had his approval, and the riotous proceedings which disgraced the closing period of the Legislature last year may not have been condoned by him. These incidents are certain to be brought into the campaign to his detriment. They will be paraded everywhere as evidences of the servility to the machine and signs of moral and mental weakness. His real friends will know better but their protests will be futile. Facts are stubborn things.

All things considered at full value, however, Mr. Alter is the fittest of the two candidates named for the favor. His integrity is beyond question, his ability is universally conceded and his experience in public affairs has been wide and varied. Pinchot has been a part of the Sproul administration from its beginning. He admits its iniquities but exculpates all participants in them from blame. The reasoning which may be summoned as evidence against Alter should therefore work with equal force against the other, but it won't because of the men who have voluntarily rallied to the Alter banner.

—Senator Vore was hardly candid in his statement of his purpose in working for party harmony. He says it was for the promotion of the Harding policies. As a matter of fact it was for the preservation of his own liberty. If the Democrats carry Pennsylvania the chances are a number of Republican statesmen will go to the penitentiary.

United on One Subject.

The Republicans in Congress are able to agree only upon one subject. They are at daggers' points on the tariff, as widely separated as the poles on the soldiers' bonus and at "loggerheads" upon most other questions. But on the question of concealment they are a unit. No inquiry concerning administration purposes or proceedings are allowed under any conditions. The public must be kept in the dark. The Ku Klux Klan is no more secretive in its operations than the Republican organization. Probably there is a reason for this. Publicity is a dangerous instrument to "monkey" with. It reacts.

When President Harding knocked the merit system in the civil service into the proverbial "cocked hat," a Senator offered a resolution that he inform the Senate and the country why a reform work of forty years' effort was scrapped in a moment. It was a reasonable inquiry. The Senate in particular and the public on general principles have a right to know what is going on in official life. But the Republicans of the Senate joined to a man in refusing to pass the resolution. They unanimously declared that it is none of the public's business and as for the minority in the Senate it "can go hang."

The other day Senator Caraway, of Arkansas, introduced another resolution on the subject of the President's violation of the civil service law. He probably imagined that "the sober, second thought" might have interposed and worked a change in the policy of the majority. But he was mistaken. Bourbons learn nothing. An Associated Press reporter states that "Republicans in chorus objected to the discussion of the resolution and it went over." The late Commodore Vanderbilt epitomized a similar situation when he said "the public be damned." The Republicans of the Senate are a unit on the same idea.

—Sproul can claim vindication no matter which of the Republican candidates for Governor is successful. They are all in the official family.

—Beideman, Mackey and Snyder must have meant some other year and under different circumstances.

—It looks as though the harmony operation would fail to harmonize.

Henry C. Niles Knows How.

Mr. Henry C. Niles, of York, a veteran worker in the cause of clean politics and honest government, in declining an invitation to support the candidacy of Gifford Pinchot, said: "In my view reform of the Republican party from within is impossible. The nomination of such a man as Mr. Pinchot would only be a palliative. He would be the candidate of the Republican party, which, as now controlled in Pennsylvania, has degenerated into nothing but an organization for systematic political corruption. If elected, whatever improvement his personal integrity might effect would be capitalized by the gangsters for party credit to furnish them continued opportunity for further spoil."

Mr. Niles is equally accurate in his prescription of a remedy. "The election of John A. McSparran, the Democratic candidate, by the votes of the independents and progressives," he writes, "would do more for genuine and thorough reform than would be possible through any Governor elected as a Republican. There is nothing good which would be accomplished by Mr. Pinchot which would not be done more certainly and more effectively by Governor McSparran." And this is equally true with respect to any other Republican. The organization is so completely saturated with fraud that no individual, however capable, courageous and honest, could change the system which Mr. Pinchot himself condemns in severe terms.

To achieve any substantial and enduring improvement in the government of Pennsylvania there must be not only a complete change in the personnel and politics of the administration but an actual destruction of the nest of vice in which the corruption is born and fostered. No Republican could accomplish this. The struggle now in progress in Washington between the President and the spoilsmen proves this, and the history of politics in Pennsylvania during the last half century confirms it. If the voters want clean and honest government they must follow the suggestion of Mr. Niles and vote for the admirable candidates of the Democratic party from McSparran down. There is no other way.

—Secretary Mellon had no trouble in getting Banking Commissioner Fisher into the fight but he wasn't able to take him out. Vore and Harry Baker are more expert in bossing.

Tariff and Ocean Transportation.

The Finance committee of the Senate in Washington is still hammering away in an effort to whip the absurd Fordney tariff bill into some shape that will make it acceptable to the leaders of the Republican party. The House of Representatives wrestled with it for nearly a year and finally passed it reluctantly. For several months it has been in the Senate committee and on Saturday last by a vote of seven to three of the Republican members Mr. Fordney's pet feature, the American valuation, was rejected. With this alteration in the text it is likely to be reported to the Senate in the near future. But it is not likely to be passed soon and it is practically certain that Fordney will reject it.

It is universally agreed among importers of the country that the Fordney tariff bill, even as amended in the Senate committee, will greatly diminish if not actually destroy the business of importing as well as exporting, for international commerce is an exchange of commodities. The Fordney bill as passed by the House with the American valuation is certain to kill international commerce. Mr. Fordney still cherishes the preposterous idea that the importation of commodities works harm to domestic producers and his intentions are not to produce revenue but to prevent importations. In this purpose he appears to have the sympathy of the President. He certainly has the support of most manufacturers.

The logical inference to be drawn from these facts is that the President and a considerable number of Senators and Representatives in Congress desire to shut off the importation of goods. President McKinley, who was a radical tariff advocate, declared before his death that unless we bought from abroad we could not sell abroad. That being the case the President desires to cut out the business of ocean transportation, for ship lines can't possibly be maintained if there are no cargoes to carry. Yet the President wants a ship subsidy of fifty millions of dollars a year to be divided among the owners of idle ships. What sort of reasoning does he employ to get himself into that frame of mind?

—The Attorney General says he will act in the coal strike when the public is pinched. The public has been pinched every time a ton of coal has been delivered within six years.

An Easter Prayer.

Charles Hanson Towne in the April De-linctor.

Lord, now that spring is in the world, And every tulip is a cup Filled with the wine of Thy great love, Lift Thou me up.

Raise Thou my heart as flowers arise To greet the glory of Thy day, With soul as clean as lilies are, And smile as they.

Show me that Thou art April, Lord, And Thou the flowers and the grass; Then, when awake the soft spring winds, I'll hear Thee pass!

A Tariff Abomination.

From the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

The Senate Finance committee hopes to be able to report out the new permanent tariff bill early in April. As it was received from the House, it was an abomination, and if reports as to changes that will be written into it are true, it will be still more objectionable than when it left the House. The principle of a tariff to raise revenue apparently has been wholly lost sight of by its framers. If the bill is anything like it is said to be, precious little revenue will be derived from it. Many of the duties are said to be higher than those in the Payne-Andrich bill, which was condemned and repudiated by the people. Indeed, some of the duties are said to be virtually prohibitory.

Aside from the great burden it will saddle on the consumers of this country, the bill will offer no encouragement whatever to the upbuilding of our foreign trade. Our own industries can never thrive until the world reconstruction is worked out through trade revival, and yet the pending bill proposes to interpose the most formidable obstacles to trade. Just at the time when Americans are reaching out for more trade abroad and seeking an entrance into foreign markets, Congress is preparing to cut down exports by limiting imports with which our exports must be paid for. It is folly to talk about building up an American merchant marine when we pursue a policy which will render it impossible for our ships to secure cargoes both ways.

What the people need most of all is a reduction of taxes, and yet it is proposed in this bill to increase them enormously. During the campaign of 1920 there was no demand worth speaking of for tariff legislation, nor has there since been any popular demand for it. Despite its inequitable schedules, the people as a whole were fairly well satisfied with the Underwood tariff. It had the merit, at least, of being revenue-producing at lower rates than the tariff tinkers now seem determined to impose. When the bill is reported on the floor of the Senate it is said that the East will be arrayed against the West in its further consideration. Each side will contend for a tariff that "protects" its own products. That means they eventually will compromise on a measure that will impose rates high enough to satisfy the exploiting interests of both sections at the expense of the great body of consumers.

A Bonus Suggestion.

From the Chicago Evening Post.

We hope that the Senate will shelve the "cashless" bonus as promptly as possible. Then we should like to see them initiate the necessary step to call the draft boards back into the service and to have them make an honest and impartial estimate of the "boys' need cash aid, some of them need homes or farms, some need education; others need help in getting fitted into suitable jobs, with cash to keep them alive in the meantime. The work of the draft boards has been characterized as over 95 per cent. efficient. This efficiency, if placed at the disposition of the veterans, would make an intelligent use of the bonus far more likely.

Furthermore, the United States needs to know in advance what the relief of the veterans will cost. At present it is all guess work, and no one has pretended to figure accurately how much money the government will be called on to provide, nor when. Officials of the Treasury Department estimate that, under the House bill, it will cost the nation \$400,000,000 in the next year or so to pay off the cash claims of less than \$50 each to finance the bonus options of vocational education, home-building aid, etc., without providing a cent for the cashing of certificates in 1925. But Congress apparently regards the above as idle guessing, and has not moved in any way to raise the sum.

Are Men so Fickle?

From the New York Herald.

Women members of the Republican County committee were discussing Assemblyman Steinberg's bill providing that no marriages should be performed until thirty-six hours after the issue of the license. Miss Mary Wood, prominent in politics, opposed the measure. "It gives a man too great a chance to change his mind," she said.

—The Senate doesn't want to know why Harding discharged employees of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing but the public may be less indifferent.

SPAULS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—Farmers along the Susquehanna, east of Lock Haven, are complaining that wild geese and ducks are feasting at their expense on their green wheat fields.

—The Riverview Manufacturing company's underwear mill at Lockport has been leased by a New York firm that makes men's shirts and the idle machinery will soon be humming.

—Somerset county has had one Republican aspirant for Congressional nomination removed by death—Lewis W. Fogg, of Uniontown. He was just home from Florida and motored to Somerset, taking a heavy cold and developing a fatal case of pneumonia.

—Eight year old Helen Confer, of Flemington, was taken to the Lock Haven hospital a few days ago, likely to die of lock jaw from an infected wound of her left knee. She was sliding down a cellar door and ran a splinter into the flesh, which her father failed to get entirely out.

—Two young men driving near Philipsburg, whose horse backed them into a reservoir, where both men and animal narrowly escaped drowning, were rescued from death and arrested by state constabulary. They paid fines for being intoxicated and for disorderly conduct.

—Deep mud probably saved the life of Mrs. McBride, of Hillsgrove, Sullivan county, who fell from the seat of a heavy truck wagon in such a way that the wheel passed over her face. The soft mud kept her skull from being broken and while she is much disfigured it is believed she has a chance for recovery.

—A team of horses owned by Robert Allison, a Nittany valley farmer, was frightened by a Bald Eagle Valley freight train while standing at the Mill Hill station last Friday and dashed around the station, running into the freight. One horse was instantly killed and the other had to be shot. The train was traveling forty miles an hour.

—While driving in a race during the county fair at Clearfield last year, Charles S. Middagh, of Mifflin, was shown and sustained injuries which he claims have resulted in permanent lameness in his right leg, and he now enters suit to recover \$15,000 damages from E. Earl Sober, of Johnstown, driver of another horse, whom he charges with having caused the accident.

—Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Brown, just a few nights after moving from Williamsport to Lock Haven were awakened by noises down stairs. Their weapons hadn't been unpacked and Mr. Brown feared to show fight. Mrs. Brown threw up a window, halted a passing motor car which threw its search light on the house. The intruders left by a side entrance without getting anything.

—Punxsutawney authorities are investigating the deaths within an hour of each other last Thursday night of Robert and Theodore Heller, young sons of Mr. and Mrs. James Heller, of Port Barnett, Jefferson county. The children, according to their mother, appeared to be in their normal health all day. Early in the evening Robert became ill and died a few minutes later. Theodore died within forty-five minutes.

—The Lancaster county court last Saturday authorized the sale of the assets of the Agricultural Trust Company to the Agricultural Title and Savings Company for \$950,000. The depositors in the institution, which was wrecked by the defalcation of Charles D. Zell, will receive 90 cents on the dollar, according to Banking Commissioner Fisher. The directors of the reorganized institution hope to open within the next few weeks.

—There is a possibility that a maneuver camp will be located on the Gettysburg battlefield this summer. A captain of the United States air service flew there on Sunday afternoon from the marine camp at Occoquan, Va., to look over possible sites. The camp, wherever it is held, will last ten days and will include 4000 Marines, together with a number of airplanes which will take part in the maneuvering, and will likely give a mock air battle. The camp will be held in June.

—Robert W. Watt, of Kansas City, has started suit in the United States court at Scranton against his father-in-law, Hiram S. Williams, prominent hotel man of Berwick, Pa., charging that the defendant alienated the affections of his wife, and also took her away from him. Watt asks \$25,000 damages. He alleges that he and his wife went to Kansas City to live a few years ago and that they were living together happily when her father went to visit them. Also, that the father turned his wife against him.

—The State executive committee of the American Legion, in session at Williamsport on Saturday, voted to provide the State commander's headquarters with a radio telephone equipment, so that he can broadcast Legion information to the posts, being urged to adopt that means of communication. A resolution that the Legion reaffirms its adherence to a "hands-off" policy in politics was laid on the table, following declarations by members that it was not necessary for the Legion to declare its support of its own constitution.

—Northumberland county commissioners have flatly refused to join with Union county in building a bridge across the Susquehanna river between Watsontown and White Deer at an estimated cost of \$200,000. The matter has been in the courts for five years, three successive grand juries in both counties having recommended the structure. It has also been peremptorily ordered built by writs of mandamus in both courts, but because of the high cost of material was not proceeded with by Union county officials will again take the matter into the courts.

—Twelve jurors sauntered toward the jury room in county court at Brookville, last Thursday, after Judge Charles Corbett had ordered that they test the evidence in the case of Mrs. Anna Drelick, of Sykesville, accused of violating the liquor law. Several, unable to conceal their elation at the prospects of having a "wee drap," made no effort to hide their feelings, and one jiggered several steps. But, alas, the lightly colored moonshine, with its high alcoholic content, was not immune to the heat of the room, and exploded while a constable was carrying it into the jury room. The explosion did no injury to the officer, but it rumbled the feelings of that jury. They headed for the box and brought in a verdict of "guilty" without uttering ten preparatory and unnecessary words.