

INK SLINGS.

Only sixty-eight days until spring will be here. Do you think your coal pile will hold out?

Things are not what they used to be. We haven't had that old "January thaw" for a number of years.

Even if France doesn't succeed in making Germany pay she can give the world bully of 1914 an object lesson and we hope she does it to the limit.

Anyway, if he does see his shadow today all we ask is that the six more weeks of winter weather will be as pleasant as the past six have been.

The last of the Herrons took flight from Bellefonte, Monday, and the same day landed at their new nesting place on the banks of the Juniata, opposite the town of Huntingdon.

To our way of thinking Pennsylvania would make a better showing in educational lines if she were to provide properly for her one legitimate offspring before she starts adopting two more.

We are wondering whether Mrs. Poindexter would have had the temerity to stir up Washington society had her husband, the Senator from Washington, not been chucked into the discard last fall.

There seems to have been a great many feet that the shoe we threw last week just fitted. We have been surprised that there are so many people who have so few home responsibilities themselves. Certainly theirs is the enviable lot.

With five thousand acres of fertile land beautifully located in the centre of the State, why this propaganda for more sites for penitentiaries in Pennsylvania unless politics is creeping in to blast the completion of a great project merely because it threatens the elimination of a few jobs elsewhere.

At the age of eighty William Hall, of Lewistown, who has been bald-headed most of his life, is growing a luxuriant head of hair. About two months ago he was run down and injured by an automobile and with his recovery from the injuries is coming a wonderful growth of hair. Almost we are persuaded to visit William to view with our own eyes this miracle, for if it be true we intend to hunt up the car that hit him and tell it to do its dandiest to us.

Governor Pinchot is said to have had the trustees of The Pennsylvania State College "on the carpet" last Friday night and given them hedges for playing politics. If this be true it throws a possible side-light on the Governor's budget allowance for the State's one institution of learning, as well as on his reported demand for the transference of the department of forestry at State College to Mont Alto. Certainly such an attitude doesn't recall the Governor as the broad, open-minded man that many of his admirers think him to be and we opine that if he ever comes "back to the people," as he has so repeatedly said he would do, he will find that the common people of Pennsylvania won't stand for an injury to their College because of the personal grudges of any man.

If the thirteen new election bills that Senator Flinn, of Pittsburgh, expects to father in this session of the Legislature, should be enacted into law, there may be a lot more purity and honesty in elections, but there'll be no joy left, whatever. There would be no watchers, nobody but an election officer could assist another and then only after he had made affidavit as to disability, no candidate or any person in his behalf could furnish transportation to or from the polls for another, nor could a candidate or others in his behalf hire a band, flags, torches, cockades or distribute buttons excepting his candidacy. A candidate could not entertain his friends at dinner or contribute to any charitable institution other than he might regularly have done before. Anybody opening a "bar" or a pint from primaries to election is threatened with a year's imprisonment and a five thousand dollar fine. Verily, if Senator Flinn gets this across we're going to study for the Methodist ministry for there'll be more pep in one of their conferences than we'll have in the future political battles in Pennsylvania.

The more we study the activities of Governor Pinchot the closer we get to his big idea. The whole scheme seems to be revealing itself to us and this: If he can buffalo the present Legislature into giving him what he wants in the way of legal authorization instead of being impotent, as most Governors are during the last session of their administration, he will be more powerful. He might easily do without a Legislature at all, for there could scarcely be anything in the way of control that he won't have that even an absolute dictator might long for. With his own personal appointees in charge of all the roads, all the schools, all the police powers, all the funds to be devoted to charity in the State it seems to us that from Milford, up in Pike county, has come one deluded with the idea that he is a super-man. It is not so much what we fear Governor Pinchot might do with such powers; we prefer to think him an altruist, as it is what his successors will do with them when the machine gathers itself together for the orgie of plunder that the precedents he is trying to establish will make possible.

Democratic Watchman

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Means Well But Inconsistent.

Governor Pinchot may mean well in his proposed reforms in the administration of the State government but he is not consistent. In his inaugural address he set forth as among the fundamentals of his plan the decentralization of dispensing all authority from Harrisburg. The Finegan school system left nothing to the discretion of the local school authorities and the laws regulating the Highway Department lodged all control of operations in Harrisburg. The creation of the Health Department a few years ago distributed a horde of office holders under the direction of the Commissioner of Health to regulate purely local affairs.

Two years ago the creation of the Department of Public Welfare, at the instance of the political machine, seemed to be the "last straw" in the matter of centralization. It vested in the Commissioner of Public Welfare powers over the charitable and corrective institutions of the State almost absolute control. But still there remained in the representatives of the people in the Legislature the right to determine how much or how little financial aid the State would give to those institutions. But Governor Pinchot's knock will, if it becomes effective, budget the pins from under this last prop to local self-government. It gives to the Commissioner complete control of the finances as well as the government of local hospitals.

Governor Pinchot probably imagines that his election gave him a mandate from the people to do whatever he liked in all matters pertaining to the affairs of the Commonwealth. But he forgets that in his primary platform he promised an increase rather than a diminution of the powers of the people over their local affairs. His election did not invest him with liberty to curtail home government. It did give him full authority to "clean up the mess at Harrisburg." But so far as the proposed budget touches the matter of local hospitals it will create rather than clear up messes. He would better abandon that feature of his program unless he wants the whole structure to collapse.

With war clouds assembling over Germany in menacing form it is small wonder that Grover Bergdoll is looking for a safer retreat.

Mistaken Possibly but Not Unjust.

It is hard to appraise the wisdom or folly of the French invasion of the Ruhr valley in Germany. It is less difficult to estimate the justice of it. If Marshal Foch, who appears to be the sponsor of the movement, is able to force Germany to at least make a decent effort to pay the war indemnity fixed by the treaty of peace signed by German representatives, the wisdom of the movement will be established. It is fairly clear that Germany intended to repudiate that obligation. The deliberate depreciation of the currency and the hoarding of the resources of the country by the rich bankers and manufacturers is substantial and convincing evidence of that.

But if the purpose and expectations of the French in the matter of collecting the claims are disappointed, and if the enterprise should, as now seems possible, result in another disastrous and destructive war, the folly of the enterprise will be beyond computation. Germany might have paid in part if the demands had been modified, or in full if sufficient time had been given. In the event that the French method fails, therefore, within a brief period of time, the entire sum owed will be lost and a vastly greater debt created to be taken care of in the future after other thousands of precious lives have been sacrificed. It is a gloomy subject for contemplation.

After the war of 1870 Germany exacted even severer terms from France and enforced her conditions relentlessly. France suffered but paid. In that war no material harm had been done to Germany. There were no cities destroyed within the German lines and no factories razed. In fact there was no claim for reparations. In the recent war France was devastated to an extent far in excess of the reparations demanded or allowed by the peace conference, and though the peace conference was guided by a spirit of benevolence Germany refused to pay, or even seriously try to pay the indemnity. In the effort to collect by force France may have been mistaken but she was not unjust.

If it be true that the ex-Kaiser is unhappily married he will have to look to the stars for sympathy.

The Governor appears willing to show some respect for the constitution but he does it grudgingly.

If you want all the news read the "Watchman."

Senator McCormick's False Ideas.

Senator Madill McCormick, of Chicago, who has just returned from a trip to Europe, told a doleful tale to his colleagues on Monday. He favors both the pending bills for the relief of the farmers, he said, but added that "such measures alone should not be expected to restore agricultural prices in view of other economic influences at home and abroad." What these are he leaves to conjecture, but careful reading between the lines of his speech makes them reasonably clear. "Europe needs bread-stuffs more than she can buy," he states. She needs "\$500,000,000 worth of American wheat and corn." He might have added that she needs other products of American farms, factories and mills in greater volume.

Under the customs of civilization there are only two ways of acquiring commodities needed or desired. One is buying and the other stealing them. If you buy you must pay in cash or commerce. Europe is at present woefully short in cash. In fact it is practically impossible for her to dig up enough currency, that is worth anything in the United States, to meet immediate home demands. But she is able and willing to pay in trade and thus open up her markets to the products of our soil, mills and factories, affording the producers profits on what they sell and what they get in exchange. The pending bills for the benefit of farmers fail in this essential element of helpfulness.

Before Senator McCormick sailed for Europe the Congress of the United States, with his help, enacted a tariff law which prevents Europe from buying our products on the terms of commerce for the reason that the tariff tax on the products of Europe is so great that no importer can take chances of trading. This crazy legislation created the economic conditions that closed the markets of Europe to the products of the United States and acts of Congress regulating prices that will afford profit here are important to open them. If Senator McCormick were half as intelligent as he is loquacious he would understand these facts and avoid such blunders as he made in his speech on Monday.

The Hon. Tom Beaver has introduced a bill that aims to make it unlawful to fire a gun within one hundred and fifty yards of a house without the consent of the tenant. It is to protect farmers and others from the dangers of indiscriminate shooting by hunters of small game principally.

Proposed Election Reforms.

So many changes in the election laws are contemplated during the present session of the Legislature that the public mind is confused. That there is urgent need for greater protection of the ballot is freely admitted by all who favor honest elections, but past experience compels a doubt as to the sincerity of purpose of the professional reformers who usually sponsor legislation on the subject. The changes now under consideration are both numerous and radical, and some of them quite obvious. But others are experimental and of doubtful merit. It will be up to the Senators and Representatives to separate the wheat from the chaff and that will require careful thought and action.

One of the most important changes proposed will involve an amendment to the constitution of the State. It is the elimination of what is known as the "poll tax." Article VIII, Section 1 of the constitution provides that "if twenty-two years of age or upwards" the voter "shall have paid within two years a State or county tax, which shall have been assessed at least two months and paid at least one month before the election." In view of this provision there is no immediate prospect of action. It will require four years to make the change even if it is favored by a majority of the people. By that time conditions may be such that public opinion has reversed itself on the subject.

The reference to the matter, however, directs attention to the inequality of this tax as levied under the constitution. In Philadelphia the poll tax is twenty-five cents and the receipts may be purchased in job lots by any one who desires to invest in them, just as cabbages are bought in the market stall. In other sections of the State the tax is anywhere from fifty cents to a dollar and can only be procured by the individual tax payer or upon the presentation to the tax collector of a power of attorney signed by him. The reason for this discrimination is plain. In Philadelphia a vast proportion of the voters are in this class and the machine gets their votes at small cost.

It may be by courtesy called a budget but when the Legislature gets through with it it will be "knocked into" something resembling a "cocked hat."

Signs Point to a Flare Up.

The executive axe continues to do good service at Harrisburg and the machine is beginning to wince. Two pet heads fell on Monday and a resignation on Tuesday decimated the ranks considerably. County Commissioner Berkey H. Boyd, of Westmoreland county, was given the comfortable \$7000 a year job as Superintendent of Public Grounds and Buildings which has been occupied by Thomas W. Templeton for several years. Mr. Boyd served a couple of terms in the Legislature, some years ago, and was a follower of Roosevelt. That fact scored against him in his legislative activities, for when the Penrose machine was in full flower, independents were not in high favor.

Mr. Charles E. Carothers, chairman of the Republican committee of Washington county, was dropped from the pay roll as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture at the same time and the commission handed over to Mr. John Milton McKee, also a resident of Washington county, but an attaché of State College. Mr. Carothers has held the office, which pays \$5000 a year, since 1916, and was considered a fixture. He left his post a few weeks ago to manage the campaign of Colonel Barnett, for State Senator. Possibly his failure to secure the election of his candidate is the cause of his removal. But that is not likely, for we have reasons to believe that Colonel Barnett is not in favor of the Governor.

The resignation of Mr. Biles, assistant to the Commissioner of Highways, was more of a surprise to the public than the other changes referred to. He, too, is in high favor with the old machine and the salary of the office was fixed at a figure considerably above that of his chief some time ago. But he resigned on Tuesday and the cause is left to conjecture as to the public. He has never been openly active in politics though it is an open secret that the Department has been used for partisan purposes. The Governor may have got onto his curves or his new chief may have objected to his salary. In any event, things are moving in the direction of a flare up and it is likely to come soon.

In the local columns of today's paper is a brief item stating that the men who are installing a new laundry on south Water street will put in a filter to purify their wash water before allowing it to run into Spring creek and perhaps injure the trout or drive them away, and that the owner of the City Laundry will also construct a cesspool into which to drain his wash water in order to keep from discharging impure water into the creek. All the gentlemen interested are to be commended on their public spirited policy in so cheerfully and willingly co-operating with the commission at Harrisburg in keeping the waters of Spring creek as pure and as clear as possible for its finny inhabitants. Bellefonte has two natural attractions—one is the big spring, the like of which cannot be found anywhere else in the State, and the other its numerous big trout in Spring creek which, according to no less a person than William Jennings Bryan, cannot be seen anywhere else in the world. As a matter of fact more people stop at Spring creek to look at the trout than go out to look at the spring, and every resident of Bellefonte should have enough of pride to do all they can to protect the fish. And in carrying out what they propose to do the laundrymen above referred to are doing their part in protecting the fish.

This is groundhog day and whether the pesky little critter sees his shadow or not we can all take consolation in the fact that this is the shortest month in the year and winter, officially speaking, is half over. The rumor that Henry Ford aspires to be President is probably only a joke, but the present administration is a joke in ghastly form. If the President ever finds out what the foreign policy of the United States is he will probably declare himself in emphatic terms. The illness of Attorney General Daugherty is a perfectly good alibi for another postponement of the trial of the war grafters. If Secretary of the Commonwealth Clyde King measures up to the expectations of the Governor he will be a wonder. The investigation of Foreign embassies for rum leaks has been called off. Wonder which Ambassador has sore corns? Probably Mr. Bryan imagines that under some other system he might be elected President.

Funding Britain's Debt.

The Philadelphia Public Ledger. The disclosure from the White House that a basis of agreement for the funding of Britain's debt to us had been reached by the American and British representatives and only awaited the approval of the London government before being submitted to Congress is gratifying news. When a settlement of the debt is arranged and formally ratified by the two countries, a long step forward will have been made toward attacking and solving the whole problem of inter-Allied indebtedness.

An agreement between the two creditor nations of the world will make easier the examination and revision of France's debt to Great Britain and to us. If the opportunity affords, after the results of the French occupation of the Ruhr become clear, for the United States and Britain to assist in fixing the sum that Germany can pay France, the negotiation will be simplified by the circumstance that the British debt to us has been satisfactorily funded.

It is greatly to be desired that Congress be given an opportunity to confirm the funding plan for the British debt before adjournment on March 4. It is the expectation and hope that word may come from London by next Wednesday or Thursday that Bonar Law and his Cabinet have accepted the terms that Stanley Baldwin and our representatives agreed upon at their recent meetings at Washington. Pending their acceptance by London these terms are not publicly disclosed, though they are known in confidence to many representative members of the House and Senate and to financial interests both in this country and abroad. The plan now under consideration and awaiting acceptance is an American proposal.

The British representatives brought with them to Washington a plan for funding the debt and a mass of data to support their proposal. Their attitude made an excellent impression on the American representatives, including Secretary Mellon and Mr. Gilbert of the Treasury, and Senator Smoot and Representative Burton, of the War Department Commission. Long and minute examination of the British proposal followed its presentation. An inquiry developed that it would not be acceptable to the House and Senate. An American proposal was drafted that would meet the approval of Congress. It called for the payment of a larger sum than the British had suggested. It is that plan on which a decision is now awaited from London. Mr. Baldwin, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, who represented Britain in the negotiations at Washington, have accepted our terms as the only plan that can be got through Congress at this time.

A settlement made now will have much greater value and usefulness than an agreement reached a year or two years later. The importance of this element of time is being impressed upon the British Cabinet by Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Norman. Their own financial relations settled, the United States and Britain not only set an example but will be enabled by the mere fact of having no point of dispute or friction between them to act with greater effectiveness in assisting their war time allies and associates. An agreement having been reached between two major principals concerned in the inter-Allied indebtedness, it will be easier to extend the solution of the whole problem. If and when the terms now under consideration are published, it will be found that the United States has not been harsh and grasping, but has based its proposal on its debtors' ability to pay. This should have its effect abroad.

Finegan's Fool Suggestion.

Of all the fool suggestions going around, the prize fool proposition comes from Dr. Finegan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. It is that the Constitution be so amended as to provide for a special election day throughout Pennsylvania to select members of school boards.

Where members of such boards are elected now they are selected on the regular election day, when mayors of cities, chief burgesses of boroughs, commissioners, supervisors and other local officers are chosen.

The doctor certainly has a poor opinion of the brain power of Pennsylvanians, since he appears to believe that they suffer from brain fog by being compelled to pick out a township supervisor and a few school directors on the same day.

But why get excited over it? Dr. Finegan is doing some big things, but he will not force his proposed extra election day soon enough for this generation of men, women and children to become agitated over his proposal.

That's Something Else, Again.

The Soviet government is reported to be opposed to the Santa Claus tradition, but it has not yet objected to Uncle Sam when he plays that part in the famine area.

If the United States Senate had been just to the people of this country and those of her associates in the war the "Turkey" wouldn't be strutting as it is now.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

Postmaster M. J. Gladfelder, of Loganville, found his wife dead in bed from paralysis.

More than 2000 men and women of Fayette county will be called upon for jury duty this year.

D. Stuart Griffiths, aged 56, assistant treasurer of the Union Trust company, of Lancaster, was found dead in bed.

The office of the Flicksville Milling company, near Bangor, was robbed by burglars of \$50 in Liberty bonds and \$10 in cash.

John and Paul Marquette, both former Altoona and sons of "Bud" Marquette, assistant manager of the Capitol theatre in Altoona, met instant death on Saturday at a Monaca, Pa., grade crossing.

Peter Kendon met death in a peculiar accident at Pittsburg, Saturday night. He slipped on an icy sidewalk and rolled over a sixty-foot embankment. He suffered a fracture of the skull, which resulted in death.

William Thompson, a West Indian, who is said to have admitted that he shot and killed Charles Brown, at Luzerne, near Brownsville, last Saturday, has appealed to the British consul to come to his assistance, on the ground that he is a British subject.

A sign on the door of the office of Dr. John S. M. Pratt, of Conestoga, that reads "ring the bell and walk in" tempted a thief to enter without ringing. Finding the place unoccupied, he forced open a safe and stole \$2000 in checks. He also took an overcoat.

Mr. Rhodes, of Monroe county, Democratic floor leader in the House, on Monday night offered a resolution protesting the seating of all but four Democratic members at the rear of the hall and demanding that the minority members be re-seated in a compact group on the left side of the House.

Robert Hinkle, who has just resigned as superintendent of the Freedland Water company, is enjoying his first vacation after forty-two years of continuous labor. He began work at the age of eight as a slate picker in a coal breaker and says the days seem long but he has decided to live up to his program of a long lay-off.

A residence distillery with a daily capacity of 135 gallons of whiskey was put out of business in Pittsburgh on Monday by federal prohibition agents. Four stills, operating at full capacity were found in the house located on the edge of the down town district. Philip Lerner and Julius Rubin were arrested. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Isaac Stein.

Mrs. Noble R. Henninger and four children, of Shamokin, were forced to flee from their dinner last Thursday when a big automobile truck ran away on a hill and crashed through the side of the house, stopping against the dinner table. According to August Leonard, the owner, the brake failed. Part of the framework of the home had to be taken away to remove the truck.

Coal trains six miles in length and carrying nearly 800 cars, or 36,000 tons of anthracite leave Hazleton every night, officials of the Lehigh Valley Railroad company announced last Saturday in emphasizing the rush to meet the demands of the nation for fuel. The coal is taken from the sidings at the collieries as soon as the day's loading is done. War-time records are being made in production.

Just at noon on Saturday an eastbound freight train on the Pennsylvania railroad near Johnstown, struck Charles Martin, aged 45 years, as he was walking along the tracks and hurled him into the Clarion river. Men dragged the river for more than two hours before the body was recovered. His death is believed to have been caused by drowning as the body was not mutilated to an extent noticeable on hurried examination.

The January meeting of the trustees of the mothers' assistance fund of Clinton county was held on Saturday at the home of the secretary, Mrs. Ross W. Barrows, in Lock Haven. The report of the trustees showed that sixteen widowed mothers, having seventy-three children, are at present receiving assistance in Clinton county, while nine widowed mothers, representing twenty-six children, are waiting for an increased appropriation.

The Chauncey breaker of the George F. Lee Coal company at Avondale, near Wilkes-Barre, was completely destroyed by fire Sunday morning. The breaker, which had a capacity of 1,200 tons a day, was built in 1918 at a cost of \$250,000. It was electrically operated and the flames which were discovered in the head house at the top, are believed to have been caused by a defective wire. Work of rebuilding is to begin as soon as possible.

A De Carlo and several customers were thrown into a panic when a black diamond rattlesnake was discovered in a bunch of bananas in the former's store at Sharon on Saturday night. The bananas came from South America several days previous. De Carlo's daughter saw what she supposed was a banana that had become "speckled." She later noticed it had moved. Her father investigated and it attempted to bite his finger. He sent for the police. The snake was killed and was twenty-eight inches long.

The largest gas well in northwest Pennsylvania in years and the largest yet recorded in the Tidoute field, has been brought in on the Wheelock farm, two miles south of Tidoute. The daily production has been estimated at 10,000,000 cubic feet. The producer is owned by A. V. Clinger, of Tidoute, and Franklin and Pittsburg men. The gasser is a little over a mile to the northeast of the Carabon discovery. It is believed it will develop a new field. The roar of the escaping gas can be heard for some distance. The well is down 1,400 feet and is four feet in the sand.

Charles O. Yessler, aged about 42 years, who was arrested and committed to the York county jail on Saturday on charges of selling habit-forming drugs, committed suicide by hanging himself by the upper berth in his cell early Sunday morning, his lifeless body being discovered by the turkey, George A. Hort, about eight o'clock.

Yessler was a drug addict and when arrested told the authorities that he procured his supplies from peddlers in the vicinity of Callowhill and Eighth streets, Philadelphia. He gave them a list of names of Yorkers, men and women, who had bought drugs from him. A quantity of the drug and one thousand dollars were found in a cigarette box on his person when he was arrested. Yessler is survived by his wife and daughter.