

—Dictionaries ought to be among the best sellers these days.

—There is one outstanding assurance in being poor. We never have a thought of being held-up.

—The greatest single contributor to underproduction in the United States is, without doubt, the fellow who started cross-word puzzles on their rounds.

—We don't know whether they tried or not, but the evidence from Harrisburg certainly is convincing that Rebecca and Judge Dale didn't deliver the Hon. J. Laird to Pinchot.

—There would be a great boom in the broom market if every one would agree to start sweeping up in front of his or her own door before they undertake the job for their neighbors.

—A groundless suspicion, rolling off the tongue of a thoughtless person, falls on the ears of the town criers and is magnified into a malicious lie before it even gets into high gear. Truth starts on its trail, but can never catch up.

—We told you that Rebecca had gone once too often to the well with her pitcher. It was cracked last November 4th and the Hon. Holmes busted it all to pieces on Tuesday by his vote for Bluet, the "wet," for Speaker of the House.

—My, but somebody must be wishing she had the thousands of postal cards that flooded Centre county the Saturday before last election, back again. They cost a penny a piece and thus far haven't brought "thirty cents" in total results.

—Let us tell you this: Nine out of every ten might find it difficult to prove that they have not been guilty of indiscretion, but you can't find more than one in ten who can't look you in the eye and say that he or she has not been immoral.

—What Bellefonte, and every other community needs most in this year of our Lord, 1925, is men and women who will give the same ingenuity to making homes and lives happy that they seem to have been giving to making them unhappy in 1924.

—How much more gracious many of us would be to the collector of school taxes were he to come after them just when the kids have been bundled back to their desks after two weeks devoted to scratching the furniture, stomping in and out when you are trying to take a nap and emptying every bag and box in the cupboard.

—The young lady who quit reading the "Watchman" because we devoted too much space to "It's none too soon to start Christmas shopping" being no longer a threat, we become obsessed with the urge to announce that it is only ninety-five days until the opening of the fishing season and it's none too early to start shopping for a private boot-legger.

—If you are making a budget for 1925 don't forget to include provisions for payment of your installments to the hospital. If you make your will in 1925 don't forget to make a little bequest to the hospital in it. Provide for a living memorial, something that will pick up the torch after you have thrown it down and carry on for you as long as the institution stands.

—We know very well that the Hon. Holmes didn't vote for Bluet because he represented the "wet" faction. There were other reasons, which will develop and be revealed later. Meanwhile we would advise the saintly souls, who went to prayer for guidance as to what to do with him, after they had advised those who don't try to mix the good Lord up in politics to vote for him, to resign themselves to watchful waiting. He'll do something to please them every time that it doesn't displease the Grundy-Vare-Baker combine.

—This is by way of explanation and apology to several persons who must be wondering why we merely grunted at their cheery "Happy New Year!" salutation, as we passed them on the street the afternoon of the 1st. After having been on, over and under a broken press from eight that morning until three in the afternoon, in order to get "Old Reliable" on its way to you in time, we were homeward plodding our weary way in answer to an S. O. S. Call that "the furnace is out." "Happy New Year!" to us then was as the Christmas letters of the week before that didn't have what Trood Parker, of Clearfield, called "the Christmas greens" in them.

—Inasmuch as Bluet had the overwhelming majority he showed in his fight with the Governor it looks as though Mr. Holmes played very poor politics in not having gotten Baker's consent to vote for Goodnough. Harry would have given it, we're sure. Especially after it was known that Bluet would not need Holmes' vote. The Member from Centre could have voted as would have more in line with the wishes of his home constituency and later gone along with the organization when his vote might really be needed. He will attempt to explain away his desertion of his "dry" advocates here by saying that the election of a Speaker had no bearing on Prohibition or enforcement. But they won't accept any such excuse, reasonable as it is. They are not that kind and Mr. Holmes can save himself now from political oblivion only by coming home next April with ample appropriations in his bag for Centre county institutions.

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Bluet Elected Speaker.

By a vote of 133 to 58 the Republican Representatives in the General Assembly, in caucus at Harrisburg on Monday evening, nominated Mr. Thomas Bluet, of Philadelphia, for Speaker of the House, and on Tuesday at noon the choice was ratified by his election on a strictly party vote. The 58 votes cast for Mr. C. Jay Goodnough, of Cameron county, his competitor for the honor, augmented by probably a dozen organization men influenced by the prohibition issue and half that number coerced by the Governor's threat of reprisals, expressed the strength of Governor Pinchot in the session of the Legislature for 1925. Two years ago he held complete control of the General Assembly.

So far as information goes Mr. Bluet is a rather obscure but entirely reputable Philadelphia lawyer. He was chosen for the office by Congressman Vare and adopted somewhat reluctantly by Mr. Grundy and Secretary Mellon. There is no basis for affiliation between these men other than a mutual detestation of Pinchot. Grundy and Mellon were influenced by expediency. Vare's ambition to pose as a State leader held him obdurately in the entrant and the others yielded. Mr. Mellon brought Senator Max Leslie, of Pittsburgh, into the combination and finally chairman Harry Baker was forced to join the group, though the original purpose of Grundy and Vare was in part to destroy Baker's influence.

Mr. Grundy and Mr. Vare had three well defined purposes in mind in combining for the selection of a Speaker of the House. The first was the elimination of chairman Baker as a potent influence in the party organization. The second was to rebuke Governor Pinchot for his frequent slurs on the machine and the third to prevent, the enforcement of the prohibition amendment to the federal constitution and the State and National legislation on that subject. Mr. Mellon had no sympathy with the movement against Baker except that he is not in accord with him on the candidate for Governor next year. But he was an enthusiastic supporter of the purpose to rebuke Pinchot.

It may be said that in the nomination and election of Mr. Bluet to the Speakership all the purposes have been fulfilled. Mr. Mellon has only a superficial interest in prohibition or enforcement legislation, and Grundy being secure in a supply at the luxurious clubs in which he enjoys membership is probably equally indifferent on that subject. But with Vare it is a vital matter. His corrupt party organization depends largely upon the proceeds of graft and the protection of crime for its maintenance and prosperity. It was for this reason that he picked out a candidate for Speaker who, as Governor Pinchot declared, is "notoriously wet."

No doubt Mr. Bluet will administer the office to the best of his ability and with such fairness as political expediency requires. Having had the experience of two terms in service he understands the necessity of "assuming a virtue." But it is equally certain that in so far as opportunity affords, he will serve the interests of those who bestowed upon him the distinction he enjoys. He will be harassed more or less by "snipers" from the Pinchot camp but he has an overwhelming majority behind him in the beginning, and though his path may not always be strewn with roses he may surprise even his friends by efficiency. In any event he has the best wishes of good citizens.

—The Commissioners of Centre county will vote today on raising the county millage for 1925. At present it is 6 mills and they find they'll have to increase it to 8, if they are to have funds with which to pay for the new bridges which the new highway through upper Bald Eagle valley will force the county to build.

—To thwart the speed demons and careless motorists council has tried "dummy" policemen and expensive "blinkers" without much result. It might occur to that august body that some time or other the law should be given a chance to show what it would do, if properly enforced.

—Senator Dial, of South Carolina, will retire from public life and return to obscurity on the fourth of March, and he is not likely to be missed much.

—The Philadelphia mummies had lots of fun with public safety director Butler, on New Year's day, but the General has the balance of the year to score.

—The statement that a deaf mute wife has been arraigned in court for "nagging" her husband makes a rather strong draft on credulity.

Work of the 1925 Session.

The proceedings of the session of the General Assembly which began on Tuesday are certain to be interesting and may be valuable. As a rule it may be safely said that the fewer the laws passed the better, and at this time there is not much need for a great number of laws. But there is urgent need for some legislation besides the supply bills which must be passed in order that the government may function. Among these is the measure known as the Giant Power bill. This bill was opposed by some Senators and Representatives because it is urged by the Governor and by others for the reason that railroad interests are against it. One of the arguments in its favor is that it will reduce the cost of transportation of coal, a very enticing proposition.

Another subject likely to challenge opposition is the ratification of the child labor amendment to the Federal constitution. There are various reasons advanced for opposing this measure. It encroaches directly, and many think mischievously, on the police power of the State as well as the moral influence of the family. Some of the welfare organizations have openly expressed opposition to the ratification and it is likely to fail of passage. There will be a good deal of fighting over the proposition to reenact the emergency tax bills passed during last season under the spur of pressure by the Governor. But it is reasonably certain that there can be no decrease in revenue unless there is a corresponding cut in appropriations.

Two years ago Governor Pinchot began his administration with many and vociferous promises of economy. He still persists in a statement made a year ago that some \$40,000 a day were being saved. But taxes were considerably increased to meet the ordinary and other expenses of the State. It was believed then that these emergency taxes would dispose of all past delinquencies and present an even balance to begin the biennium to be provided for by this year's Legislature. It is now admitted that this expectation will be disappointed and it will be necessary to re-enact the emergency bills or provide revenue through other sources. How the Governor will manage it this year remains to be seen, but he is not likely to run a bunco game as he did before.

—Happily the Democrats were harmonious in the organization of the Legislature. There weren't enough of them to organize a good fight.

Preparing Bruce for the Grave.

Senator Bruce, of Maryland, who was elected as a Democrat but usually votes with the Republicans, stirred up a good deal of a "hornet's nest" the other day when he undertook to criticize his colleagues in the Senate and the Democrats of the country generally because the party is inclined to serve the people rather than the corporations. During the consideration of the Mellon tax bill last session Mr. Bruce was particularly active in support of Mr. Mellon's policy of discrimination in favor of the rich and against the poor tax payers, and upon all other questions involving the interests of corporations he aligned himself with the Republicans and against the party which had honored him.

The other day Senator Pat Harrison "took a fall out of him" and it is understood that in the near future Senator Walsh, of Montana, will reply to his criticism of the conduct of the Teapot Dome investigation. If there is enough of him left to form a target after Walsh finishes it is reported that Senator Robinson, of Arkansas, minority floor leader of the Senate, will complete the work of preparing him for a well earned political grave. Senator Harrison replied to his criticism of the late Democratic National convention, Walsh will discuss the conduct of the Teapot Dome investigation and Robinson will answer his strictures on the legislative policies of the Democratic Senators during last session.

Senator Bruce is persuaded that the Democrats are wrong on almost every question of public interest. In the investigation of the Teapot Dome scandal he imagines that the constitutional rights of Secretary Fall, Mr. Doehny and Harry Sinclair were grossly outraged. They were strictly pursuing the lines of "common sense" in robbing the government to enrich themselves and interference with their plans was a grave crime. The Democratic Senators framed a tax bill in the interest of the people and accepted the help of independent Republicans to pass it over the Mellon bill, and that was a conspiracy against capital. All in all Bruce is bowed down in grief but the Democratic party is satisfied.

—Goodnough may be all right as a Speaker but he is noughgood as a candidate.

Issues in the Speakership Fight.

The supporters of Mr. Bluet for Speaker of the House of Representatives were quite as absurd in their claim that there was no "wet and dry" issue involved as the supporters of Mr. Goodnough were preposterous in alleging it was the only issue. It may be safely assumed that neither Joe Grundy nor Bill Vare cares a "tinker's dam" whether the Speaker is wet or dry or prohibition legislation is enforced or neglected. The purpose of their "unholy alliance" is to get control of the Republican machine, and the only way by which they may achieve that result is to eliminate State chairman W. Harry Baker. That was the influencing reason for injecting Mr. Bluet into the contest for Speaker.

The individuals and organizations opposed to prohibition and against the enforcement of the Eighteenth amendment and the Volstead law naturally and logically joined in the movement to elect Mr. Bluet because of the influence a "wet" Speaker would be able to exercise on legislation for or against prohibition enforcement. Present indications are that a good deal of time and energy of the Legislature during the session will be given to consideration of measures of this character. Even with a Law and Order committee favorable to enforcement wisely directed and vigorous opposition from the chair would make the passage of any type of legislation extremely difficult if not impossible.

The political ambitions of Grundy and Vare and the selfish interests of rum runners of the State were expressed in the candidacy of Mr. Bluet. It is an immoral combination of greed, graft and crime and may work great evil for the people of Pennsylvania. But the offer of the opposition was little better. In his strife for mastery Governor Pinchot prostituted the prerogatives of his great office to the basest uses imaginable and made the grossest atrocities of Quay and Penrose look like disinterested patriotism. The liquor interests had no cause of quarrel with chairman Bluet, the legatee and administrator of Penrose's political estate. But they opposed his candidate because he is dry.

—Attorney General Stone is making rapid progress toward the top in public life. A year ago he was a rather obscure lawyer in New York and now sits on the Supreme court bench.

Governor Pinchot's Message.

Governor Pinchot's annual message, delivered to the Legislature in joint session on Tuesday, is characteristic. It is long drawn out, boastful and pretentious. In it the Governor reiterates the statement, officially disputed by both the Auditor General and State Treasurer, that the administration has saved \$40,000 a day during the two years that have elapsed since the opening of the last session of the General Assembly. The Governor generously credits the heads of the several departments for a share in this beneficial achievement.

The Governor unsparingly and justly denounces the leaders of his own party for sins of the periods before his induction into office. "The false political standards created in the public mind by generations of ill-advised political leadership, seeking only spoils," he declares, "have at times made the path difficult." In another paragraph he adds: "Under boss rule the people of Pennsylvania became hardened to the sight of political corruption and to the shameless use of public office for private, personal or political ends. The cost of such misrule is always high."

Yet in the face of this understanding the Governor publicly opened up a trading post for the purpose of buying support for his pet candidate for Speaker of the House of Representatives only a few days ago, offering official patronage as the only currency in the transactions. If this was not a recurrence to, and even an enlargement upon, the methods of Quay and Penrose it will be difficult to define it. Besides, during the recent campaign he urged voters to support the Washington administration though it was reeking with corruption.

—The Legislature ought to be speedy and unanimous in passing the legislation necessary to use the loan already approved by popular vote.

—In counting his friends Governor Pinchot uses the system Jack Falstaff employed in measuring his enemies.

—Chairman Baker's influence may be impaired but Mellon will see to it that Vare doesn't get the "peacock feather."

—Senator Borah may find out in the course of time that unsolicited advice is not always welcome.

The Tariff Commission.

From the Philadelphia Record. There is not the least probability that the sugar duties will be reduced, but the law that created the Tariff Commission provided for the representation of the minority upon it, and the flexible provision in the present tariff law contemplated, professedly, the lowering as well as the raising of duties. It is the part of a vigilant minority to expose the bad faith of the majority party whenever it is possible.

A resolution has been offered in Congress calling for an investigation of reports that the Tariff Commission has been subjected to pressure to prevent it from recommending a reduction of the sugar duties. There may have been pressure which has not been disclosed, and, if so, we hope it will be uncovered. But for all practical purposes what the President has done amounts to pressure to prevent anything approaching an impartial investigation of the sugar duties. Here is a board created ostensibly to investigate the incidence of tariff duties, which is deterred by the President from reporting in favor of a reduction; it may report all the increases it likes.

The board had been investigating the sugar duties for a year or two. It reached conclusions and transmitted its report to the President, who did not make it public, but sent it back to the commission for certain additional information. Ten days or two weeks before the election, a member of the commission said that it would take several days more to get the information desired. "The Record" predicted then the report would not become public before the election. The housekeepers were pressing for a reduction, and the sugar beet growers were protesting against any reduction, and the President was a candidate for election.

Of course, there would be no report before the election. It is now two months since the election, and the report has not yet been made public, and no action has been taken regarding it. It is universally believed in Washington that the commission reported in favor of a substantial reduction in sugar duties—25 per cent. at least. One Republican must have joined the two Democrats in order to make a majority in favor of reduction.

The action of the President in returning the report to the commission, and his failure to act upon the report up to this time, leave no doubt that he will not have any reduction of any duty, and this is the severest pressure that could be applied to a group of officials who are appointed and are removable by the President. The purpose of a tariff commission is defeated; there is no use in the commission investigating a duty if it must reach a conclusion satisfactory to the President. It is useless for the law to provide for representation of the minority party; and the flexible provision in the tariff law is exposed for the deception it is. The Fordney-McCumber bill fixed duties above the level at which several Republican Senators could vote for it. The flexible provision was put in to enable all the Republicans to vote for the measure, the moderate protectionists accepting the suggestion that the Tariff Commission could reduce duties if they were found to be too high. Men like Fordney and McCumber do not believe any duty can be too high, and the flexible provision was devised, not to make reductions of duties possible, but to make it possible for all the Republican senators to vote for the bill. The President also thinks no duty can be too high.

The Democrats can't change the tariff, but they can expose the coercion of the Tariff Commission by the President, and the fraudulent character of the flexible provision.

Political Geography.

From the Indianapolis News. Geographical equality is regarded as important when it comes to the distribution of political patronage. One locality must be balanced against another, if some of the party faithful are not to become disgruntled. The action of an employee of the Republican State committee in preparing a catalogue of State and Federal positions, their location and the names and party faith of the incumbents, reveals positive genius. Accompanying the catalogue is to be a map, on which colored thumbtacks are to be placed, showing where those drawing salaries paid by the public live. Both achievements doubtless will get the praise they merit from party boards of strategy, whether of Republican or Democratic allegiance.

If ordinary citizens are somewhat mystified as to why there should be this balancing of the plums territorially, they do not realize the danger—to politicians—of sectional discord. There must be a united front against the enemy when campaign time comes, or the chances of defeat are increased. A battle lost means no appointments to award, either to high or low officers in the conquering army. So there must be judicious discrimination in seeing that too many of the offerings do not go to any one community, or the soldiers in others may cry discrimination and perhaps refuse battle again. Strategy decrees a careful handling of patronage to hold the lines firm.

—The litigation in the Elliser estate, in which Philadelphia and Pottsville families are represented, ended last week when attorney James J. Morgan was agreed upon as trustee to represent both sides. The estate worth \$500,000 at Miami, Fla., will be disposed of as the result of the settlement and the entire amount will be divided between Mrs. John Elliser, of Philadelphia, and Miss Emma Elliser, of Pottsville. The property of the Ellisers at Miami was bought a number of years ago for \$60. The purchase was considered a family joke, but with the rapidity of the growth of the town the investment has grown to huge proportions and much already has been realized from the sale of lots. The estate was brought into court when a Philadelphia member of the family asked for an accounting.

—Try the "Watchman" in 1925.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—Mrs. Amos Sell, of Gallon, Ohio, will give \$1000 to the Susquehanna Synod of the Lutheran church for the education of young men for the ministry.

—When I. Protech opened his jewelry store at Vandergrift early last Friday morning he was confronted by a man who emerged from the darkness in the rear of the store and pointing two pistols at the merchant demanded he open his safe. Protech complied and the robber escaped with about \$20,000 in jewelry and \$46 in cash.

—Inmates of the Lehigh county prison last year wove a total of 32,882 yards of rag carpet, according to the report of warden Ervin F. Schaeffer, submitted to the board of prison inspectors. In addition, 1898 rugs were manufactured. All of the carpets are made of rags, cut and sewed by Lehigh county housewives, the warden stated.

—Two bandits entered the grocery store of Charles Schwartz, of Darby, Chester county, as he was about to close the place late Friday night. They asked for butter, and as Schwartz was about to enter the ice box one of the men covered him with a revolver. The other then went to the cash register and rifled it of \$322 in cash and a check for \$75.

—Williamsport employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad who have been retired are: Charles Fisher, aged 65 years, receiving and delivery clerk at Williamsport, who has been in the service since 1887; Benjamin Haddon, aged 65, switch tender at Northumberland, who has been in the service since 1870; Milton Arbogast, aged 68, crossing watchman at Sunbury, who has been in the service since 1885.

—David B. Simpson, of Philadelphia, an executive in the State Department of Welfare, has accepted the position of commander of the State soldiers' and sailors' home at Erie. He will succeed Capt. A. W. Anderson, who was appointed about two years ago. The board of trustees of the Erie home is planning enlargements, which include greater hospital facilities, in order to care for incapacitated world war veterans.

—Lester Freeman, aged 19 years, of Colpepit, Cambria county, apparently likes the Blair county jail. Released a few days ago, he walked into Pennsylvania Railroad police headquarters and requested to be arrested. He said he stole an overcoat from Francis Carothers, in Altoona, last November, and to prove it he was wearing the overcoat. Carothers identified his property, and Freeman was sent back to jail.

—Seventeen customers of the First National bank of Claysburg, Blair county, last week received checks totaling \$17,400 to compensate them for their losses when the bank was robbed December 9, 1921. The burglars pried open safe deposit boxes and stole securities and other valuables. One loser won a suit against the bank to recover his losses. Ten others brought suit. The bank obtained permission from the comptroller of the currency to reimburse its patrons.

—George Cooper, 40 years of age, of Johnstown, was committed to the Westmoreland county jail on Sunday charged with attacking Mrs. Abby Sheen, 61 years old, and dragging her by the hair 25 feet along the Pennsylvania railroad tracks at Millwood, near Derry, Saturday night. Mrs. Sheen is under the care of a physician and is in a serious condition from shock and lacerated scalp. Police reported that a quantity of the woman's hair had been pulled from her head.

—A farmer on his way to market at Williamsport, saved a family of six persons from burning to death in their home near Cogan Station early on Saturday. Charles Pepperman was driving to that city when he noticed the home of Loren Kyle in flames. He ran to the house and aroused Mr. and Mrs. Kyle and their four children, who were sleeping. They fled from the house in their night clothing. Then, using snow instead of water, Pepperman and Kyle succeeded in extinguishing the fire before it could destroy the home. The origin of the fire is not known.

—While the burglar alarm was loudly ringing, robbers marched boldly out of the garage of the Hamburg Motor Car company, owned by R. P. Rentscher, at Hamburg, Berks county, one morning last week with \$1000 worth of raw furs and disappeared. Rentscher handles furs in addition to his garage business and had about \$25,000 worth stored in the building. The thugs cut out window panes without touching the frames to get into the building. They packed their loot into bags, then opened the front doors, setting off the alarms, and fled in autos.

—His badge of authority probably saved the life of patrolman Edward Fallon, of Pittsburgh, on Sunday, when it stopped a bullet fired by a Negro officer attempting to arrest him. Fallon was knocked to the ground by the force of the bullet and suffered powder burns on the face, but otherwise was uninjured. The Negro and his companion escaped. The suspicion of the policeman was aroused by two Negroes standing beside an automobile in Bigelow boulevard. As he approached them, one of the Negroes drew a revolver and fired, the bullet striking Fallon's badge.

—The annual banquet by the freshmen class at Carnegie Institute of Technology, at Pittsburgh, was broken up on Tuesday night when a group of 25 sophomores forced their way into the dining room on the fourth floor of an East End hotel. The freshmen turned a fire hose upon the invaders, who came into the room by way of the fire escape. The proprietor turned in a riot call to the police who responded and separated the fighting class men, ordering them to disperse. No arrests were made. Many of the students were bruised and cut and their clothes torn but no one was seriously hurt.

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