

PREACHMENT

THE TEXT

Death may come with a crawl or a pounce.
But, whether it be slow or spry.
It isn't the fact that you're dead that counts:
Only, how did you die?

Years and years ago; it seems centuries now that the urge has come to unlock another little cell in memory's library, we happened to be one of a party of five sitting about a plain wood table in the grille of the Inside Inn in St. Louis. Bottles of Lemps' beer, were on the table. Pale anemic looking beverage with an odor that reminded us of the skunk cabbage of the Bear Meadows. Not that we recall had anybody touched it when one of the gentlemen of the party, who held the unique distinction of possessing a pass over every railroad in the United States—a pass graven on a solid gold plate, called attention to the couplet we have chosen as the text for this preachment.

Edwin Vance Cook had talked to the National Editorial Association, in convention in St. Louis, that afternoon, and quoting some of his own verse had focused Mr. Page's thoughts on "How did you die?"

Homer Davenport, the country band boy of Eugene, Oregon, who came to be the greatest cartoonist of his day, whose creative mind and deft fingers put the \$ on Mark Hanna's clothes and whose wordless story "Lest We Forget" saved Admiral Dewey from dying of a broken heart in foreign lands, was one of the party. Col. Henry Watterson, than whom journalism knows none other like, was another. Col. Steele, of Ashland, Penna., whose son Will was then on the Seattle Post Intelligencer and had just engaged us to go to Nome with the Argonauts and become editor of the first daily newspaper of the Klondike country, was of the party and as we have said—we happened to be the fifth member.

Davenport was in the midst of telling the story of the genesis of "Lest We Forget." How he had been sent to Washington to stem, if possible, the tide of opprobrium that was crushing the hero of Manila bay because he had in a moment of thoughtless gallantry ceded to his wife the house that a Nation had given him. We fancy that Col. Watterson had looked with disgust at the Lemps' and was in a mood for something real, when Page broke in with the Cook couplet.

We have never heard a preacher do it, but lots of public speakers resort to "On the one hand"—we have four fingers and a thumb. "On the other"—we have a thumb and four fingers. Generally, that is about all their contraptions amount to. We revive the old quip here because at the moment we have at the left hand something that is in striking contrast with the thing that lies at our right. The one on the left is Bruce Barton's story of "The Man Nobody Knows," and at our right is the morning paper announcing the death of Luther Burbank.

Few of you have read Barton's story—do it by all means. Most of you have planted Burbank's seeds. At seventy-seven he died—an infidel. He was the plant wizard of the world, but what does that mean? By grafting, budding, marrying pollen to strange brides, he produced hybrid vegetables and flowers of new color combinations, but with all his intensive concentration on plant life he couldn't make the sap that is surging up the trees now, nor could he substitute the chlorophyll that gives the leaves and the grass their verdant, restful green.

In the animal world the mule represents the result of miscegenation, just as Burbank's accomplishments do in the vegetable and floral spheres. He experimented with the material at hand and it seems strange to us that he was content with the thought that it just grew. Burbank created nothing. He developed much, but it was only by crossing what had already been created. When the plants he experimented with drooped and died under the abortions he was attempting he couldn't bring them back to life, nor could he have replaced them had there not been seed at hand.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and earth * * * and every plant of the field, before it grew" and Burbank worked with these creations and died denying that they had had a Creator. What a paradox! It seems impossible that so great a genius should yet be so ingenuous as to admit that he didn't know Barton's "Man that Nobody Knows." Burbank was closer to Him all the time than most of us and that is why we wonder and preach and quote Cook's "Only, how did you die?"

and ask the shade of Burbank if it will tarry at the grave of Joyce Kilmer, who lies mid the poppies in Flanders' Field, long enough to deny that "only God can make a tree."

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast.

A tree that looks at God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray.

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair.

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

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Vare Openly Insults Democrats.

Last Sunday one of the Scranton newspapers carried a page advertisement in the interest of William S. Vare, which openly solicited Democratic voters to register as Republicans in order that they may vote for Vare at the primary election in May. This form of political juggling was one of the reasons given for the uniform primary election law. It had been employed in Philadelphia and other populous centers to such an extent it became a menace. Since the primary law became effective it has been practiced covertly by political crooks. This attempt by Vare to debauch the Democrats of Scranton is the first open effort in that direction for years.

If there is an human being who is abhorrent to the Democratic mind and offensive to the Democratic conscience, it is William S. Vare. He stands for everything that is vicious in public life. He not only shelters but encourages crime in politics. Fraudulent voting is and always has been the source of his power. By the process which he now hopes to gain votes in Scranton he has destroyed the Democratic organization in Philadelphia. He tells those whom he expects to victimize that they may be free to vote for the candidates of their own party at the general election. In other words he invites them to deceive their associates in order to promote his selfish interests and absurd ambition.

No honest Democrat in Pennsylvania can have common cause with William S. Vare. He is the antithesis of everything that is Democratic. He never has supported a Democratic measure nor favored an honest Democrat. His impudent appeal to the Democrats of Scranton to betray their party associates and principles should be denounced with all the vigor that the English language affords. No Democrat, whether he be for or against the Volstead law, will vote for this ignorant pretender, and it is the duty of all Democrats to resent this corrupt proposition by putting additional vigor in the fight against William S. Vare.

One subject for cheerful contemplation is that when Bill Vare is defeated at the primary this year he will be "down and out." Such politicians never survive a thorough drubbing.

Iowa Senatorial Contest Settled.

The seating of Daniel F. Steck, Democrat, as Senator in Congress for Iowa, marks the end of a long drawn out and somewhat complex contest. In the campaign of 1924 Mr. Steck was the Democratic candidate for Senator and Smith Brookhart the Republican nominee. Mr. Brookhart repudiated his party's Presidential ticket and supported LaFollette. In resentment the Republican organization of the State repudiated Brookhart and supported Steck. The result was a close vote, which on the face of the returns, gave Brookhart a small plurality. Charges of irregularities in the vote and returns were made by both parties and a recount was ordered by the local courts.

Upon the assembling of the Senate in December, 1925, the contest was transplanted from the Iowa courts to the Senate. Brookhart qualified for membership on the certificate of election given him by the State returning board and Mr. Steck became the contestant. The recount showed that Steck had a very small majority of the undisputed ballots but Brookhart had the seat. Several hundred ballots were held out of the equation largely on technical grounds and the Senate committee which conducted the investigation declared that the Steck vote "expressed the will of the voters," and reported that he is entitled to the seat. The vote on Monday was upon the adoption of the committee report.

Party lines were somewhat broken in the vote. Sixteen Republicans voted in favor of Steck and nine Democrats in favor of Brookhart. But the significance of the result is not in the numerical division with respect to party. Among the Republicans who voted for Steck are Senator Butler, of Massachusetts, chairman of the Republican National committee, and his colleague, Senator Gillet. Butler is supposed to be the Senatorial mouthpiece of President Coolidge and his attitude may be interpreted as expressing the will of the President. On the other hand Senator Pepper, who professes to be a 100 per cent. Coolidge supporter, voted in favor of Brookhart, who refused to vote for Coolidge for President.

Mexico has agreed to not enforce obnoxious laws against Americans, but it may be assumed that this does not apply to the Volstead law.

Grundy's Fight Against Baker.

As the factional lines are being exposed it becomes certain that State Chairman W. Harry Baker is quite as much a target of the Mellon activities as Vare and Pinchot. This fact may be attributed to the influence of Joseph R. Grundy on the operations of the Pepper-Fisher combine. Herebefore the Mellon mind was inclined to a friendly feeling for Baker. Senator Pepper has likewise felt kindly toward the State Chairman. But Grundy has long cherished an enmity toward him. Grundy is a sort of a "moss-back." He is opposed to all reforms and improvements in labor conditions. Some years ago when the child-labor legislation was pending Baker was active and influential in support of the bills.

The late Senator Crow was Chairman of the Republican State Committee at that time and the floor leader of the Republican majority in the State Senate. Like Penrose he relied much on Baker and Grundy imagined that Crow's support of that type of labor legislation was influenced by Baker. As a result he declared unrelenting war against both. When Crow died Baker was chosen to succeed him and Grundy concentrated his hatred against him. Penrose held friendly relations with Grundy because of his success in collecting campaign funds, but the bitterness against Baker continued. It was because of this enmity that Grundy supported Pinchot against Alter for Governor four years ago and carried Fisher with him.

Four years ago Mellon was for Alter and was greatly disappointed because Fisher affiliated with the Pinchot forces. When the lines were forming for this year's fight the Mellons were inclined to oppose Fisher but willing to join a combination that would help Pepper. After considerable jockeying Grundy offered to support Pepper if the Mellons would take Fisher as the candidate for Governor. Grundy, because of his relations with the manufacturing industry of the State is a valuable asset and the bargain was signed, sealed and delivered. Since the Grundy energies have been directed toward creating opposition to Baker in the combination and the indications are that he has scored.

If, as many believe, money is the most potent element in politics Senator Pepper will be the winner. There are millions behind him.

Pinchot Exposes Gross Frauds.

The exposure of forgery, perjury and fraud in the petitions of W. S. Vare for registry as a candidate for Senator in Congress is not surprising. The cause of wonder is that this form of electoral crime was not exposed long ago. It has been in practice not only in Philadelphia but in all populous centers for many years and all the leaders of the Republican party have not only been aware of it but have given it sanction and encouragement. In many cases petitions have been made out and signed for one candidate and filed for another. As frequently the petitions are signed in blank and the name of the candidate inserted after the signing. This is a clear violation of the law.

Nevertheless Governor Pinchot has performed a valuable public service in bringing this form of electoral fraud into public notice. He knew, of course, that it would not disqualify Mr. Vare as a candidate for out of the vast number of petitions there are sufficient legally signed to place his name on the ballot. But the Governor reasoned that the exposure would alienate some of the supporters of Vare, whom he regards as his most dangerous antagonist for the nomination, and that a majority of votes thus diverted might come to him as a reward for his fidelity to civic obligations. Mr. Pepper knew as well as Vare that the frauds had been committed but he discreetly remained silent.

Section 74 of Chapter V of the election laws of Pennsylvania provides that "if any person shall knowingly make a false statement in an affidavit required by the provisions of this act to be appended to or to accompany a nomination petition, " "he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be sentenced to pay a fine of five hundred dollars or to undergo imprisonment for not more than one year, or either or both." It will be seen that the Governor has started something which ought to be finished in the interest of good government. He has properly referred it to the Department of Justice and the public will await developments for appraisalment of the act.

The vote on the Brookhart contest indicates that the President is not greatly concerned about the safety of Senator Cummins, either.

Mellon Establishes a Trading Post.

The announcement that Mr. W. L. Mellon, nephew of the Secretary of the Treasury, will sit in Philadelphia during the Primary campaign may be interpreted as public notice that the "bar!" has been tapped. Mr. Mellon thoroughly understands the psychology of business. When he wants to buy anything he goes to the market in which it is most abundant. The crooks who make up the phantom votes in Philadelphia offer an enticing objective for the activities of an adroit and courageous political trader. Mr. Mellon's headquarters will be an alluring and convenient trading post for these political mercenaries and it may be predicted that Mr. Vare will have a hard time to hold his forces in line.

Mr. Mellon's purpose in establishing a trading post in Philadelphia is to promote the interests of Senator Pepper, candidate for re-election, and John S. Fisher, candidate for the Republican nomination for Governor. These gentlemen have been appointed by Secretary Andrew Mellon as the candidates of the predatory corporations and big banking interests of the State. For obvious reasons these elements in the industrial and commercial life of the country have set about to control the politics not only of Pennsylvania but of the entire country. President Coolidge has already completely surrendered to them and they are now trying to acquire control of Congress and the State governments.

We have little interest in, and no favorites among the Republican candidates for Governor and Senator. Vare, the promoter of ballot corruption is impossible, of course, and Pepper and Pinchot have grave faults. But we cannot refrain from expressing abhorrence at the prospect of yielding, without protest, the opportunities of the average citizen to property and liberty, to the control of a dangerous if not actually destructive element. Goldsmith said: "I'll fare the land, to hastening ill's prey, where wealth accumulates and men decay." That is the peril which is clearly expressed in this combination of millionaires to get control of the government of Pennsylvania.

Branch stations of the United States weather bureau report the past winter as being the longest on record, and we candidly agree with them. Here it is, the 16th day of April, and the weather has been so cold and disagreeable since the official opening of spring that very little, if any, gardening has been done. And even at this late date the earliest fruit trees have not yet put forth a showing of buds, which is taken as a favorable omen for a big fruit crop.

Announcement that Dr. Arthur Holmes, of the University of Pennsylvania faculty, will be the speaker for the annual spring scholarship day at the Pennsylvania State College, has just been made by Penn State officials. Dr. Holmes was formerly dean of the general faculty at Penn State. The exercises will be held April 29th, when students will receive recognition for their excellence in classroom work.

Just because we preached the column where this paragraph might have been expected to appear clear full we are grabbing space here to tell you that we didn't go fishing yesterday. Preaching is exhausting work and—besides, we forgot to dig any bait.

If it be true that there are no cuss words in the Japanese language what do motorists do when engine trouble develops far from a repair shop.

The public hearing on the proposition to change the Volstead law may have been interesting to many but it won't change the law.

Some of these adventurous scientists who are searching for the North Pole wouldn't know what to do with it if they found it.

There may be such a thing as synthetic beef steaks but it will be hard to wean healthy appetites away from the juicy sirloin.

W. D. Zerby, of Bellefonte, and Charles Freeman, of Philipsburg, have filed petitions for Democratic county chairman.

Anyway Bill Vare has an advantage of some of his associates in the political game. He can "milk the cow."

The fittest do not always survive. Some times money makes the unfit prime favorites.

An Incentive to Register.

From the Philadelphia Record.
It was an act of astounding impudence for Vare henchmen to write upon the nomination papers of their boss the names of hundreds, and probably thousands, of voters who never even saw the petitions. And now, with unblushing effrontery, these zealous servitors of the great man, admitting that they did much of the writing which purported to have been done by the voters, declare that there was no harm in it—that everything was perfectly legal.

It is truly difficult for an honest citizen to get the gang point view. But it should be remembered that for years the very same sort of people who prepared nominating petitions containing large numbers of false signatures have been saving the voters in their division all the trouble ordinarily connected with the casting of ballots. They think nothing of inserting the voter's name for him, together with all the information required by law, on the registration book if he fails personally to appear to attend to that duty. On election day, in case of his absence, they duly mark his ballot for him and insert it in the box. And if he does turn up at the polls and vote, and the ballot is marked for candidates disappeared by the gang, the marking is ignored and the vote counted according to the wishes and orders of the boss.

When one reflects upon these facts it becomes easier to understand the mental processes of men who, knowing the requirements of the law with regard to the signing of nominating petitions, modify them to suit their own notions and brazenly proclaim that they had a perfect right to do so. To the followers of the boss who aspires to a seat in the United States Senate the law is a joke. They know no law. They recognize no limitations upon the processes of rolling up predetermined majorities.

The Record is not so optimistic as to suppose that any of these petition jugglers will be called to account in the Courts—much less punished. But the exposure of their methods ought to stimulate the determination of honest citizens that Philadelphia shall not be disgraced by the nomination of a ballot-stuffer hero for the United States Senate; and it furnished an additional incentive to the hundreds of thousands of assessed voters whose names are not on the registration books to go to the polling places on Wednesday, April 14, and enroll themselves, that those of them who are Republicans may attack the menace of the Vare candidacy in the primary.

Mussolini's Escape.

From the Altoona Tribune.

Not yet can Mussolini be spared from the dictatorship of Italy. The worst thing that could happen would be his removal by violence. The rejoicing of loyal Fascists in his escape from serious injury at the hands of an assassin recently is shared by friends and well-wishers of the Italian nation everywhere. And the fact that his assailant was not a disaffected Italian gives ground for confidence that no serious political results, no untimely social upheaval, will follow upon the Duce's wounding.

His assailant, according to the news reports at this writing, is an eccentric Englishwoman who, presumably, acted on the promptings of her own disordered brain. She is not the type that would have been trusted by political conspirators nor employed as a tool for the removal of the Premier. Therefore, it is not likely the incident will be utilized to rally opponents of Fascism in an effort to overthrow Mussolini. Nor to rally Fascism for further acts of oppression.

Hateful as the Mussolini regime is to millions of Italians, all intelligence in the Kingdom realizes that the completion of reconstruction depends on its functioning for a while longer, as it has since 1922. Mussolini's death or overthrow otherwise at this time would usher in a period of chaos such as has not been known in modern Italy. He has a firm grip on affairs of State and he is getting results of immense benefit to the country. There is no one to take his place, either to carry out his policies or to reorganize the State on governmental lines more democratic and acceptable to the people.

His dictatorship has been aptly likened to a receivership in a bankruptcy. He has exercised arbitrary power because that was the only way by which social order and economic stability could be restored. The judgment of history probably will be that Mussolini fulfilled his self-imposed mission more successfully than anyone else in the public eye could have done. And when the task is finished the present order of affairs will merge almost insensibly into a new and better order. The new day cannot be hastened by assassination, but may be retarded by a premature change at the head of State. Therefore, it is to be hoped Mussolini will be permitted to carry on till the Italian people are ready to manage for themselves.

Mellon may be an efficient, but judging from his language he will not be an "easy" boss.

SPAULS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—The body of Clarence E. Henry, of East Slatetale, who disappeared from his home about a week ago, was recovered on Sunday from the bottom of an abandoned slate quarry.

—Carrying a heavy bundle of merchandise, Mrs. S. Kaplan, of Chester, tripped over a lighted gas stove, starting a fire which caused \$2000 damage. The woman was slightly burned and suffered from shock.

—Killed by gas, probably turned on accidentally by an overshoe thrown against a stove, Joseph E. Ward and his wife, Kate M., were found dead in their home at Reading by a son, Howard, who came to visit them.

—Police are investigating an alleged attack on Roy Adams, 12, of Lancaster, who told police that he was assaulted and bound by an unidentified assailant who gained entrance to the house by saying that he was a "gas man."

—Losing his balance while walking down an ordinary stairway, Walter Haley, of Philadelphia, who is an ironworker, had worked many a day at dizzy heights, turned a somersault, landing below on his shoulders. He is in a critical condition.

—Reading's train service is so efficient that air mail service to and from Reading would not improve the service, according to the opinion of acting Postmaster General Warren I. Glover, who declined to consider the erection of an air mail station at Reading.

—Mrs. Sarah Creasey, 65, of Catawissa, was killed last Thursday afternoon when she was pitched forward from a second floor balcony on which she was shaking a rug and landed head first on a concrete driveway. She was dead when bystanders reached her.

—Believed to have been dead for twenty-seven years, George Starr, formerly of Unityville, Lycoming County, returned last week to visit his sister, Mrs. M. R. Robbins, of Berwick. He had been prospecting in Alaska for a number of years, having gained a considerable fortune.

—Leone Massi, 24, a suspect in the hold-up of the R. A. Anderson drug store at North East on the night of March 31, was found secreted in a locked trunk in his home and was placed under arrest. He was identified on Friday morning by Anderson as the man who had robbed the store.

—Joseph P. Magruder, 52, of Millington, died last Thursday evening in the Lewistown Hospital from injuries sustained at noon when crushed between freight cars in the Pennsylvania Railroad yard. Magruder was working as a car inspector between drafts when the gap closed, and crushed his body.

—Dislike for noodle soup by a Burgettstown man resulted in an application for divorce at Washington, Pa., on Saturday. Mrs. Elizabeth Frances Conner charges that when her husband, Eberhart Talbot Conner, came home one evening eating and found that noodle soup was included in the evening meal, he threw the offending food out of the window and then attacked her.

—The West Penn Cement company has broken ground at West Winfield, Butler county, for the first unit of a \$2,500,000 manufacturing project on 2,000 acres of land recently acquired there. When this unit is placed in operation early in January, 1927, it is expected to have a capacity of 2,000 barrels of cement daily and when the second unit is added next year, the capacity of the plant will be doubled.

—A jury in the Northumberland county court returned with a verdict on Saturday for \$1,000 against the Rev. Adelbert Topolinski, head of St. Stanislaus Polish Catholic church of Shamokin, in favor of Mrs. Victor Shevitskie, a married woman with two grown children for an alleged slander. The woman alleged that she went before a woman's club with two hundred members present after she had been elected an officer, and said she was not fit to hold office.

—At a meeting of the officers and directors of the State-Centre Game, Fish and Forestry association, held at the Moshannon National Game Preserve, Phillipsburg, last Thursday evening, Harry E. Scott was authorized to proceed with negotiating a lease of a tract of land from the Prentiss estate for the building of a fish dam on Black Moshannon stream. The tract would be three miles long and one-half mile wide.

—In search of money, thieves last Friday night stole a cornerstone from the Fritz Lutheran church, near Somerset, but their efforts were fruitless, as they tore away the wrong stone. Breaking into the church building, the thieves took two strips of carpet from the floor and stole the Easter collection, about \$8. A bloodhound trailed the robbers for about a mile, but the trail was lost when the culprits escaped in an automobile. The main cornerstone contains money and other valuables.

—Several Lancaster county ministers have applied for appointments as school teachers in the county, according to Superintendent Arthur P. Mylin. In the case of the ministers, low pay from the churches may be accountable for their applications, it has been pointed out. Many married women also have made requests. Such applicants are regarded favorably, as the tendency among older persons is to teach for several years, whereas college graduates frequently seek other occupations after a year or two.

—Mrs. H. Norman Byers, of Valley township, Montour county, spent several hours at the home of Sheriff Gross and family at the jail in Sunbury on Saturday, when her husband refused to pay her taxes or permit her to pay them. The amount was \$7.65. When a constable took the woman to jail the sheriff would not admit her, so Mrs. Byers had a pleasant visit with the sheriff's wife until neighbor women made up the amount. The husband is a well-to-do farmer and operates a milk route in Danville.

—Windows for an entire block were shattered and buildings damaged when a bomb explosion wrecked the Spano-American barber shop, in Johnstown, at 2 o'clock Friday morning. Angio Salvador and his wife, asleep in the second floor apartments, escaped injury. Eyewitnesses saw a sheet of flame sweep across the street while citizens for squares around were awakened by the concussion. Two hundred chicks in a window incubator opposite the wrecked shop were killed. Police have a rival barber under arrest.