

—Probably the reason there are so many spoiled children these days is because their parents hadn't time to keep "a rod in pickle."

—The time of year approacheth when the man of the house standeth upon the shady street corner and bloweth hard about his garden, while his good helpmeet toiled in the sun and keepeth the weeds out thereof.

—The Pennsylvania Tax Commission has evidently had a brilliant thought. It has suggested a plan whereby the State will levy new taxes only when it needs the money. Under what other exigency has the State ever levied a tax?

—From this distance it would seem that President Coolidge might well begin at home with his proposed new disarmament conference. If the Nation's capital is to be turned into a pugilistic arena Tex Rickard ought to be elected President.

—Now they're trying to tell us that George Washington had Swedish blood in his veins and we don't believe a word of it. Had George been a Swede he would never have fooled around with that slow row boat when he crossed the Delaware. He'd a yumped it and he'd made it in two jumps.

—Candidates are announcing in every quarter of the county and as the primary will not be held until September we pity the farmers. Candidates will be swooping down on them like the locusts did on Egypt and how are they going to get their crops out and listen to all the political importuning.

—Poor Suzanne Lenglen. Charlie Pyle gave her one hundred thousand dollars for a professional tennis tour of this country. Now "Uncle Sam" wants a "cut of about sixteen thousand for income tax and when she gets back to France they're going to take forty thousand of it to help stabilize the franc. Its lucky for Suzanne that her itinerary didn't take her within reach of any other authorized tax grabbers.

—"Big Tom" Cunningham's official spokesman, Congressman Golder, now says that the Philadelphia ward leader didn't give that fifty thousand to the Vare campaign last spring, he gave it to help Beidleman's candidacy for Governor. Senator Reed might have treated that as an alibi had "big Tom" made such a statement when he had proccas servers from Washington after him before, but it will sound rather "fishy" to him now.

—From a good Methodist friend in a far off State we get a new slant on Foreign Missions. He writes that he doesn't care for the regular mission sermon in the church because he thinks it a foolish idea to raise money to convert the Chinese and Armenians when it means almost certain death to them for becoming converted. In the light of what's happening to Christians in China and Armenia it looks as though there is something to our correspondent's argument.

—Among Governor Fisher's plans to bring all departments of the State government into conformation with the new code is one to create a board of Trustees to be known as "the Board of trustees of Central State Penitentiary." That means that the Centre county institution is to have a management all its own and we shall be very much interested in its personnel. It also means, apparently, abandonment of the original plan to merge all of the penitentiaries of the State into one at Rock View.

—The esteemed Philadelphia Record deplors the increasing number of suicides among students and other young folks and sees a possible cause of it in notoriety given such tragedies in the public press. We agree with the Record in the thought that publicity might be a contributory cause through suggestion and call its attention to the fact that in the same edition that it editorially advocated suppression of such news there was a scare headed front page story of the student suicide at Hempstead, N. Y.

—There is no mistaking the signs of the times. The middle west, known as "the corn belt," is after the Coolidge scalp. Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler is going to see to it that the next candidate of his party for the Presidency is wet. Senator Borah is going to permit no one to be nominated who will refuse to openly espouse the dry cause. Coolidge is a very uncommunicative man, but none of these three groups of "show mes" are going to be satisfied with sign language. They're going to make him talk on farm relief, wet and dry issues even if they have to kill the cat that's taken his tongue.

—It is well that Henry Ford should turn his attention to tabloid foods. He is said to have an army of dietician experimenters at work concocting a cake that will satisfy all gustatory demands and keep the human machine physically fit. When it is finally perfected the "soup to nuts" days will be over. There will be no more cooking and dish washing, a Ford cookie will constitute the family meal and it will taste just as good in a fliv as it will on a mahogany table. When that time comes it will be goodby "Home Sweet Home," for most women of today stay there only long enough to prepare the meals and most men tarry only long enough to eat them.

Democratic Watchman

STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

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Governor Fisher May Help Reform.

There are good reasons for the belief that Governor Fisher will retard rather than promote ballot reform legislation by sending into the General Assembly a measure or group of measures on the subject sponsored by himself. We do not question the sincerity of the Governor when in his inaugural address he declared that he favored "the enactment and enforcement of such laws as will insure the free use and fair count of the ballot of every qualified voter." But it is not certain that he is promoting that consummation in submitting at this late day in the session a proposition which necessarily assumes a personal aspect, however free of that intent he may be.

There are a considerable number of ballot reform bills on the calendars. Among them are the seven measures prepared by the Committee of Seventy-six and offered during the special session of last year. These bills are not entirely free from partisan prejudice but they have the approval of a group of patriotic and intelligent men and women who have given careful consideration to the subject. In whatever respect the Governor's bills differ from those of the Committee of Seventy-six there is certain to develop antagonisms which may become bitter enough to defeat both propositions. If the Governor would simply "get behind" the committee bills he would greatly promote ballot reform.

It is well known that the Senate and House committees which will consider ballot reform legislation are composed largely of men who are opposed to ballot reform of any kind. With the Governor in sympathy with the bills of the Committee of Seventy-six there will be no excuse for those opposed to reform to assert their opposition, and public sentiment will force them to support the bills. The least difference between the Governor's bills and those of the Committee of Seventy-six, and we assume there will be no great difference between them, will serve as an excuse for voting against ballot reform legislation. The Governor can reduce the excuses to a minimum by endorsing the committee bills.

—Now they are digging up valuable jewels from the graveyards of Ur, which may mean that Abraham was something of a dandy.

The McNary-Haugen Bill.

After a long drawn-out parliamentary battle which extended through at least two Congresses, the McNary-Haugen bill passed the Senate on Friday last by a vote of 47 to 39. In the vote party lines were entirely ignored and the success is ascribed to a combination between the wheat producers of the middle west and the cotton and tobacco growers of the south. It is interpreted as a defeat for the administration for the President had not only frequently declared it unwise legislation but in the final struggle his friends in the Senate tried to substitute another measure for it, the Curtis-Crisp bill, known as the "corn-belt bill," because of its origin in the corn belt section.

Of those who voted for the bill on final passage twenty-five are Republicans, twenty-one Democrats and one, Mr. Shipstead, of Minnesota, Farmer-Labor. Against the measure there were twenty-two Republicans and seventeen Democrats. Among the supporters of the measure was Senator Copeland, of New York, all the others being western or southern Senators. The two Republican Senators for Pennsylvania voted against the bill and the attitude of the President is now a matter of speculation. It will be up for consideration in the House within a few days and the belief is that it will pass. Then if the President is true to his record he will veto it and bring upon his head the vengeance of the west.

It has been suggested that the bill is in conflict with the constitution of the United States in that it provides for the nomination of members of the board. They shall be appointed by the President but from a list chosen by the farmers by some sort of ballot system. But as a matter of fact there is no conflict. The constitution in Section 2, paragraph 2, declares "Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they think proper in the President alone, in the courts of law or in the heads of departments." The act in question fixes the right of selection in the hands of the farmers and if the bill is vetoed another reason must be found.

—The Pennsylvania League of Women Voters has opened warfare against the Homsher election bills.

—Politics sure are showing signs of warming up locally.

The Tax Claim Against Couzens.

At a hearing before the Board of Tax Appeals in Washington, the other day, Commissioner Blair, of the Internal Revenue Bureau, testified that when Senator Couzens sold his interest in the Ford Motor company, Henry Ford assured Mr. Couzens "that he would be free of any further tax assessments." The significance of this lies in the fact that ever since a disagreement on public policies between Secretary of the Treasury Mellon and Senator Couzens the government has been trying to collect a tax claim of several million dollars. At the hearing referred to the fact was brought out that Senator Watson, of Indiana, was the originator of the charge that Couzens owed taxes.

Senator Couzens came into the Senate by appointment of the Governor of Michigan when Newberry resigned to avoid expulsion for excessive use of money in the primary. The new Senator at once affiliated with the independents, now known as insurgents, and the whole force of the Republican machine was turned against him, personally as well as politically. In February, 1922, Senator Watson, of Indiana, wrote to Commissioner Blair that the Treasury Department had a memorandum "which challenged the original appraisal of the Ford stock," the purpose being to institute a claim for taxes against Senator Couzens. The sworn statement of Commissioner Blair that Ford had assumed the obligation will probably end the suit.

The greatest crime a public official can commit is to employ the instrumentalities of government to harm a citizen. Governments are established and maintained for the purpose of protecting the rights and property of the citizen. In all the bitter partisanship of the past no high public official prostituted his office to so base a use. In recent years such complaints are frequent and in many cases supported by convincing evidence. It has not been asserted that Secretary Mellon is responsible for the Couzens case, though his quarrel was undoubtedly the basis for it. Senator Watson probably imagined he could gain favor in a high quarter by "starting something" that would harm Senator Couzens.

—The first Canadian Minister to Washington will enter upon his duties this week. It is not expected to make much difference in the bootlegging trade between the two countries.

Flattering the Governor.

At the Lincoln Day banquet in Philadelphia, the other day, one of the speakers referred to Governor Fisher, who was the guest of honor on the occasion, "as a probable candidate for President in the future." This has become a customary tribute to the vanity of newly elected Governors in this State. As far back as the time of Hartranft it was begun by persons who had expectations of office or political schemes to promote and nearly every Governor of the State since, with the probable exception of Pattison, has been a harmless victim of ambition thus created. Governor Brumbaugh took it most seriously but it is recalled that it hit Governor Sproul quite hard.

It is more than probable that most men who engage in this form of flattery of new Governors are influenced by a hope of office of which he is the dispenser. But it is known that some of the party leaders with or without the consent of the Governor "put him in the running" with the view of building up party lines for use in controlling votes for other candidates. It is believed that Hartranft consented to such a use of his name. He never had any real aspirations, at least he never enjoyed such hopes. But he was anxious to promote the nomination of another candidate and willing to offer himself as a rallying post to hold other delegates from making alliances.

Governor Fisher is just entering upon his tenure as Chief Magistrate of Pennsylvania and holds within his hands the possibility of a Presidential nomination. His predecessors in office who had aspirations in that direction failed for many reasons, the leading one of which was the fact that the overwhelming Republican majority in Pennsylvania made it unnecessary for party managers to cater to the Pennsylvania organization. Fraudulent votes in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and other cities gave them the excessive majority. Governor Fisher now has the opportunity to demand and secure honest elections, thus removing the principal reason for the defeat of his predecessors.

—The estate of the late John S. Crawford, of Cooperstown, Pa., was considerable but will not reach a great way in providing the wants of the "fatherless children of France."

Forcing the Prohibition Issue.

Unless the signs are misleading there will be no "pussy-footing" on the prohibition question in the next Republican National convention. In the Cleveland convention in 1924 President Coolidge was able to satisfy the wets and the dries with a few meaningless platitudes which could be interpreted to favor either side of the question. But nothing of that sort will happen next year, for the leading men on both sides are expressing themselves in strong terms. In New York, a few days ago, Nicholas Murray Butler, spokesman for the wets, declared that "this issue is here and must be met." In that he expressed the practically unanimous opinion of the leading Republicans of New York.

This announcement got a prompt rise from Senator Borah who, notwithstanding his occasional slips, is recognized as a leading Republican Senator. In a letter to Dr. Butler Senator Borah wrote, "I agree with you perfectly that we should not dodge this question. I shall contribute in every way I can to force the issue to a final conclusion in the next convention." He will not be content with a declaration of the party candidate. "The party as a party," he added, "should unmistakably declare itself and the voters who make up the party should be given an opportunity to speak in the selection of delegates to the convention." This attitude of conspicuous leaders leaves no loop holes for dodgers.

In his New York speech Dr. Butler strongly intimated that the vote of New York in the next Presidential contest would be cast for the wet candidate. It is certain that he will favor such a candidate and equally certain that Senator Borah will take the dry side of the proposition. Thus we have the two leading minds of the Republican party ready and anxious to engage in "a duel to the death" on the question of prohibition as a paramount issue in the next Republican National platform. It will cause some shifting of attitudes among Republicans of Pennsylvania. In the event the wets win, as they are likely to with the vote of New York and New England practically solid, some Keystone voters will suffer.

—One of the proposed changes in the Pinchot administrative code by the Fisher administration is the creating of a new board of trustees to be known as "the board of trustees of Central State Penitentiary" to have charge of and manage the penitentiary at Rockview. At present the Rockview institution is under the management of the trustees of the western penitentiary, most of whom live in and around Pittsburgh. The creating of a separate board for Rockview would also mean the appointment of a warden for that institution and also a superintendent of construction. The trustees serve without remuneration but are allowed actual expenses incurred.

—The Pennsylvania Railroad company is figuring on building a branch line from the Lewisburg branch to the home for feeble minded women, at Laurelton. Surveys have been made and the right of way secured over all but three or four tracts of land over which it will be necessary to cross. The branch, which will be only two and a half to three miles long, will tap the Lewisburg at Rutherton, about half a mile below Glen Iron. At present everything for the home must be transported from the railroad by motor bus and trucks.

—The Chicago woman who lost an \$80,000 pearl necklace on a train the other day will not get a great deal of popular sympathy.

—Ty Cobb will no doubt prove a valuable acquisition to the Athletics and we hope Connie will find him worth the price.

—Chauncey Depew has appeared in many roles, mostly graceful, but he shines brightest as "Defender of the Faith."

—Tom Cunningham continues to be obdurate, but that is only for the time being. He will come to reason in the end.

—The President rather got the edge on the advocates of new cruisers by his proposed disarmament conference.

—A fist fight in the Senate is an unusual episode but it proved that Senators are human like the rest of us.

—We suspected that February was behaving too well. The reaction was distressing.

—Subscribe for the Watchman.

Ballot-Box Opening.

From the Philadelphia Record. "The Record" naturally rejoices that Governor Fisher has declared himself in favor of legislation to make mandatory the opening of ballot-boxes upon allegation of reasonable belief that fraud has been committed. The difficulties in getting at conclusive evidence of wrong-doing when that evidence is impounded in a locked ballot-box were well illustrated during the efforts to uncover crookedness believed to have been perpetrated in the Renshaw campaign. Because the law said that ballot-boxes "may" be opened under certain circumstances, instead of declaring that they "shall" be opened, some of our Judges found opportunity to exercise their discretion to the advantage of the interests that resisted the opening of the boxes. Governor Fisher would rightfully deprive the Judges of such discretionary powers, it is important to facilitate the discovery and punishment of fraud after fraud has been perpetrated. But we cannot subscribe to the opinion that we have seen elsewhere expressed that this is the most necessary of all election law reforms. It is far more essential to prevent fraud, if possible, than to ferret it out.

We can't have honest elections in Philadelphia until we have honest registration.

We can't have honest elections while the law authorizes one man to mark the ballots of unlimited numbers of others under the false pretense that they need "assistance."

We can't have honest elections while election boards in many divisions consist of five representatives of one political party.

We can't have honest elections while candidates for offices are allowed to expend in pursuit thereof sums greatly in excess of the emoluments of the offices; that is to say, while candidates are permitted to buy nominations and elections for the sake of the power they expect to derive from the exercise of official duties.

Governor Fisher knows these things as well as we do, and "The Record" entertains no doubt that at what he considers to be the proper time he will advocate legislation to correct the conditions that make Pennsylvania elections a mockery.

We will go further and say that if Congressman Vare were shrewdly advised he would himself advocate, and use his power to accomplish, the ballot reforms demanded by the people.

President's Arms Reduction Proposal.

From the Pittsburgh Post. The suggestion by President Coolidge to Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan that treaties binding them and the United States to extension of the navy reduction principles to smaller craft be negotiated at Geneva conference is but in line with what the American representatives sought to do in 1921 at the Washington meeting. It comes at a time when the American Congress as well as the powers abroad is showing a disposition to resume navy building, holding that the spirit of the Washington conference has been violated by some of the treaty signatories. The Senate, overriding President Coolidge's views against such resumption, is for starting the building of three cruisers now, and it believes that the House can be brought to agreement with it. Speaker Longworth has just made an emphatic declaration for a strong navy. This naturally should strengthen the position of the President in calling for treaties of limitation, emphasizing that if armament racing is to be resumed the United States will not hang back. However, it is declared that the building of the proposed three new cruisers would only bring this country up to a reasonable plane of safety preparedness. Whether justified or not, there is a growing impression among Americans that the effect of the Washington conference is to the disadvantage of their navy. It is but common sense that the only way to limit armament is to do so by international agreement, but whether this can be brought about at the Geneva conference remains to be seen. Meanwhile another common sense proposition is that if the United States is to hold aloof from such international bodies for peace as the League of Nations and the World Court we will have to give greater attention to our military defenses. If it has no confidence in international association for peace it will have to arm accordingly.

The "big navy" men of Congress, under the circumstances, have an argument not lightly to be set aside.

Watch Gifford and Cornelia.

From the Clearfield Republican.

Watch the Pinchots appropriate the challenge of Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and enter the lists as the only simon-pure, high-dry available candidate for the Republican nomination next year. They have been dreaming and planning to that end for four years. And they have the money to buy plenty of publicity when it means much in their behalf. Democrats all over the country would welcome the Pinchots as the certified Republican standard bearers in 1928.

—Senator Jim Reed, of Missouri, says "the American conscience is sound, but it is sleeping." Certainly he couldn't have referred to that part of it that is within range of his voice.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—The Northumberland and Union county commissioners have set the date for awarding the \$500,000 bridge contract between Watsonstown and White Deer for April 4. Specifications call for concrete and steel.

—Miners idle because of the slack in the anthracite market have taken to the woods with their guns and traps to catch furbearing animals. Gray fox skins are in demand at \$17 to \$30 each by furriers, who offer \$1.50 to \$7 for weasel pelts and red foxes bring \$3 to \$4.

—Six cats are the beneficiaries of \$9000 through the will of Mrs. Emma Prosho Bennett, who died recently at Lindley, Tioga county. The will gives \$450 to each of her relatives, while the cats receive \$6000 in trust. At their death the fund is to go to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

—Burns about the back received when she fell into a tub of scalding hot water resulted in the death of Nellie Modak, 5-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Modak, of Conemaugh, in the Lee Homeopathic hospital, at Johnstown, on Saturday. The child was playing about the house when she tripped and plunged into the tub of hot water while her mother was engaged with the family washing.

—A joy ride ended quickly for Lancaster Fry, 17 and Sumner Smith, 19, of Granville, when they were arrested by police within half an hour after they are alleged to have driven a car from a garage in the north end of that city. The owner summoned police when he heard his machine being driven out and the youths were overtaken after a brief chase. They are in jail, in default of bail, for a hearing.

—While helping his wife in the kitchen, Talbert Huntington, of Athens, backed into a needle that had been stuck into the wall. The needle penetrated his back just below the left shoulder and temporarily paralyzed that side of his body, causing him to fall to the floor. He was taken to the Packer hospital at Sayre where surgeons have made several unsuccessful attempts to locate the needle.

—For the first time in Columbia county's history, a term of court has been called off for lack of business and the jurors notified not to appear. Judge Evans last week ordered the February term of common pleas court canceled when he was informed the one case set for trial had been settled. Four other cases on the list had been continued, three of them having been pending for more than seven years. In two of the suits the plaintiff has died.

—Fire of undetermined origin destroyed the large garage operated by W. B. H. Williams, at Hastings, Cambria county, early last Friday. The loss is estimated at between \$75,000 and \$100,000, partly covered by insurance. Twenty automobiles and trucks were consumed. For a time the blaze threatened to sweep over a portion of the main business section of the town, but the Hastings and Barnesboro volunteer fire companies checked the flames.

—For one ride from Shamokin to Philadelphia in a stolen automobile, Charles Getwell, 18, of Shamokin, forfeited at least three years of his liberty. He pleaded guilty in court at Sunbury and was fined \$100 and sentenced to from three and a half to seven years in the Northumberland county jail. He admitted the theft and abandonment of R. L. Neugard's car. He gave himself up at Cleveland, Ohio, last week, saying he was tired of being hunted.

—Indictments on charges of receiving stolen goods and of being accessory after the fact of larceny were returned by the grand jury in Pittsburgh, on Monday, against Edward A. Goodfellow, whose yard in Perryville Manor yielded \$280,000 after the disappearance of \$320,000 in the Brotherhood Savings and Trust company bond swindle. Goodfellow maintains that the money was given him by a member of the banking force to keep until called for.

—The five-story building occupied and owned by the W. T. Grant Department Store in the centre of Altoona business district, was damaged by fire early Sunday morning entailing a loss in excess of \$75,000. Flames were caused, according to firemen, by defective wiring. The fire was confined to the two top stories with the roof being burned off. Two dozen windows in offices on the top floors, lost heavily by fire. Water damaged tenants and the lower floors.

—Said to have been despondent because his mother had married a second time, Nelson Courtney, of Erie, swallowed poison in an attempt to end his life. The boy was found by his brother, who notified police. He was taken to Hamot hospital, where a stomach pump was used to remove the poison from his system. It was stated by hospital attaches that he probably will recover. According to police, the mother recently remarried and is now on a honeymoon trip in the West.

—Three brothers, Michael, John and Stephen Kovack, aged 11, 12 and 14, of Nazareth, found a can containing a black substance in the back yard of their home. Stephen said it was coffee, Michael and John thought differently. John ran to the house for matches to prove it was not coffee. He did, for as soon as the flame touched the can there was a flash and the boys were severely burned. They were taken to the Sacred Heart hospital at Allentown where the surgeons have hopes of saving their lives. It is believed that the can contained gun-powder.

—The York hospital is named as the residuary legatee of an estimated estate of a quarter million dollars in the will of Ambrose B. Strickler, retired bachelor, lodgeman and clubman, who was found dead in his luxurious apartment at York, from a heart attack, several days ago by his Japanese servant, Tai Iwatsu. To Lehigh University is bequeathed the sum of \$10,000; another \$10,000 to the Children's Home at York and \$2,000 to the Reformed Mennonite church of Waynesboro. A bequest of \$10,000 is made to his servant and another bequest of \$2,000 to Walter H. L. Spangler, his secretary.

—The will of the late John R. Crawford, of Cooperstown, Yamango county, filed for probate at Franklin, leaves the major portion of an estate of nearly \$206,000 to "the fatherless children of France." The will provides for bequests to various relatives ranging from \$100 to \$15,000, and \$9000 is set aside, the interest to be used toward salaries of ministers of the First Presbyterian church of Cooperstown. One clause reads: "All the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, real, personal and mixed, shall be converted into money by my executors and given to and for the benefit of the fatherless children of France."