

—Out in Indiana recently they put an editor in jail for criticizing a judge. Now they are preparing to try the judge before the State Senate.

—The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations is not willing to trust its chairman, Senator Borah, with a roving commission during the recess.

—Governor Pinchot pays Governor Fisher the compliment of approving his ballot reform programme in part. As a matter of fact that is about all that could be done.

—War widows who fail to get pensions may charge it up to Dave Reed. As Senator he was more concerned to save Vare's tainted title than to secure just claims of war widows.

—Now that the Democratic women of Pennsylvania have set themselves to the task of curing the political ills of the State, we look for a material improvement in the election returns.

—Japan has had another terrible earthquake. Thousands of lives have been lost and much property destroyed. Nippon is getting so shaky that life there must be a constantly haunting fear of the next quake.

—We are among those who are opposed to a three cent tax on gasoline. Not so much because of the proposed jump of a cent a gallon as because as soon as they get the three cent levy made they will begin to conjure up reasons for raising it to four.

—There are two residents in Washington who will be interested to know that former Judge Dale has some political fat in the fire again and there are a lot of people in Centre county who are wondering whether they will come up to help him pull it out.

—The brewery workers union of Scranton is threatening to call its men out on strike unless they are given a raise in wages. We had no idea that there was enough of the half-of-one-per cent. stuff libated to make work for enough workers to form a union.

—The approaching marriage of United States Senator Dill, of Washington, to Miss Rosalie Jones, of New York, it is said will be the outgrowth of their mutual interest in radicalism. Miss Jones is a confirmed Socialist. She also recently inherited five million dollars. That, of course, the Senator never thought of when he was picking a bride.

—Most of the news that comes out of Harrisburg these days is announcement of the creation of another department of the State government and the appointment of a high salaried Secretary to head it. Governor Pinchot's budget might have gotten the State out of debt, but his program for the reconstruction of its government bids fair to run it back in again.

—The Hon. Holmes has introduced a bill in the Legislature that would permit the presentation of a libel in divorce at any time, whether the court is in session or not. Maybe he's casting an anchor to the windward. He might want to get divorced from the judicial fight that looms in his home county and is fixin' things so he can duck to the storm cellar on a moments' notice.

—It is estimated that two thousand miles of bar fixtures, over which "suds" and hard liquors passed in the old days, are now in use as lunch counters in this country. Polished glasses are no longer shot over the mahogany tops by white coated mixologists, there is nothing to drown the sorrows of the disconsolate and make the hearts of the hopeful effervescent in song. The headaches of the morning after are gone and the lunch counter state of civilization has brought dyspepsia in their stead.

—Commenting on the election reform bills now before the Legislature former Governor Pinchot is of the opinion that in some respects their passage would make matters worse. The proposal to permit a candidate to spend ten cents per voter, with the provision that he can join a group or slate of candidates, would make it possible for four candidates on a State ticket to spend \$520,000, if they could raise it. This being the fact it is apparent that Governor Fisher's bill to limit campaign expenses isn't designed to limit them very much.

—With population steadily increasing and the average span of life lengthening it is natural that there should be an increase in the number of indigent and dependent persons. It seems, however, that the increase is out of all proportion to reasonable expectations from such causes and that some other reason must be found for it. Our opinion is that it is due to the life we are leading. Men and women are breaking everywhere under the strain of modern business and social activities. The eternal scramble for dollars is making physical and mental derelicts of strong men and women and the same struggle is making moral derelicts of their weaker brothers and sisters. Pep meetings, highly specialized business methods, intensive salesmanship, ever increasing fraternal, business and social membership obligations, night clubs, salacious books and plays all, in their own way, are taking terrible toll from the human family.

Democratic Watchman

STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

VOL. 72.

BELLEFONT, PA., MARCH 11, 1927.

NO. 10.

The Political Pot is Boiling Over.

What had looked like an unusual contest for county offices next fall because of the large number of aspirants for nomination, especially on the Republican ticket, has taken on an extraordinary aspect because of unexpected necessity of electing a President Judge of our courts.

The death of Judge Keller has thrown many of the Republican candidates into a near panic. They are fearful that with a judicial contest also on their aspirations will be lost sight of. It has also had the effect of starting a lot of others to thinking that they should jump in and make a try for nomination for several of the offices for which there is only one candidate in the field.

The scramble for the court house offices has been of little interest during the past week, however, when compared with the rumors that are afloat concerning the fight that is to be staged for the Judgeship. On every corner little groups are seen and its a safe guess that the topic of conversation is judicial politics in nearly every one of them.

On the Republican side there are already three avowed candidates in the field. Former district attorney James C. Furst advised us that he is an applicant for appointment by the Governor for the short term caused by the death of Judge Keller as well as a candidate for nomination for the regular term. M. Ward Fleming, Esq. of Phillipsburg, has already announced his candidacy in the papers. We are not advised as to whether he is an applicant for appointment by the Governor. Former Judge Dale advised us, on Monday, that he is a candidate and will run in the primary on the Republican ticket only.

This three cornered fight gives promise of developing into one of considerable interest. It is generally believed that Mr. Furst will be appointed by Governor Fisher. If this should prove a reality it would be evidence that he has Secretary Dornworth's support and that the administration at Harrisburg would be back of him in the primary. Mr. Fleming has long been a devoted friend and political ally of Sen. Scott and what would be more natural than for the Senator to throw his support back of the Fleming candidacy. Such a result could conceivably precipitate a show down between the forces of Secretary Dornworth and Sen. Scott as to who is the real leader in Centre county and then there would be a real fight, with barrels of money thrown into it. The candidacy of former Judge Dale on the Republican ticket, only, might become more formidable than some think in this three-cornered contest. In the 1925 primary, when he ran against Judge Keller on the Republican ticket, he fell only fifty votes short of polling one-third of all the Republican votes cast and there are certain conditions that might arise that would give the Dale colors more followers in a contest with Messrs. Fleming and Furst than it could attract in that with the late Judge Keller.

The only other person we have heard talked of as a possible Republican aspirant is John Love Esq. We called on him to ascertain his feelings and he replied "when you see my name written or printed anywhere as a candidate strike it off." He admitted, however, that there are certain contingencies under which he might enter the contest, but they are too remote to cause him to give the matter any serious thought.

On the Democratic side we have been able to find only one avowed candidate. He is W. D. Zerby Esq. and he assured us that he is in the race in earnest.

J. Kennedy Johnston Esq. was non-committal when asked if he would run. Our reaction to a pleasant little chat with him was that he doesn't view the prospect pleasantly and will withhold his decision until a later time.

Samuel D. Gettig Esq. said that he is "not a candidate at this time." We infer from further conversation we had with him that he is holding the matter under advisement.

W. Harrison Walker Esq. is another who had not made up his mind at the time we called on him. Our impression of his attitude was that he prefers to get the advice of his friends before making a definite decision, one way or the other.

Having been unable to see N. B. Spangler Esq. we have to resort to rumor as to his intentions. They are to the effect that he has stated to friends that he will not enter the race.

William Groh Runkle Esq. said that he hadn't given much thought to the matter and was not ready to say what he might do later.

An esteemed contemporary, speaking of Congress, says "there have been worse sessions." Possibly, but we don't call them that.

Reed's Labor Wasted.

It would be hard to imagine what absurd impulses influenced Senator Dave Reed, of Pittsburgh, to organize and maintain the filibuster that defeated a lot of important legislation at the close of the Sixty-ninth Congress. There was nothing to gain by the enterprise. It probably strengthened the personal friendship between Vare and Reed, which may be a political asset in the next Senatorial campaign. But measuring this advantage at its highest value it will hardly recompense for the harm done in defeating the women's pension bill, the deficiency bill, bonus payments to veterans and a number of other measures affecting the comforts and in some instances the lives of citizens.

The plain object of the filibuster was to prevent the opening of the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh ballot boxes now in possession of the Slush Fund committee of the Senate and the certain exposure of the fraud perpetrated last November to secure the election of William S. Vare. But the purpose was defeated when the objection to opening the boxes was made. It was in itself a confession that the election was fraudulent, and to the average clean mind it doesn't matter how extensive the frauds run. The only wise thing done by Vare in connection with the matter was in promptly consenting to the impounding of the boxes. It conveyed the idea that Vare was confident of the integrity of his vote and willing "to go to the mat to prove it."

The futility of the filibuster is revealed in another way. As indicated, the purpose was to prevent the opening of the ballot boxes in custody of the Senate committee, and notwithstanding the fact that it prevented a vote on the motion of Senator Reed, of Missouri, the boxes will be opened and the frauds exposed. The Pittsburgh Senator has succeeded in fastening upon the entire Republican party of Pennsylvania the odium of a condition which might have been shifted onto the shoulders of a few like Vare, Harry Mackey and Tom Cunningham. But that is no longer possible. The stupidity of Dave Reed has involved the party organization, including those associated with the President.

The county auditors completed their work of auditing the various county accounts, placed their statements in the hands of the printers and left for their respective homes on Wednesday.

Another Prod at Beidleman.

If there has been left even a faint shadow of hope of reconciling the differences between the Mellon organization and the Beidleman-Baker faction, it melted away when the Hon. Michael E. Stroup was sworn in as Deputy Attorney General. Stroup represents the head and front of the local opposition to the "Hill Gang." For many years he has been the willing leader of every movement to oppose the plans of Beidleman and Baker and has shown such capacity in organization and manipulation as to make him a dangerous foe. He is an able lawyer with a wide experience in politics. He served two terms in the Legislature and was twice elected District Attorney of Dauphin county.

In the famous primary campaign of 1922 Mr. Stroup directed the efforts of the friends of Pinchot and subsequently managed the campaign of that candidate, in Dauphin county, at the general election. It was expected that Gerritt would promptly recognize the merits of his work by calling him into some important office. But this expectation was disappointed for one reason or another. The Governor praised him generously but left him "outside the breastworks." When the primary campaign for 1924 was organized no one was greatly surprised to find Mr. Stroup working in opposition to Pinchot and managing the campaign of Pepper and Fisher with such success that Fisher received 7000 votes against Beidleman.

It is understood that Mr. Stroup will be assigned to the State Security Bureau and will manage all the cases of the Bureau coming before the Dauphin county court. This will be a pleasant work for him as he has spent all his professional life in the Dauphin county courts. He was admitted to the bar in 1898, was appointed Assistant District Attorney after serving two terms in the Legislature, and served in that capacity until 1912 when he was elected District Attorney and re-elected four years later. At the expiration of his second term in the office he seemed to withdraw from public life, but not from political activity. He always had a harpoon ready to throw into the Beidleman machine.

—Subscribe for the Watchman.

Governor Fisher Yields to the Machine.

Governor Fisher revealed his complete servility to the worst elements of the Republican machine in issuing a supplemental certificate of the election of William S. Vare to the office of Senator in Congress. In apologizing for the act Governor Fisher says "I have acted under the requirements of the Act of Assembly of 1913." As a matter of fact the Act of Assembly of 1913 required nothing of Governor Fisher on the subject. It required his predecessor in office, Governor Pinchot, who fulfilled that obligation in a manner that seemed fit to him. The law prescribes no form and leaves to the Governor the right to exercise his own judgment as to the language employed.

The Act of 1913 provides that "the vote for candidates for the office of United States Senator shall be counted, certified, computed and returned, as is now or may hereafter be provided by law with respect to other offices filled by a vote of the electors of the State at large. Provided, however, that the returns of the election of United States Senator shall be made to the Secretary of the Commonwealth, who shall immediately tabulate and compute the same, and upon the conclusion of said count, certify the result thereof to the Governor who shall immediately issue a certificate of election, under the seal of the Commonwealth, duly signed by himself and attested by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, and deliver the same to the candidate receiving the highest number of votes."

Thus it appears that there was no official reason for the Governor's act. It was simply a piece of rather shabby politics. He hoped to confuse the conditions in Washington and possibly secure the temporary admission of William S. Vare to the floor. Before the primary election last May Mr. Fisher publicly declared that Vare's expectation of election was predicated on a beer mug. Now under the spur of the machine leaders he is willing to resort to any expedient to legalize the frauds that resulted in his apparent election. His efforts will fail, however. The count of the votes contained in the ballot boxes now in possession of the Slush Fund committee will show he was defeated.

—Senator Dave Reed may imagine that those Philadelphia and Pittsburgh ballot boxes were taken to Washington for use as committee room ornaments. Senator Jim Reed will remove this impression from his mind.

Hopeful Woman's Organization.

The organization of the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women, completed at Reading last week, marks an auspicious beginning of a systematized effort to restore the Democratic organization of the State to its former force and vigor. It must be admitted that heretofore the Democratic women of this State have been delinquent. There have been a few notable exceptions and those women who have given time, energy and material help to the cause deserve the highest honors. But as a rule Democratic women inclined to participate in political activities have chosen non-partisan agencies of expression. The organization of the Pennsylvania Federation of Democratic Women indicates a wise change.

Since the adoption of the Nineteenth amendment to the Federal constitution the Republican women of the State have been active and efficient party workers. It was believed by many reasoning persons that the enfranchisement of the women would reduce the Republican vote on the ground that women would not approve the vicious methods of the Republican machine. This expectation has not been fulfilled, however. On the contrary the Republican majority increased in the ratio of activity of the women. In other words the Republican women "swallowed" all the iniquities that have made the Republican machine of Pennsylvania notorious throughout the country.

This new organization of Democratic women is State-wide in its activities. It is the result of a three-day convention, largely attended, held in the City of Reading. An executive board, the membership of which was distributed over the State so that each section would be represented and Mrs. Margaret Jerry, of Easton, was chosen for President. She has had wide experience in the work having been Vice President of the Northampton county Democratic committee. A number of Vice Presidents were chosen and though Centre county is not represented in the initial organization we fondly hope her Democratic women will affiliate with it in the near future and take a share in its good work.

Ballot Reform in Doubt.

The information which comes from Harrisburg, through the medium of the newspapers, is not encouraging to the hope for ballot reform legislation. A sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Elections held a session, on Monday night, but arrived at no definite conclusions. It seemed apparent that the administration forces in the Legislature will be inclined to favor the four bills sponsored by the Governor and let it go at that. Outside of the measure making the opening of ballot boxes compulsory there is little merit in this group. Yet taken together with certain other bills even these bills might be made to serve a good purpose in the case of ballot reform.

An encouraging sign revealed at the committee meeting was that Governor Pinchot's letter to Governor Fisher, on Sunday, made a strong impression on the minds of the committee members. It was an argument against one of the Governor's election bills. In limiting expenditures at primary elections Mr. Fisher proposed that groups of candidates might pool their funds and multiply the total allowed to be spent by the number of persons in the group. Mr. Pinchot pointed out with great clearness that under such an arrangement even greater excesses than marked the last Republican primary might be legalized. The members of the committee freely expressed an abhorrence of such a situation.

There is a good deal of sentiment for genuine ballot reform legislation in the General Assembly this year, and unless it is stifled some good may come of it. But the stifling process is in motion. One of the correspondents at the scene of the meeting wrote, "there was also some intimation that the absence of W. L. Mellon, chairman of the State Republican committee, had something to do with the delayed action on all the bills. Mr. Mellon, now in Florida, received an S. O. S. from the sub-committee to assist it in amending the expenditures limitation bill and the other if he deemed it necessary." Mr. Mellon is about as anxious for ballot reform as Tom Cunningham or Max Leslie.

The weather of the past week has been real spring-like, pleasant days, cool nights and frosty mornings, with no snow or blizzards in sight at present writing. But the onion snow and the saplin' bender are still due.

New Judge Will Have Big Job Ahead of Him.

Whoever is appointed Judge of Centre county for the remainder of 1927, as successor to the late Judge Harry Keller, will have a big job ahead of him. On the list are between fifteen and twenty cases which had been tried before Judge Keller and in which applications for new trials are pending. Some of these cases have already been argued but no decision yet handed down. In such cases they will have to be reargued before the new Judge, and it will also be necessary for him to read and digest all the evidence presented at the trial. This he will have to do in all cases which have not yet been argued, and among them are one or two in which the testimony is unusually voluminous. As the appointment will be good only until the first Monday in January next the man who picks the plum will get a lemon of a job handed to him.

The four Olney bank bandits who paid the supreme penalty at Rockview on Monday kept up the pretense of indifference to the end but fooled nobody.

Worth Township and Port Matilda Tax Payers to Meet.

Under the auspices of the parent-teachers association of Port Matilda all the tax payers of Worth township and the new borough of Port Matilda have been invited to meet in the Presbyterian church at Port on Monday evening, March 21.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide an open forum at which all taxpayers of the two districts can freely discuss the merits of the proposal to create a bonded indebtedness for school purposes. The election to decide the issue will be held the next day so that this meeting is very timely. Questions pro and con may be asked and will be answered so that the taxpayers may be better informed as to just what they will be voting on when they go to the polls next day.

The French army will be composed of men and women alike, according to a new plan of the Chamber of Deputies. That will put a new face on war.

The Watchman publishes news when it is news. Read it.

SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—The body of Miss Rose Schurz, aged 26, who disappeared from her home in Nicktown, a suburb of Johnstown, on February 25, was discovered on Sunday buried under a snowdrift near her home which had partly melted away. No marks of violence were found.

—The Rev. F. H. Daubenspeck, of Aaronsburg, who recently accepted a call from the First Lutheran church of Chlcora, entered upon his duties as pastor on Sunday. He succeeds the Rev. H. H. Flick, who became pastor of the Lutheran church in Homestead recently.

—Taxpayers of Clinton county are circulating a petition for the replacement of the old covered bridge over the Bald Eagle creek, one mile west of Mill Hall, as the present structure seems unsafe and the approach is dangerous in view of the amount of traffic at that point.

—Elmer Green, of Philadelphia, is puzzling over the question: "What constitutes a holdup?" Three men stopped him on Richmond street, last Friday night, held his wrists fast, and relieved him of \$20. Detectives told him he was not "held up" but merely "detained" and subjected to a form of larceny. There was no gun used, detectives explained.

—Emil Larsen, late of Denmark, recently landed in Philadelphia to get a job taming lions in a circus. There were no available lions, so soon Emil found himself with little money and no job. He needed a suit of clothes, too. So he walked into a store on Bainbridge street, tried on a suit, and after getting a good fit, showed a revolver in the clerk's face and ran out wearing the suit. He was arrested.

—With only \$40 left of her \$800 in savings, Mrs. Katrina Trinka, aged 50, of Pottsville, Washington county, Pa., who told police she deserted her husband and three children for another man, was stranded in Cleveland, Ohio, on Sunday when the man deserted her and took \$700 with him, she said. Mrs. Trinka declared she left her husband because he made her provide for him and their three children.

—A. S. Bannmiller, assistant treasurer of the Commonwealth Trust company, Harrisburg, was arrested on Monday night charged with defaulting in the sum of \$200,000 of the bank's funds. First reports were that \$100,000 of the defaultions had been recovered, but details of the case were withheld. W. M. Ogelsby, president of the bank, said the institution would not be affected by the loss, being fully covered by insurance.

—Bobbed hair remains under the ban at the Bloomsburg hospital, because long hair is kept neater than short locks and adds dignity to the student nurses. Miss Marion E. Smith, the superintendent asserts. Miss Smith said the ban was general, but was being lifted in some hospitals. When it might be lifted there she did not know. Student nurses with bobbed hair either wear switches or nets to keep it down until it grows out.

—James N. Hoffman has just been re-elected by the Sanbury division of the Pennsylvania railroad, after forty-eight years of service, at Lewistown. Mr. Hoffman began his railroad career as a messenger boy at the scale office, February 2, 1879. He was promoted to clerk two years later and in turn to agent, train dispatcher and yard master. One of the unique features of his service was the fact that his entire forty-eight years was spent in the one office at the Lewistown passenger station.

—Hugh Cochran, aged 40, was instantly killed in an explosion at the filter house of the American Oil Works at Titusville at 6:15 o'clock Sunday morning. Cochran was descending a wooden ladder inside the filter tank to get a splash plate that had been left in the fuller's earth when it broke, throwing him against the side of the tank. The electric light bulb he was carrying then smashed and caused the explosion from gas that had accumulated from benzine used in washing the fuller's earth.

—The Young building, a three-story brick structure on Allegheny street, Jersey Shore, in the heart of the business district, was destroyed by fire, which broke out at 3:30 o'clock Friday morning. Three stores were wiped out and the occupants of five apartments on the upper floors were driven to the street in their night garments. The loss on the building is \$35,000 with \$25,000 insurance. A loss of \$30,000 additional, partially covered by insurance, was sustained by the proprietors of three stores and occupants of the apartments.

—The Armour and Company tannery at Big Run, fifteen miles southwest of DuBois, was almost totally destroyed by fire early Monday evening, entailing a loss estimated at three hundred thousand dollars. Fire companies summoned from Punxsutawney and Reynoldsville helped to save adjoining property from the flames. The cause of the fire has not been determined. It broke out shortly before five o'clock and, spreading rapidly, destroyed all the tannery buildings but the engine room. The plant had resumed operations only two weeks ago after an idleness of five years.

—George Probert, 68, of Farmer's Valley, superintendent of the McKean County Refining company plant, was instantly killed at Bradford, last Friday morning after assisting an employee who was overcome by gas fumes from a tank car. Probert helped Archie Broder from the cat and was starting to climb out himself when an explosion of undetermined cause occurred which blew him out of the man-hole and hurled him fifty feet. He suffered bad burns over his entire body and both legs were fractured below the knees. Three other men nearby were burned, two only slightly, but Otto Baker, of Smethport, required the attention of a physician.

—Sentences of from 10 to 20 years in the western penitentiary were imposed on Monday upon Frank K. Hockman and Samuel C. Earl, both of New Castle, who were convicted Saturday of complicity in the attempted robbery of the Clarion County National bank of Knox. The robbery was frustrated when state police learned of the plot. Council for both men said an appeal would be taken to the State Superior court. The sentences were imposed by Judge Frank L. Harvey. Hockman's term was directed to run concurrently with a sentence against him in Allegheny county. William J. Matteson, also of New Castle, the third man tried in the case, was acquitted on his wife's testimony that she refused to allow him to help to Knox on the day of the attempted hold-up.