

# Democratic Watchman

## INK SLINGS.

—Justice Joseph M. Proskauer, of New York, addressing the Federation of Jewish Charities in Philadelphia, declared bigotry "is a hydra-headed monster." It is also a despicable instrument in politics.

—Someone has said that first water is thrown over us, then rice, then dirt. That would sum up the course of life fairly well if it had included a summary of the days we spend toiling over various reports to the government and the sweat we break into earning enough to pay our taxes.

—Harry Gerberich has called our attention to the fact that we have missed a trick. The truth is that since our private bootlegger left for other and more salubrious climes the trout seem to have deserted our favorite streams also and we don't look forward to the fifteenth of April with the same zest that we did a few years ago. However, we want to remind you that it will be just seventy-nine days until the season opens.

—It will be just like some fool Legislator to introduce a bill in the Assembly of Pennsylvania making it a crime to "hex" in this State. We trust that there isn't enough asininity in Harrisburg to give consideration to such a proposal. How could a law change the reasoning of a disordered brain? A person who imagines he has the power to "hex" another certainly imagines he has the power to "hex" the law into impotence.

—At this distance from the scene of action and with no dictograph in the chambers of the innermost council we are in no position to predict what is going to happen to the Republican machinery in Pennsylvania. We do want to say, however, that John Fisher is sitting prettier in his last session of the General Assembly than any Governor we have recollection of. The physical fading out of the leaves Joe Grundy as the potential power in Republican politics in Pennsylvania. Grundy and Fisher are friends. Grundy will name the next Republican candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania and because he and Fisher are friendly the latter will have some influence after he has retired; which is a very unusual political heritage for an ex-Governor.

—In an open letter to Al Smith, Will Rodgers expresses the belief that "there is life in the old gal yet." He means the Democratic party. The cowboy humoresque is a very popular character in the country today and his facetious philosophy is uncannily sound, but he told the world nothing new when he wrote his last letter to Al. The Democratic party looked bad after last November's debacle, but it wasn't as pathetic a looking cadaver as Will was when he arrived at the aviation field here on his transcontinental flight last fall. He came through to "pinch hit" for Fred Stone and the Democratic party is going to come through to pinch hit for the country when it wakens up to realize that a Republican ballot isn't a touch stone for prosperity.

—The death of "Sheriff" Shearer brings home to us again the toll that passing years is taking from our lives. "Sheriff" had been a character in the community so long that he seemed a part of that intangible something that holds us loving and loyal to the home town. It takes memory only an instant for the flight back a quarter of a century when every Bellefonte and every frequent visitor met here and there on our streets some one whom they knew as a "town character." There were a dozen or more of them representing every walk in life, some of them brilliant raconteurs, others just men who were so habitually on the streets that one came to expect seeing them at certain places and others, just quaint, inoffensive characters like "Sheriff." They are all gone now and their passing takes something we can't just analyze it—out of our life that can never be replaced.

—Our council has passed a new milk ordinance. It is a few paragraphs longer than the moral law, but it is well intended. Intended, we understand, to prevent the possibility of any of us getting t. b. or typhoid from the milk the dairymen serve us. We don't remember when the last case of typhoid fever was reported in Bellefonte, but we do know that the State has tested all the dairy herds for t. b. that furnish the milk that comes to Bellefonte. If the new ordinance is enforced milk will jump from ten to twelve cents a quart. That wouldn't be bad if the farmers got the two cents, but they won't. That will go to the distributor to cover the cost that the sterilization, pasteurization and what not will involve on him, and, in addition, we will have the salary of the inspector provided for in the ordinance. To-day there are about seventeen hundred quarts of milk delivered to the consumers in Bellefonte. At an increase of two cents it will mean an additional outlay of twelve thousand, three hundred ten dollars a year for what, you ask? To prevent tuberculosis from cattle that are already tuberculin proof and to prevent typhoid—There's a lot in science but we don't believe we're going to die every time somebody discovers a penny or a cow's hair in the bottle of milk delivered at their door.

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STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

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## The Rockefeller-Stewart Contest.

Widespread public interest is shown by press news and comments on the contest now approaching a crisis between John D. Rockefeller Jr. and Colonel Robert W. Stewart for control of the Standard Oil company of Indiana. Colonel Stewart has been for some years chairman of the board of that Rockefeller subsidiary and seems to like his job. Because of the exposure, some time ago, of some unethical transactions in which he participated, Mr. Rockefeller Jr. has come to the conclusion that Mr. Stewart is unworthy of continued confidence, and that in the interest of business morality and for the purpose of preserving public respect for the industry another manager should be chosen.

About the time Harry Sinclair was negotiating with Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall for the alienation of the naval oil reserves, Colonel Stewart, Mr. Sinclair and two other oil operators entered into a conspiracy to purchase a large quantity of oil and sell it to their own companies at a profit, over night, of \$3,000,000. In the investigation of the Teapot Dome transaction this sinister deal was exposed. Colonel Stewart first testified under oath that he had no part in the deal but subsequently admitted he received one-fourth of the profits. Mr. Rockefeller asked him to resign the chairmanship of the board which he refused to do and the pending contest is the result.

Colonel Stewart bases his claim for continued control of the corporation on the ground that his management has been efficient and successful and that his acquittal by a District of Columbia court of perjury vindicates his character for integrity. But that is a lame defense. The court that acquitted him admitted that he had sworn to a falsehood but there were not enough persons present at the time to make it legal perjury. He claimed that he intended to pay his share of the profits into the company but he held it in concealment for six years and made restitution only after exposure had made further concealment impossible. That sort of alibi failed to satisfy Mr. Rockefeller and hence the fight.

Under the management of Colonel Stewart the Standard Oil company of Indiana has prospered amazingly. Its operations have broadened and its enormous dividends promptly paid. If pecuniary success were the only consideration in corporation management Colonel Stewart might justly claim a life-time tenure of his office as manager. But there are other things to consider. His almost successful attempt to steal from his company in the conspiracy with Sinclair and others is only part of his perfidious record and his re-election to the chairmanship of the board of the Standard Oil company of Indiana will put an ineffaceable stain on big business, not alone in oil but in every line of endeavor.

—Dr. Ralph D. Hetzel, president of State College, has been housed up this week with an attack of tonsillitis and was unable to go to Harrisburg for his scheduled address, on Tuesday evening, before the State farm products show. In his absence Prof. M. S. McDowell talked to the farmers and not only congratulated them upon the wonderful advances that have been made in all lines of agriculture during the past decade but pointed out the good work being done by State College through the county agricultural extension societies.

—Automobile owners of the United States last year paid seven hundred and eighty-five million dollars in taxes on their cars. A stupendous sum. Some of you will ask: Where is it coming from? We are not concerned about that so much as we are as to whether it is leading.

—Everybody will be glad to learn that both King George, of England, and Marshal Foch, of France, are moving forward toward complete recovery.

—If Mr. Hoover manages right he may be able to make the prohibition issue serve for another Presidential campaign.

—Kansas City is to have a two-and-a-half million dollar art gallery. It will be a rival attraction to the stock yards.

—An airplane propeller amputated a cow's tail in Illinois. Maybe the cow was trying to "jump over the moon."

—Hoover in Florida may be "Far From the Madding Crowd" but he is not safe from importunate office seekers.

## Vare's Frauds Will Not Be Condoned.

The false pretense expressed in sending William S. Vare to Florida about the time the Senate Slush Fund committee was ready to formulate its report was revealed the other day when he undertook, by long distance 'phone service, to control the election of a president of the Philadelphia Municipal court. The committee had generously agreed to give him an opportunity to appear in person, or by attorney, to answer the accusations against him before submitting its report to the Senate for final action. He failed to avail himself of this advantage during several months previous to his affliction in August. In November he had sufficiently recovered to declare he was still boss of the organization.

But in December, when the chairman of the committee notified him that a time had been fixed for the final hearing he was hurriedly, and with considerable ostentation, packed off to Florida and pronounced by his physician a very sick man. Probably he was physically unfit to appear in person but his very resourceful lawyer was amply able to appear for him and present his case, if he has one to present. A few days later, when his Philadelphia organization was imperiled, however, he was physically able to make a long-distance appeal to his political agents in Philadelphia to save the machine. This was a complete refutation of his pretense of helpless infirmity. It proved he is playing for delay.

It is barely possible that the slight increase in Republican majority in the Senate in the Seventy-second Congress might award the seat he covets to Mr. Vare. The perversion of Senator Borah, of Idaho, and Senator Brookhart, of Iowa, afford encouragement to that hope. But the false pretense of infirmity is not a valid reason for scrapping the evidence in possession of the Slush Fund committee of the Senate and ratifying the corrupt verdict of a debauched ballot. Chairman Reed will gladly give Mr. Vare's attorney an opportunity to speak for him today but it will not deter the presentation of the report, the exposure of the frauds and the just verdict against Vare and his methods of campaigning.

—W. L. Mellon has grown tired of politics. He probably found the Grundy brand too expensive.

## Some Abuses in Public Service.

A correspondent of the esteemed Philadelphia Record says he "could never understand why a person who holds a political job should be taken care of after he rusts or wears out, while the poor man who has had to root hog or die while hustling for an existence, out of office, should take care of himself." Many another man and woman has been perplexed by the same problem. Those who hold public office are not, as a rule, forced into the service. On the contrary they are eager to get the employment which holds out the promise of "easy money" and retain it as long as possible. In nine cases out of ten the compensation is as generous as that of other vocations they are fit to follow.

The correspondent in question was influenced by his expression by an exposure that there are men on the police force of Philadelphia who are disqualified for the service by age or infirmities, but are retained out of sympathy. Sympathy is a grand impulse but fits better in other forms. That is to say, it is both inappropriate and improper when it impairs the safety or imperils the rights of a considerable number of people, as seems to be the case in the instance which provoked the observation. But there are other abuses of this sublime emotion even more reprehensible. The indiscriminate pensioning of antiquated civil servants puts a burden on the public which is as inexcusable as it is onerous.

The too generous increase of salaries of public officials is a kindred evil that has become too common in recent years. The pensioning of judges after a long and faithful service may be excused, if it is not abused, but the practice of fixing salaries of public officials at a figure far above their capacity to earn in industrial, commercial or professional life is an abuse of power that should not be tolerated. That "the laborer is worthy of his hire" is axiomatic. But paying for services that could be as efficiently obtained for half the money is little less than legalized larceny and should be condemned as such. It is well that public attention has been called to this fault.

—Salvation Army General Booth is a good Christian all right, but of the militant variety.

## Mr. Hoover "Passes the Buck."

President-elect Hoover has already fallen into the pernicious habit of "passing the buck." He proposes to shift the solution of prohibition enforcement to the ingenuity of a commission composed of more or less distinguished gentlemen. In his speech of acceptance he said, "it is a noble experiment which should be worked out progressively." This was a happy phrasing of a promise that satisfied the bootleggers and delighted the Anti-Saloon League and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. All of these elements in the electorate supported him with great earnestness and enthusiasm and secured his election by an overwhelming majority. Now he hands out an equally enticing lure to the credulous.

Mr. Hoover is accurate in his estimate of the failure of Congress to solve the enforcement problem and probably justified in removing it from that tribunal. He also shows courage in assuming responsibility for the work which he proposes to submit to a commission of his own selection. If his plan happens to fail, which is possible, he will have to reckon with the disappointed groups which favored him. But it is not an actually desperate hazard at that. The work of the commission can be carried over a long period of time and the summation postponed for years. Meantime the shifting of the buck can be repeated at convenient intervals as new ideas on the subject are developed.

However the President-elect has come up against a perplexing question at the start. He doesn't know whether to name Elihu Root or Charles Evans Hughes to head the commission and direct its activities. Mr. Root is outspokenly wet and Mr. Hughes inclined to be dry. If Root is chosen the Anti-Saloon League will have a conviction fit and if Hughes is selected the bootleggers will be gravely offended. But a highly trained engineering mind ought to be able to devise a method of overcoming such difficulties. Mr. Hoover has accomplished marvels along these lines already and we see no reason why he should fall down now. He enjoys the complete confidence of the wets and dries at present, anyway.

—If Tom Cunningham doesn't manage Vare's legislative interests any better than he conducted his contest in the Municipal court he will lose his job.

## West's Appointment Confirmed in Secret Ballot.

By a vote of 54 to 47, in a secret ballot, the nomination of Roy O. West, of Chicago, to the office of Secretary of the Interior, was confirmed by the Senate in Washington, on Monday. According to the press dispatches those opposed to confirmation "made a determined last minute effort to have the proceedings, including the roll call and the committee reports made public." But this effort failed. Many of the Senators who voted in the affirmative are unwilling to let their constituents know of their affiliation with the machine or their subservience to the administration.

For many years Mr. West was the personal attorney of Samuel Insull, the water power magnate. He became a partner in his enterprises, a sharer in his profits and an all-around "friend, philosopher and guide." At the time of his appointment by the President the Insull interests were concerned in many efforts to obtain favors from the government through the office of the Secretary of the Interior and the Federal Power Commission, of which the secretary is a member. These facts made the impropriety of his appointment self-evident and its acceptance a public scandal.

It is true that Mr. West publicly declared he had disposed of his shares in the Insull corporations as soon as he was named for the office. It is equally true that he publicly promised that in the event of his confirmation he would decline to sit in the Federal Power Commission sessions when the Insull claims were under consideration. But in the abundance of men from which to select a Secretary of the Interior why should one be chosen from whom such assurances were necessary? The obvious purpose of the appointment was to serve Insull and it ought to have been rejected.

—A Washington scientist says man was "neither created nor a product of evolution." He must have been reading Uncle Tom's Cabin and taken Topsy's view of life.

—The Mitten management in Philadelphia and the Mellon management in Pittsburgh seem to have gone "on the rocks" about the same time.

## Mr. Vare Contradicts His Counsel and His Physician.

From the Philadelphia Record.

When a committee of the United States Senate wishes to accord William S. Vare an opportunity to appear before it, either personally or by counsel, in order that it may conclude a case involving the legality of his election to the Senate, his health debars him from even discussing the matter with his lawyer.

His personal physician and his principal attorney explain to the Senate committee that his condition is such that he cannot converse connectedly on any serious topic for five minutes.

The public arrives at the conclusion that Mr. Vare is no longer interested in exercising the functions of a boss. But what are observers to think when Mr. Vare, despite his deplorable condition, is deep enough in politics to use the long distance telephone to communicate from Florida his orders regarding the election of a President Judge of the Municipal Court?

Has the state of Mr. Vare's health been misrepresented? Or has he had a remarkable convalescence?

Whatever his actual capacity for sustained discussion of political affairs, he has made it perfectly obvious that he responds to the slightest pressure upon the nerves of his Organization. He has thus destroyed any claim he might otherwise have had to further consideration at the hands of the Senate committee. For while it may be quite true that he could not stand the ordeal of a personal appearance before the Reed committee, it cannot be true—it can no longer be believed—that he is unable to discuss his political interests in the privacy of his Florida retreat, or to advise with his counsel upon a course of action.

Mr. Vare's attempt at intervention in the Municipal Court affair has had the effect of cutting the ground from under his feet so far as his status before the Senate committee is concerned.

And that is the only effect it had. For happily his orders were openly ignored. The Municipal Court has been taken from Vare control.

President Judge Brown, elected yesterday, and those who supported him, have charged that as an adjunct of the Vare Machine the Municipal Court has incurred unwarrantable expenses, and that its business has been transacted without due regard for the public interest.

It is now up to the new element in command to free the Court of its political affiliations, select its employees on the basis of their fitness, curb its extravagance and give the taxpayers a new deal.

We do not believe that there is any branch of the city government that would not be better administered without the malign intervention of the sick man who presumes to dictate from Florida.

## Law and Witches.

From the Pittsburgh Press.

Revelations of the prevalence of the belief in witchcraft in certain parts of Pennsylvania is the basis upon which an effort will be made to pass in the General Assembly a law dealing with the subject. More stringent restrictions will be placed on "hex doctors," and levels of punishment will be set forth.

The fatuous few who believe that the passage of a law waves a magic corrective wand collide with the facts of history. In a former day there were stern laws against witchcraft. The riders of the broomstick were hanged or ducked, or put in the stocks, or run into exile from society. Further, a public opinion, possibly founded more on the cruel pleasure of the witch hunt than thoughtful logic, spurred on such punishments. Yet witchcraft flourished.

But as education spread, such punitive measures were repealed, and at the same time witchcraft diminished. It is difficult to rout out old beliefs, especially when they batten on superstition, and it is not to be accomplished by law alone, no matter how much of it there may be. Education and enlightenment are more certain curatives.

That is an actuality not to be dismissed by those who put all their faith in the mere form of statute. They are quite as deluded as the hexed.

## Old and Active.

From the Harrisburg Telegraph.

Theophilus King, head of a Massachusetts trust company, set up a fund on his sixty-eighth birthday. Every year since then he has made it a practice to give away some thousands of dollars to churches and various organizations.

Now Mr. King is 84 years old. On his birthday a short time ago he gave away a few more thousand to worthy causes.

Here is a wise man. He knows what to do with money and he has some fun giving it away while he yet lives. It is an inspiring sight to see a man old in years but active in heart, just as it is depressing to find, with years before him, one old in his soul.

—Saturday of next week will be groundhog day.

## SPAWLS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

—Woodrow Wilson, 75, of Prospect, Butler county, who was found dead near his home on Monday, was frozen to death, authorities believe. He had been missing for a week.

—Suing for divorce at Pittsburgh, last Saturday, among the complaints of Mrs. John Roiser, was her husband often insisted that a police dog sleep in the bed she occupied.

—A "Wild West" show staged by a number of youngsters in the woods near Mammoth, Westmoreland county, on Saturday, resulted in the death of John Elmo, 15, son of Mrs. Mary Elmo. Elmo was shot through the left eye, the bullet penetrating his brain.

—Ernest Arner, living near Catawissa, heard a crash in his kitchen, but thought it was a burglar and did not investigate until morning. Then he found the rear end of an automobile in his home, and a gaping hole where it had come in through the side. Now Arner wants to know whence came the machine, and who is going to pay for the damages.

—Erection on the roof of the 10-story Hazleton National Bank building has been started of a beacon whose rays will be visible 60 miles away. It will direct air traffic to the Hazleton Municipal-Veale Airport north of that city. James Lee Pardee, president of the bank, arranged the installation as his contribution to the aviation development of the region.

—Charles Deaner, Middletown, confessed ring leader of the gang of youthful thieves who pilaged stores, homes and automobiles in the vicinity of Harrisburg, Hummelstown and Middletown, in recent months, was sentenced to serve from sixteen and one-half to thirty-three years in the eastern penitentiary, last Friday in the Dauphin county court by Judge Frank B. Wickersham.

—A. J. Bauer, 59, lease worker at Glade Run, Warren county, was believed to have drowned Saturday in the Allegheny river, and the stream was dragged for his body. He appeared late on Sunday and explained that while he was in a tool house on a lease some one had locked the door, not knowing Bauer was inside. Other workers discovered his plight, and Bauer was only hungry, not drowned.

—Former Governors E. E. Beldeman, of Harrisburg, appeared as counsel on Monday for John Mahanovich, Harrisburg, who pleaded guilty in federal court at Lewisburg to the charge of trapping out of season. Judge Johnson remarked that many boys, including himself as a boy, often hunted "muskys" in this way, and fined him \$25. He only had \$20, and the court reduced the fine to that amount.

—Mrs. Martin Buchanan, of Clearfield, had a terrifying experience at her home when her hair caught in the wringer of a washing machine, pulled her head up close against the rubber rolls, and held her a screaming prisoner until she was released by her husband. She was unconscious for more than an hour after the experience and lost quite a bit of hair. Mrs. Buchanan had leaned over to pick up some clothing when her hair caught between the rolls.

—Mrs. Anna Hlatky, 36, of Monessen, convicted of involuntary manslaughter in November for killing two sets of new-born twins in 1927 and 1928, on Monday was sentenced to serve from seven to 24 years in the Women's State industrial home at Muncy, Pa. Mrs. Hlatky heard the sentence calmly. At her trial the woman testified she buried the bodies of the babies in the rear of her home. She said her husband had threatened her with death if she gave birth to any more children.

—The Rev. Theodore C. Meek, pastor of Mahoning Presbyterian church, at Danville, has urged his congregation to merge with the Grove Presbyterian church, asserting that God's money was being wasted by continuing two churches which had separated seventy-five years ago over a geographical difference. The canal then divided the town and when the question of a site for a new church building was brought up, residents of the north and south sides of the canal so violently opposed each other that separate congregations were formed.

—With a purse of \$117.50 as an incentive, Harrison Hursh, of Frankfortown, 40, walked from Dillsburg to Gettysburg and return, a distance of approximately forty-four miles, in an elapsed time of ten hours and two minutes. The purse was raised by a number of Dillsburg and Frankfortown residents, who offered it to anyone who could walk the distance from Dillsburg to Gettysburg and back in less than twelve hours. Hursh was followed by his son, Roy, and Richard Balish, in an automobile. It was their duty to see that he covered every stretch of the distance afoot, but to be on hand in case he needed medical attention.

—The Orphan's Court sitting en banc in Philadelphia, on Monday, fixed the third Monday in February to hear the petition filed by the heirs of John Nicholas Emerick in an effort to have the court allow probate of the Emerick will, dated in 1816. The move to probate the will is preliminary to claiming a part of the great fortune amassed by John Jacob Astor, an alleged partner of Emerick under a purported agreement dated January 20, 1787. The law requires the permission of the Orphan's court to probate a will after a lapse of 21 years after the death of the testator. When the petition was filed on January 7, the court tentatively fixed Monday for a hearing. Many of the Emericks live in Centre county and throughout central Pennsylvania.

—Legislation permitting trial judges to impose sentences of life imprisonment on fourth offenders has been recommended to the 1929 Pennsylvania General Assembly by a commission appointed two years ago to study the laws and procedure relating to crime and criminals. The commission reported that it was not convinced that it would be wise to pass such drastic legislation as the Baumes act in New York State which makes life imprisonment mandatory upon fourth offenders. Under the bill recommended the life imprisonment sentence is not mandatory and its propriety, when given, is reviewable by the upper court. For a second and third major offense, a convicted man under the proposed bill may be sentenced to not more than twice the longest term prescribed upon conviction for a first offense.