

INK SLINGS.

The snow that started falling early Tuesday morning was the heaviest of the year but only about five inches of it fell.

Up to the moment that he put Coleville's "millionaire" on the water wagon for an entire year we really believed that Judge Fleming had a heart.

Why call it "the busy" bee? This over exploited hymenoptera exponent of energy really works about three weeks and then eats honey all the rest of the year.

The inauguration is only ten days off and so far as cabinet mysteries are concerned Mr. Hoover has a better one than any magician we have ever heard of.

It is supposed that there is a "sucker" born every minute. Judging from the number of them that are haled into court all over the country there must be a boot-legger born every second.

We fear that the country is soon to suffer a great disappointment. In a month or so Mr. Coolidge will be expected to be making a noise like a retired President and silent Cal. just can't make a noise.

The time is about here when the average farmer will spend about eight hours every day at a public sale. You ask: Is that all he has to do. No! A year hence he'll probably have a sale note to pay.

At the coming Stribling-Sharkey fight in Miami "pop" is to be sold in paper containers and not glass bottles as usual. Thus the sore-heads after Mr. Dempsey's first promotion event will be confined to those who didn't get their money's worth.

We regret exceedingly that we have never had opportunity of meeting Mr. Edison. We are sure he never would have said that man knows next to one-millionth of nothing had he met us before making such a sweeping assertion. He would probably have omitted the "next."

We are hoping the New York courts will publish the "sucker list" of the fake Canario Copper company. We'd like the world to know the soft sisters who thought they were buying stock in a copper mine but were really buying automobiles and diamond studded dog collars for the ladies of New York's night clubs.

Mr. Hoover had no sooner departed from Miami than the business men of that city called a meeting to solve the unemployment problem there. As long as Herb was in town we presume every fellow who was out of a job had hope, but when the apostle of prosperity started north—well, that was something else, again.

Senator Reed, of Missouri, is holding the spotlight in Washington just now. He will retire from the Senate with the close of the present session and he is singing swan songs daily. On Monday he sang a rather acrid little ballad entitled "Wet Drinkers and Dry Voters," dedicated specially to his colleagues in both branches of Congress.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania would do well to let the rival political gangs in Philadelphia wash their dirty linen at home. At this distance from the scene Senator Salus looks like a poor sport. If he and his crowd can't take a licking without running to Harrisburg to get the State to do what they couldn't do themselves they're pretty small potatoes and few in a heap.

Two hundred men lined up for seven jobs that were open when they started work on two new school houses in Sunbury on Saturday. After looking up the last fall election returns in Northumberland county we have concluded that probably one hundred and ninety nine of the applicants voted for Hoover. And if they did it must have been because they thought he would bring them prosperity. Certainly it wasn't because Smith was wet. Northumberland isn't so dry as that.

From New Hampshire, Ohio, comes the story that a young man fasted thirty-five days "to drive the devil out of his father." We note the incident not because someone doing a fool thing is unusual. As a matter of fact such things are being done every day. The interesting phase of the exhibition in question is the revelation that there is a son in this broad land who is worried about his dad. In this day and generation of youthful sophistication we are amazed to learn that there is one shoe on the other foot and one old fashioned boy left.

We're getting soft. Nobody seems to be able to stand cold weather anymore. This hasn't been an unusually cold winter yet we hear comment on all sides as to its severity. In 1904, from Thanksgiving day to February 19, there were only seven days when the mercury failed to go below the freezing point. We have had no such consistently cold weather this winter. We are coddling ourselves with super heated homes and offices, discarding woollens for silks and expecting summer raiment to render winter service. That's why we're cold in weather that our forebears considered merely exhilarating.

Democratic Watchman

STATE RIGHTS AND FEDERAL UNION.

VOL. BELLEFONTE, PA., FEBRUARY 22, 1929. NO. 8.

The Gas Tax Question.

It may be accepted as a certainty that there will be a hard fight over the gasoline tax question during the present session of the Legislature. Governor Fisher favors a four cent levy and the gas consumers are persuaded that the present rate is high enough. There seems to be a widespread opinion that additional revenue will be needed during the coming biennium. The alternative to an increase in the gas tax is a tax on shares of manufacturing corporations. Joe Grundy is unalterably opposed to such a tax, and the Mellons are in sympathy with his attitude. These forces combined on any question are invincible. The Governor could not possibly oppose them.

A few years ago the question of tax on gasoline was of little importance to the public outside of the owners and users of automobiles. But the development of electrical power has so expanded the demand for gas that it has become an item in the budgets of every household, small factory and farm. The automobile owners are still the largest consumers but the others require enough to make the price a matter of consideration, and a large proportion of the people believe that gas consumers have been "the goat" long enough. Hence they are preparing to put up a strong opposition to the proposed increase. They are persuaded that it is not needed and are averse to voluntary sacrifices.

While Mr. Grundy is the ostensible "power behind the throne" in the movement to increase the gas tax, the Mellons are not indifferent observers of the impending conflict. They are extensive producers of gasoline and the flow from the refineries of "Good Gulf Gas" contributes to the wealth of the family a good deal more than the quantity consumed by their automobiles subtract from it. Maybe some good will come out of the controversy, however. It may lead to legislation that will correct the faults in the collection of the gas tax that will supply any deficiency in revenues from that source that exists. In any event equalization in taxation is as important as volume of revenue.

The great mouth duel between Senators Reed and Borah has been successfully pulled off and "the government at Washington still lives."

Just Indignation Expressed.

The recent death of John Bercoveskie, a miner employed by the Pittsburgh Coal company at Santiago, near Pittsburgh, after having been brutally beaten by three coal and iron policemen, appears to have aroused Governor Fisher to a belated appreciation of the evil of such an organization. The coal and iron police is an organization authorized by an Act of Assembly passed many years ago. It conveys to private corporations authority to organize and maintain forces which may exercise police authority without responsibility. This license to arrest without responsibility for excesses or abuses has invited recklessness and in many cases grave offenses have been perpetrated in the name of the law.

In the case in point the victim of the brutal attack was in the home of his mother-in-law and is said to have resisted an arrest attempted without cause. Thereupon the three private policemen beat him with clubs and pistol butts until he was fatally injured. Upon complaint of friends Governor Fisher promptly ordered an investigation and revoked the commissions of the offenders. The Pittsburgh Coal company has since engaged to care for the dead man's family and the local authorities will probably inflict just punishment upon the offenders. But even such generous and just promises afford meagre recompense to the bereaved widow and children and small reparation to an outraged community.

There will come a material gain to the public, however, if this lamentable incident shall culminate in the correction of a great fault in the police system of Pennsylvania which has been pyramiding outrages for many years. And Governor Fisher's comments inspire hope for that result. "The viciousness of the system," he says, "consists of the surrender by the State into private hands of police power. These powers ought to be jealously guarded by the State and exercised only under its jurisdiction." No greater truth has been uttered, no truer principle expressed by a public official in recent years, and, fortunately, Governor Fisher is in position to bring it about.

The relief work in Philadelphia is in progress but not in the form of soup houses.

Little Improvement in Philadelphia.

The real reformers in Philadelphia have little faith in the sincerity of the group which Senator Salus describes as the "new combination." This group is composed of Greenfield, Monahan, Hazlett and others, who offer themselves to take the place of the old Vare machine. In an address made before the Legislative League in Harrisburg, the other evening, Thomas Reburn White, head of the Committee of Seventy, said, "no new leadership which may emerge from Philadelphia's tangled situation can hope to survive for more than a fleeting moment unless it takes note of the need for improvement in the administration of Philadelphia's business affairs."

When Senator Salus appeared as sponsor of the bill providing for a new form of government for Philadelphia wise observers began looking for "an African in the woodpile," and he was soon revealed. Mr. Salus proposes to insert a provision in the measure that the manager shall be chosen by councils, and councils shall be elected by the political machine. This would simply give the machine increased power and lessened responsibility. The purpose of Mr. White, in addressing the rural members of Legislature, was to admonish them against this danger. In the original bill proper precautions are expressed to secure a selection by the people, but the proposed amendment would destroy it.

The "new combination" is not concerned about improvements in the government of Philadelphia. The members of it may be dissatisfied with some of the methods of Vare and are opposed to such raw stuff as has been exposed in the police department. But they all swear allegiance to Vare, and if Cunningham and one or two others of the present bosses are thrown out others will take their places who are equally obedient to the Vare will. The only way to make substantial improvement in the government of Philadelphia is to turn out not only Vare but all those who acknowledge allegiance to his corrupt dynasty. Honest election laws will help to accomplish this result.

One trouble with Senator Reed, of Missouri, is that he keeps "too many irons in the fire." If he had given less time to a hopeless effort to rehabilitate John Barleycorn he might have achieved a splendid triumph over fraud and corruption by keeping Vare out of the Senate.

Hoover's Uncertain Mind.

Unless appearances are misleading President-elect Hoover is a hard problem to solve. He is impulsive, emotional and uncertain in purpose. He won't "stay put," if we may use an expression common among politicians. That sort of man in power is difficult to manage and unless the President is manageable the party managers have all sorts of trouble on their hands. No engagements can be made or plans laid if the boss cannot be completely relied upon, and every act of the President-elect, since the election, shows that Herbert Hoover is sort of a question mark. He acts upon his own impulses regardless of the effect upon the party or the country.

Soon after the election the announcement of his tour of the Southern Republics came to the country like "thunder from a clear sky." It was variously interpreted by the press and public, and to a considerable extent was taken to mean the removal of embarrassments to President Coolidge during the closing period of his administration. But before he had completed his "mission of goodwill" he changed his mind and returned to Washington to engage in conferences with party leaders upon current questions of policy. After a period he suddenly "pulled up stakes" and hid himself to an inaccessible retreat on the Florida coast to remain until the eve of his inauguration.

Now, he has changed his mind again and is back in "to clear up a number of matters which must receive his attention before March 4th." What influenced him to this action has not been revealed but may be ascribed to various causes. The party managers may have been doing something that does not meet his approval or he may have imagined that his presence in Washington during the closing days of the present Congress would be helpful to his friend Vare who served him in an emergency at Kansas City. Then again the President may have done something.

Pat Crowe, whose greatest achievement was the kidnapping of a rich baby, also denies that he committed suicide or died by any other process.

Reaction to the Cruiser Bill.

The statement of Sir Esme Howard, British Ambassador at Washington, of the purpose of his government to initiate a new effort in the direction of naval armament limitation may be London's reaction to the passage and approval of the cruiser bill. The conference on the subject at Geneva a year ago failed because the British government believed the people of the United States were so completely committed to peace policies that Congress would submit indefinitely to the disparity in naval equipment between that country and this. The passage of the cruiser bill by an overwhelming majority and its prompt approval by the President has effectually removed that illusion.

The Washington conference in 1922, in which British and Japanese statesmen made rings around the Harding administration, provided for a perfect parity in the naval strength of the United States and Great Britain, to accomplish which nearly a billion dollars worth of perfectly good American war ships, afloat or nearing completion, had to be scrapped and sunk. Nothing having been said about cruisers in that agreement Great Britain proceeded to build cruisers until a ratio of five for Great Britain to about one and a-half for the United States had been reached. Then the administration at Washington woke up and proposed a "limitation conference" in which our representatives were practically "laughed out of court."

The recent cruiser legislation, however, has altered the situation. It plainly conveyed the idea that while the people of this country are devoted to peace they are determined to be prepared for emergencies and if a contest for superiority should ensue we have the means to go over the top, however high it may be. Sir Esme Howard quickly grasped the significance of this fact and at the probable suggestion of equally keen minded men in London submits a suggestion for another limitation conference in which the representatives of Great Britain will be more reasonable. It is to be hoped that his gesture will be followed by action and that it will come in time to check expensive building operations.

Next week we will publish a thrilling story of the early cattle days in the northwest. It is really a blood curdler and what makes it all the more interesting it is told by a former Centre countyman, Larry Curtin, and concerns the murder of Valentine Hoy, who left Centre county in 1870 and became the cattle king of the Brown's Park country in Wyoming.

In Governor Fisher's reconstructed code the recommendation of the 1927 Legislature that Rockview penitentiary be made a separate and distinct institution with its own board of managers is to be dropped and Rockview to remain under the supervision of the board of the western penitentiary.

Highway engineers are making a survey of the Bald Eagle Valley road from Milesburg to the Centre-Clinton county line, and it is rumored that it will be rebuilt with a concrete surface the coming summer.

Probably the most important achievement of the proposed new code is that it will substitute the name of Fisher for that of Pinchot as the principal law for the government of the Commonwealth.

Judge McDivitt, of Philadelphia, is doing his part in the effort to discourage crime. The other day he sentenced four gangsters to a total of 210 years in prison.

Last Sunday's canvas for the annual budget of the Bellefonte Methodist church resulted in pledges of over \$400 in excess of last year.

The Senators were entranced by the eloquence of Reed and Borah, the other day, but it's a safe bet, not a vote was gained on either side.

Mayor Mackey is still trying to unload some of Mitten's burdensome responsibilities on the tax payers of Philadelphia.

Colonel Lindbergh may or may not be an ideal lover but he allows no opportunity to boost aviation get away from him.

Leon Trotsky, late dictator of Russia, appears to be "all dressed up with no place to go."

"Swearing he'd ne'er consent" Senator Salus appears to have consented.

DON'T WANT FOUNTAIN PLACED IN SPRING.

Only five members were present at the regular meeting of borough council, on Monday evening. Fire marshal John J. Bower was present and turned over to council a check for \$16.50, being two-thirds of a voluntary contribution to the Logan fire company for services at a recent fire at the Kohlbecker hotel, in Milesburg, and another check for \$134 from residents of Spring Mills, one-third of which will be returned to the fire company.

Elmer E. Rockey appeared in person and presented a complaint and petition from residents of east Lamb street regarding the bad condition of the pavements as well as portions of the street. The matter was referred to the Street committee.

A lengthy communication was received from M. J. Barrick, district engineer of the State sanitary water board, protesting against the placing of an illuminated fountain in the big spring on the grounds that it might contaminate the water. Mr. Cunningham, of the Water committee, stated that no portion of the fountain will go into the water but the tripod on which the fountain will rest, and as it will be of galvanized iron there will be nothing about it to contaminate the water. He further stated that the fountain is almost ready for installation and recommended that it be installed. The matter was left in the hands of the committee with power.

The Water committee reported the collection of \$300.00 on water duplicates and \$38.22 for rent and miscellaneous items.

The Finance committee presented the treasurer's report in which he stated that tax collector Sarah Love reported a little over forty thousand dollars having been collected on the 1928 duplicate to date. The committee also asked for the renewal of a note for \$4,000 which was authorized.

The Fire and Police committee reported that it will cost approximately \$97.00 to secure the necessary valve rings and put the Undine steamer in good repair and the matter was left in the hands of the committee with power.

The committee also reported that bids had been received for new tires for the pumps. The Johnston Motor Bus company will furnish four tires for \$400 and allow \$50 for the old tires; the Smead Service Station bid was \$394.88 and an allowance of \$50 for the old tires, while J. E. Rossman gave a bid of \$398. The committee advised in favor of keeping at least two of the old tires for emergency use. The matter was left in the hands of the committee with power.

Mr. Cunningham, as a member of the Fire and Police committee, protested against the chairman of the committee making appointments and awarding contracts on his own initiative without consulting either of the other members. As the chairman was not present no action was taken on the protest.

A committee of the Undine Fire company was present and requested council to paint the floor of their building, similar to the painting done for the Logans. The matter was referred to the Fire and Police committee.

Mr. Cobb, of the Special committee, reported progress in the matter of lighting the proposed airport marker, and also progress on the proposed building code for the purpose of securing a reduction in insurance rates.

Mr. Cunningham called attention to the fact that inasmuch as the new milk ordinance had been duly passed and published, and was to go into effect April 1st, council should appoint a milk inspector so he could have ample time to make any preparations necessary to take charge of the work on that date. President Walker requested the committee to be prepared to make a recommendation at the next meeting of council.

Mr. Cunningham also stated that a serious misconception of the ordinance is prevalent among the milk dealers in Bellefonte, some of whom contended that they will have to pay to the borough as a license fee one dollar for ever one hundred quarts of milk sold during the year. This is a grave mistake. The one dollar is all they will have to pay to secure a license good for one year. Milk dealers who handle two hundred quarts daily will be required to pay two dollars for a license and any who handle three hundred quarts three dollars, but that is all they will have to pay. Bills totaling \$586.31 were approved for payment after which council adjourned.

Centre county's allotment of the three cent gasoline tax from July to December, inclusive, is \$14,291.

SPAULS FROM THE KEYSTONE.

Three weeks ago an armed Negro held up Theresa Basial, 24, of Pittsburgh and robbed her of a \$360 diamond ring. The ring was left in her mail-box last Friday, with a scribbled note: "Was just a joke. Sorry to put you to any trouble."

Milton Shipley, who escaped from the Clinton county jail at Lock Haven last fall, was captured at his home in Sunbury, on Monday by State highway patrolmen Flick, Milton and patrolman Swartz. He had not been at his home half an hour when a woman called the State Highway Patrol. He said he was glad the chase was over.

An arduous hug may cost John Schwartz, of Erie, \$5000. Suit has been brought in county court by Mrs. Alda Porter, of Meadville, in which Schwartz is charged with hugging her so tightly that one of her ribs was broken and two others injured. She asks for medical expenses and for compensation for time lost from her work.

The final touch was put to his quarrel with his wife nearly a half century ago, when George H. Michener, of Norristown, in his will, filed for probate on Monday, pointedly remarked that he makes no bequest to her from his \$250 estate, because she deserted him 14 years ago. The estate was bequeathed to the four children of their marriage.

State police are searching for bandits who early Monday morning beat G. C. Woods, a steam shovel operator, at his home in Derry and took \$3600. They knocked him unconscious while he was placing an automobile in his garage. The highwayman are believed to have been in hiding awaiting his return. When Woods recovered consciousness he gave the alarm.

Lodging of a piece of peanut shell in the windpipe of Charles Decker, 16-months-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Decker, of Williamsport, R. D. No. 2, indirectly resulted in the infant's death in the Williamsport hospital, authorities said. The child was taken to the hospital to have the shell removed, but before it could be done pneumonia developed and proved fatal.

City and county authorities at Pittsburgh are searching for Rev. Harry H. Rutchel, 33 years old, pastor of the First Baptist church of Vandergrift, who disappeared after purchasing a ticket on the Pennsylvania railroad for home on Saturday night. As he was known to have more than \$500 and several pieces of jewelry on his person, fear for the safety of the missing pastor was expressed.

Forty guests of the Marble Hall hotel, at Mt. Carmel, on Monday, were forced to flee when fire swept the east wing of the building, causing damage estimated at between \$25,000 and \$30,000. Three firemen were overcome by smoke but no one was seriously injured. The blaze, cause of which has not been determined, was believed to have originated in the basement of a pool room adjoining the hotel.

Mine workers of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation company may soon be wearing goggles at their work. The accident report of the company for 1928 shows that 368 men suffered injuries of their eyes as the result of being struck by flying particles of coal and rocks. Officials are now considering the suggestion that miners be forced to wear goggles in an effort to curtail the annual number of accidents.

Thirty-eight head of cattle and four mules burned to death in a fire which early on Monday destroyed the D. L. Gibbons farm barn, five miles east of Everett. The loss is \$8500. Barking dogs awakened Carl Poor, the tenant farmer, and fire companies were called, but were unable to save anything of value. A water tank on top of the silo burst due to the heat of the fire, but the water failed to quench the flames.

That a "bank" in a woman's stocking is unsafe has been proven to Mrs. Cora V. Thomas, of York, Pa., who charges Lewis Hawkins with making a "touch" of \$11 while she was asleep. Hawkins is in jail at York waiting a preliminary hearing before Alderman Jacob Stager on a charge of the larceny of the money and also a \$65 gold watch, which, she alleges, he stole from her bedroom when he extracted the currency from her stocking.

While Jacob E. Garthoff, of Juniata, was motoring to Lock Haven, last week, to attend his father's funeral, he failed to note the red signal lights at the New York Central crossing north of Beach Creek, and crashed into a slow-moving freight, wrecking the motor and causing his wife to be hurled through the windshield. Mrs. Garthoff was badly cut about the face and head. The other members of the party escaped with slight bruises.

Progress in the drilling of the test well for gas and oil, conducted by the Junata Gas and Oil company at the George Gates farm, two miles east of Newton Hamilton, is slowing up. The test well contract calls for 3200 feet. Ten days ago, when at a depth of 2000 feet, the drillers encountered a bed of rock so impregnated with iron as to resist their every effort to go through with the machinery they have on the grounds. Machinery of a different type will be hurried from New York at once to complete the well.

Mrs. Bertha Haffner, a divorcee, was acquitted of the murder of State trooper J. Busch by a jury in criminal court at Brookville, on Monday. As the verdict was read Mrs. Haffner wept. Her parents and fiancé, R. C. Larson, Jamestown, N. Y., were in the courtroom with her. Busch was wounded fatally by Mrs. Haffner's room at Punxsutawney, October 4. Mrs. Haffner told police he shot himself accidentally. The State submitted evidence in an effort to show that Mrs. Haffner learned the day of the shooting that the policeman, who had been attentive to her, was married.

A search of the fringe of the woods in which the body of Blaz Ahazic, 59, of White Valley, Westmoreland county, who committed suicide, was found Tuesday, revealed the charred remains of the man's savings amounting to \$5000. Before leaving home Ahazic gave his wife a \$20 green-back and taunted her that she would never get any good out of the remainder of his \$6000 savings which he had just taken from his trunk. State police ended a three day search by the discovery of the money, partially burned, in a tobacco can. The Treasury Department will be asked to retrace the money.