

SHOULD ONE MAN DICTATE  
TO A COMMONWEALTH

Inasmuch as there are two sides to the argument as to the wisdom of giving one man in Pennsylvania the absolute power to "hire and fire" men who serve the Commonwealth in its most important relations with the people we publish the following: It is the viewpoint of the head of one of our greatest public utilities.

The Watchman has no other interest in the matter than one in common with all the people who want efficient service at the lowest rate that will maintain the companies serving us; allowing them, of course, ample earnings with which to pay reasonable dividends to their stockholders, fair wages to their employees and depreciation charges sufficient to take care of obsolescence.

Many people look upon Gov. Pinchot's proposal to put the appointment or dismissal of members of the Public Service Commission entirely in the hands of the Governor from an impersonal viewpoint. Granting that he would not abuse such power, what guarantee has he to give them that his successors in office might not.

Pennsylvania is overwhelmingly Republican. A great leader of that party once said: "They make Governors out of anything in Pennsylvania." Such a truism is not calculated to be any too reassuring to those who are not impugning Mr. Pinchot's motives so much as they are concerned about what future possibilities of destruction there might be in his plans for the present.

Let Mr. Kinnard, president of the Bell Telephone Co., of Pennsylvania, present his side of the question. The following is a copy of the letter he recently wrote to members of the Senate of Pennsylvania:

It is, in my opinion, appropriate for me to speak in the interest of the investors in and managers of this company, and its twenty-two thousand employees, as well as the millions of people of Pennsylvania whose reasonable expectation is that the present high quality of telephone service shall not be destroyed by legislative imposition.

There are a number of principal respects in which the passage of these pending bills would, altogether, not only produce this last effect but jeopardize three hundred millions of conservative telephone investment in Pennsylvania. I shall be brief in reference to each.

The proposal that members of a Fair Rate Board, although appointed with the approval of the Senate, might be removed at will by the Chief Executive would substitute for the collective judgment of the Senate in the direction of public utility regulation the dictates of administrative expediency. This appears to be neither wise nor reasonable; the matters proposed to be placed under the control of the Fair Rate Board are, in my opinion, rather too vital to be so dealt with.

The proposal that a public utility company by contract give up its constitutional rights and accept, in lieu of present value, what is termed "the prudent investment" basis for earnings, when and as the company applies for certificates of convenience in order to grow and spread, would generally result in stifled progress of public utility service. I cannot conceive of the attraction of sufficient capital to keep these services healthy and expansive if "prudent investment" would, in my opinion, require litigation over many years at enormous cost.

It is proposed that public utilities shall not be allowed to adopt rates for service until approval of the Fair Rate Board is secured. There could be no reasonable objection to this were it provided that the Board shall render its decision within a reasonable time, perhaps three or six months. But to permit the Board, wilfully or otherwise, to persist in the disallowance of rates for an interminable time, is to say that the service of public utilities shall flourish or stagnate, entirely by the sufferance of the Board. This is a possibility which fair minds do not care to contemplate.

"Recapture" has been proposed as a principle hereafter to apply in Pennsylvania, notwithstanding the fact that the Interstate Commerce Commission, after many years of experience over a wide variety of conditions, has recommended that it be abolished. I know of no quicker method to vitiate present investment and to drive away future investment in these enterprises than to adopt "recapture." Furthermore, unless the State desires to increase its own revenues by some such process, I fall to see how it enters into the question of reasonable and adequate regulation.

There is a proposal that cost of rendering each element of the service shall be the basis of the rates therefor, regardless of its relation to all other elements. This, of course, could not have been suggested by anyone familiar with service like that of the telephone. This business has grown to its present respectable dimensions in large part because growth has been encouraged by development rates and by graduations of charges which take some account of the values of the several services, both local and toll. To adopt charges based on the principle now proposed would impose rate increases where they could not be borne, and lessen other rates which are now acceptable in their relation to the rate structure as a whole. This would be chaos.

The proposal that charters and franchise rights be limited to fifty years would, in its ultimate effect, be most serious to the plain man or woman who has invested in public utility securities. It would say to him: "Your investment may be all right until 1940 or 1960 or whenever your Company's charter or franchise expires; but at that time everything

is going to be scrambled and you'll have to take your chances," which to him would not be an alluring prospect.

In several places the language of the proposed legislation discloses its unmistakable ultimate purpose to turn over the complete management of the public utilities to the suggested Fair Rate Board—financing, construction, expenditures, rates, service and everything else. I may, perhaps, be excused in believing that such service will fare better in the hands of company management. If the public wants to experience the virtual effect of government ownership, here is an opportunity. But, because I believe they do not, I urge your close consideration of the foregoing, and emphasize my strong conviction that the proposals referred to are hostile to the interests of Pennsylvania and its people.

PUBLIC CHANGES  
IN COAL NEEDS

Buckwheat coal, considered waste and sold very cheaply, has today become, along with pea, the most popular of the anthracite sizes, recent market surveys indicated.

The aristocracy of the larger sizes, chestnut, stove and broken grades, has been broken and no longer does the demand for them lead the trade, it was shown.

Many of the operators are running the larger size coal back through the breakers again and turning out the smaller sizes almost exclusively. Several breakers are being run as washeries in order to keep pace with the demand.

During recent years heating engineers have perfected furnaces and heating plants that utilize efficiently the coal sizes that were once considered a loss on the market. Smaller grates and forced drafts have been responsible for the change and the decrease in the demand for the larger sizes, it was said.

Formerly the operators sold pea and buckwheat at a loss concentrating on high prices of the large coal to carry the burden of making mining profitable.

With the announcement of spring prices it was noticed that for the first time in years the prices of pea, buckwheat and other steam sizes had been increased. In spite of the rise, the demand for the small sizes continued to be as brisk as before.

The increase in price from the consumers' point of view meant that homes burning the large sizes and those using the smaller sizes shared alike in making mining show a profit. However to the operators it meant profits from a source heretofore considered practically unusable.

PERFECTS TRAP TO  
SECURE LIVE DEER.

Although game commission officials were able in recent years to successfully design traps for taking beavers and bears alive, it was only recently that their painstaking efforts and experiments were successfully rewarded in designing a trap for taking live deer. According to H. H. Groinger, chief of the bureau of predatory animals, a new type trap has been designed by the commission's trappers and recently four deer were caught in seven nights in the Mifflin county section. The new trap is 12 feet long, 3½ feet wide and 9 feet high, and is constructed of heavy poultry wire. Trap doors are placed at each end and are dropped by a trigger arrangement in the middle of the trap. The trigger is set off by the deer coming in contact with two wires which are placed over corn and apples used as bait. On all sides of the trap are rolled curtains which drop when the trap is sprung, rendering the interior dark. The dropping of the curtain causes the deer to become quiet and it is not as apt to make a fuss or injure itself until it can be transferred to the shipping crate.

EXPECT HIGH MARK  
IN PHEASANT EGGS.

Pheasant eggs are being laid at a high rate at the State Game Farms, the number so far produced exceeding 10,000. At this rate the 60,000 to 70,000 eggs expected by the Commission will be produced, officers said. It is planned to furnish the sportsmen and interested farmers with about 50,000 eggs and Game Refuge Keepers with about 12,000. Some eggs will be hatched at the farms. Over 600 wild turkey eggs have been produced at the turkey farm. At this farm it is hoped to secure about 2500 eggs this season. Due to the tendency of the female turkey to secrete her nest, it is very difficult for the game farmer to locate them in many instances.

Inasmuch as it is becoming more difficult each year to secure bobwhite quail in the open market, the Game Commission may experiment with the propagation of these birds on a small scale. Weather conditions in the southwest have made it almost impossible for shippers to secure any birds at all.

FOUNDER OF MOTHER'S DAY  
DEPLORES ITS EXPLOITATION

The founder of Mother's day deplored some of the ways in which she said it has been exploited.

Miss Anna Jarvis, for whom Thomas Heflin introduced a Mother's day resolution when he was Representative from Alabama in 1914.

"They say a million dollar's worth of flowers are sold for this day. I never thought it would mean that. "But even stranger than commercialization by tradesmen is that the public has allowed professional welfare workers to exploit its sentiment for motherhood in a manner of which I never dreamed. I am more than amazed; I am dismayed. "I deplore particularly that committees of prominent men and women have commercialized this day in the name of needy mothers."

—Subscribe for the Watchman

I SMELL SMOKE

Half-past three in the morning. Mr. John Doe, asleep on the top floor of his suburban home, is partially aroused, then sits up with a jerk. Smoke! He leaps out of bed and in two jumps is across the floor. He yanks open the door. Poof. Mr. Doe is done for. What happened? Well, Mr. Doe did what thousands of others have done—he inhaled air heated to a temperature around 700 degrees. Though the fire that heated the air was 35 feet below, it killed him.

That blaze broke out in the cellar. The cellar door was, of course, tightly built. The flames ate their way through it. Pent-up until now, this out-increased their fury. Smoke and intense heat poured into the ground-floor hall. With a swish they were sucked into the open stair well, and in the next moment a solid column of heat was pushing against the hall ceiling on the top floor. Right at that moment Mr. Doe jerked open his door, and since his windows were open, creating a perfect draft, the heat whipped through his door like a streak of lightning.

This may all sound unreal, but it is exactly what causes more fire than any other single happening. I've counted 13 bodies in one upstairs room, all dead without a burn. So you can see why experienced firemen, when they roll up to a blaze in a dwelling, throw anxious eyes to the top floor, even though the fire may be plainly confined to the cellar.

If you are ever caught in this predicament, never open that door until you have felt it with your foot hand and found it cool. If it is hot, make for an open window immediately. If the height is such that you can get out safely go. If not, yell for help. As long as that door is closed behind you, the time you can safely wait for rescue will be prolonged. If it is open, your chances are pretty thin.

Twenty-eight people die every day from fire in this country. Most of them die in their homes. Every two minutes of day and night a home burns somewhere in the United States. To my mind the curse of this country is its poorly built houses with deadly open stair wells; with flimsy ground floors that let a cellular fire loose in 15 minutes; with defective chimneys on unsound foundations; with furnaces built close to wooden partitions; with tinder-box roofs; with cheap lath-and-plaster walls and no fire stops between floors to prevent flames from racing through their entire area.

Our failure as home builders seems to be that we would rather have a sun porch than a fire-stopped cellar; or a cute little breakfast nook instead of a fire resisting door. But having been a fireman for 43 years, those dead bodies on the top floor always impress me more than the handsome orchid-and-green bathroom that we saw when we went through on the overhaul.

DOCTOR CLAIMS SURGICAL  
CURE FOR ALCOHOLICS

Draining out superfluous brain fluid is a new surgical cure for chronic alcoholics, offered by Dr. Edward Spencer Cowles, of the Park Avenue hospital.

In his article in the current number of the Medical Journal and Record, Dr. Cowles advances the theory about the cause and cure of incorrigible desire for alcoholic drinks:

"In case of the alcoholics there is an irritation set up in the nervous system that drives them to drinking. The cause of this irritation is a pressure created upon the brain by the overflow of intracranial fluid. Some irritation in the covering of the brain increases this fluid output.

"By a simple operation the excess fluid can be drained out. When the irritation is thus removed, the brain pressure becomes normal. The globulin and albumin becomes normal in the spinal fluid. And the patients entirely change. They no longer have the same impulses toward drinking and irrational behavior. They experience a change of character."

Neither preaching, education, exercise of will, nor any other similar measure can permanently make a sober person of a chronic alcoholic. The craving for drink passes off only when the physiological cause is removed, the article says.

Certain persons have brain cells that become irritable under the influence of alcohol. For these types drinking is dangerous. Others might safely indulge in moderate drinking, according to Dr. Cowles. Dr. Cowles was assisted in his work by a number of prominent surgeons, including Dr. George Kirby of the Psychiatric Institute.

WARM EARTH

The earth is growing slowly warmer and drier, as it was many thousands of years ago during the interglacial periods of relatively recent geologic history, according to reports by Professor P. L. Mercanton of the University of Lausanne. Professor Mercanton, head of the scientific committee which has recorded the advance and retreat of glaciers since 1881, bases his statement on the fact that the glaciers of the Swiss Alps have been retreating for several years.

The report shows that the conditions of 102 glaciers have been observed in 1929 and of these 79 have been found steadily retreating or shrinking. The other 23 glaciers, studied during the year, show stationary conditions or only minute advances.

Alpine weather stations, during this year and last, have reported that snows have been far less than normal and that there have been, as a result of the warmth, an increased number of accidents to climbers, due to rocks falling out of the loosened snow. In normal times the snow covers up the rocks and holds them firmly in position.

NAVY PLAYS WAR GAME  
DOWN AT CANAL ZONE

Late in February the United States Navy played its great annual game of naval warfare. This year the war game was concerned with the imaginary defense of the Panama Canal and an imaginary Nicaragua Canal, such as may some day be built, against attacking forces.

The two sides were named the "Whites" and the "Blacks." The highest officers of the navy, without of course causing a single shot to be fired or sinking a single vessel, were engaged in the game of trying to outwit their opponents. War vessels of all types sped here and there, in accordance with the rules of the game. In the air above them the navy dirigible, the Los Angeles, and numerous naval airplanes participated in the maneuvers.

There were, according to naval experts, two main results of this mimic warfare:

1. Lighter-than-air aircraft were found in many ways more useful than heavier-than-air craft. In other words, the Los Angeles justified itself. For this reason the Navy Department is expected to recommend definitely the construction of the ZRS-5, the second of the new dirigibles planned for the navy. The first one, the ZRS-4, is now being built at Akron, Ohio. It will be the largest of all dirigibles and will cost \$5,375,000.

2. Battleships rather than cruisers, destroyers and other smaller vessels are pronounced the backbone of the navy. The reason for this decision is the fact that they are the only ships that can "take as well as give punishment." Thus the time-honored standard means of naval defense is justified. Much the same situation exists in land warfare, for it is commonly claimed by military experts that the infantry is the backbone of the army. In spite of the great value of the artillery (cannon), cavalry and aircraft, it is the foot soldiers in any army that constitute its greatest strength.

Mistress—I'm glad to hear you will be staying on with me after you're married. Do I know the lucky man?

Maid—Oh, yes ma'am. It's your son!

WOMAN ORIGINATED  
CHRISTMAS SEAL

The Red Cross Christmas seal was introduced in the year 1907 by Miss Emily Bissell, Secretary of the Delaware Red Cross at Washington. But Jacob A. Riis, the social reformer and author, was responsible for its adoption.

An article by Mr. Riis in the Outlook in 1907 on Christmas stamps and seals and how they had been sold in Denmark for the support of a children's hospital, gave Miss Bissell her idea. She accordingly appeared before the central committee with a stamp bearing a red cross and the words "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year," which that chapter desired to sell for the benefit of anti-tuberculosis work. Her suggestion was adopted, and by this method she raised \$1,000 toward paying for the site of the first tuberculosis sanitarium in Delaware—Hope farm.

The nation-wide sale of seals was thereafter sponsored as a means of raising funds and as an educational device by the Red Cross. The distribution is now, however, in the hands of the National Tuberculosis association and its many state and local branches, and the double barred cross which appears on the Christmas seals is the symbol of that organization.

SLEEP WHILE YOU RIDE  
WITH NEW HEAD REST.

So that motorists may travel in comfort, sleeping while riding if they desire, M. A. Montenegro, of Tampa, Fla., has devised a head rest for use in autos. Straps suspend the rest from crosspieces in a car's top. The device is equipped with "ear flaps" to prevent the noise of travel disturbing the sleeper.

Shocks and jars of rough roads are eliminated by its elasticity. A head rest for every passenger may be fitted in any car with a top. They are expected to prove a convenience for bus passengers and motor tourists on long runs.

Fonda Love—Suppose I should steal a kiss?

Miss Pert—I defy you.

Fonda Love—And suppose I should steal two or three?

Miss Pert—I should keep on defying you.

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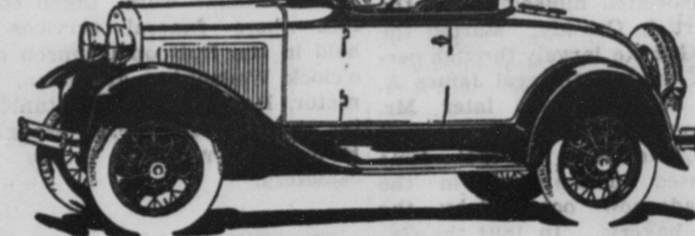
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