

The paper that P. Gray Meek edited and published for fifty-seven years and now published by his Estate at the Watchman Printing House, Bellefonte, Pa.

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BELLEFONTE, PA., DECEMBER 18, 1931.

THE EXTRA SESSION DEBACLE.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania has been in special session six weeks and the problem of unemployment relief for which it was called is no nearer a solution than it was the day the body assembled in Harrisburg.

At the time the Governor announced his intention of calling an extra session the Watchman expressed the opinion that such a course would "prove a futile gesture, resulting either in exactly nothing or in providing some measure of relief that would come too late to be of any substantial value."

Both bodies adjourned Wednesday until Monday, December 28, after having passed the Talbot bill which appropriates \$10,000,000 directly from the State Treasury to the poor districts of the State.

Inasmuch as the Attorney General advised the Legislature that the Talbot bill is unconstitutional it is to be expected that the Governor will veto it. If he does there might be an attempt to pass it over his head and with that done the probabilities are the Legislature will adjourn, sine die, and go home, leaving its only major piece of legislation to be kicked around in the courts until summer is here again and the need of relief not so pressing.

It is a deplorable state of affairs. Aside from the fact that nearly four hundred thousand dollars, the estimated cost of the extra session, will have been utterly wasted there is the spectacle of a bull-headed Governor and a political minded General Assembly having been unable to submerge the personal equation in politics long enough to enact legislation for the public welfare.

While the Watchman has never acquiesced in the theory that the problem at hand is one that can be cured by either Federal or State provided relief it is non-the-less disheartening to realize that when it comes to the acid test factional advantage, rather than the welfare of the ten million people in Pennsylvania, is the balance of power in the State's government.

EMBARRASSING THE ORGANIZATION.

John M. Hemphill, recent candidate of the Democratic and Liberal parties for Governor of Pennsylvania, has announced that he favors the nomination of Governor Ritchie, of Maryland, as our party's nominee for President.

Mr. Hemphill made no pretense of being able to deliver anything more than his own support to the Ritchie candidacy. His statement contained no intimation that he carries a bloc of Pennsylvania delegates around in his vest pocket.

Much water will go over the dam before Pennsylvania selects her delegates to the next national convention. If we diagnose the present thought of the rural Democracy of the State properly we believe it is more centered on making a Democrat the next President than on just who that Democrat shall be.

The party has a wealth of splendid possibilities, the opportunity to elect one of them is most promising, yet there are so many collateral elements to be considered that failure to properly appraise them might destroy what now seems to be the best chance we have had since 1912.

As we have said, rural Pennsylvania is not thinking so much of the man as it is of the party. If its mind were to be read, however, it would be found to be thinking more of Roosevelt or Baker than of Ritchie.

It should be remembered that Pennsylvania will have 72 or 76 delegates in the next national convention. As a unit they will be a potential factor. Divided, they will play an inconsequential part in naming the candidate.

All the high priced specialists and the high brow economists have been prescribing for our industrial ills for two years and more and the old marasmus is still on us. About every nostrum conceivable has been prescribed for the anemic industrial condition of the world and there is no sign of a turn for the better in the condition of the patient.

Last week the Watchman announced that there were two persons in Bellefonte who had volunteered to give ten dollars a month, for four months, to Associated Charities of Bellefonte for the relief of the needy, provided eight others would join them.

The Democrats, now in control of Congress, have made an encouraging start by their declaration that President Hoover's ideas on debt moratoriums are not to be made a party issue.



This column is to be an open forum. Everybody is invited to make use of it to express whatever opinion they may have on any subject.

Santa Claus Isn't Going to Forget Wesley.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 4, 1931. Mr. George R. Meek, Bellefonte, Penna., Dear George:

From week to week I have watched the list of "subscribers who were in arrears" dwindle from 775 to 607 in last week's issue. Since nothing is said about it this week I hope that all of the 607 have now paid up.

Being desirous of combining pleasure with business I am also enclosing \$1.00 for you to use for "Wesley's Christmas" as you have done so well in former years.

It may still be a little early to express to you my best wishes for the Holiday Season and to hope that next year will be for you and yours a most prosperous one in which there will be no "subscribers in arrears" but instead a much enlarged list of paid-up subscribers.

Very truly, HAROLD B. GARDNER

What Harold wishes for us is almost too much to hope for. However, since wishes are horses to most beggared country newspaper men we shall mount Harold's and ride to the devil of a disappointment, no doubt.—The Editor.

Edwin Markham, as Known by a Watchman Reader

New Dorp, N. Y. Dec. 13, 1931. Mr. George R. Meek, Bellefonte, Pa.

My dear Mr. Meek:—The poem in this week's issue of the Watchman by Edwin Markham "The Rights of a Man" is but one of the many poems written by this author.

Mr. Markham is a protégé of Thomas Lake Harris who was a minister in charge of an Independent Christian Congregation in the city of New York in the year 1848 and who was at a loss for a subject on which to preach at the evening service, finally choosing this one: "Suffer the little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Mr. Markham employs much the same style in all his writings as did Mr. Harris.

I have visited Mr. Markham on several occasions and value his friendship very highly. He is a man well in the eighties, well set up, with a heavy head of hair, his beard is scant, he carries himself despite his age and is one of the most interesting listeners and a delightful entertainer.

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On entering the Markham house one's first thought is a bookseller's store—no room for furnishings, all desks, work tables, and shelves filled with books reaching from floor to ceiling and under desks and in the hallways every nook piled high and the grand old author says "I can place my hand on any book I want," and so he can for he reached for one "California The Beautiful" and then from another part of the house he got two poems "The Man With The Hoe" and "The Man Of The Hour" autographed them and presented them to me.

"The Man Of The Hour" is a poem on Lincoln and was selected from among many as the best and Dr. Henry Van Dyke, of Princeton University, said of it, "Edwin Markham's Lincoln is the greatest poem ever written on the immortal martyr and the greatest that ever will be written."

Mr. Albright has a small mill located on a 75-acre tract, on which he has been following up a small cutting operation. The extension service has co-operated by marking the acres, which have been cut over as a thinning proposition with the idea of making a continuous operation.

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Anyone interested is cordially invited to attend, as the meeting will be held regardless of weather conditions.

ing poet and perhaps will be considered the greatest ever, who knows.

Returning to Mr. Harris I would like to quote from one of his books as follows: "The going from the country to the cities of countless thousands—the city—the stable of nations, and again, expediency is but another name for drift and today we look around for light, and lo,—politics found to culminate of necessity in an increased taxation, nepotism and shoddy-society with its churches and workhouses, hospitals and speakeasies, trade unions and city arabs gaping in hopeless bewilderment at the quagmires produced by state-craft, at the soul-stunting competition it cannot resist, and at a stream of discontented emigration we are powerless to control and no other country cares to welcome."

Following is a paragraph quoted from the same book and I ask that you ponder it well before you again tell your readers about your private bootlegger, Mr. Editor.

"Drink is in its very nature antagonistic to the social compact. It wars against manliness; for its first point of attack is the soul's seat of government—the human will. This it degrades while enervating it, and in weakening the will it opens up an avenue through which work evil desires, loathsome insanities, a demoralizing spirit and a bias toward filthiness which result in insensibility to the finer, more interior teachings of God in conscience."

The book from which the foregoing quotations were taken was written prior to 1893 and as things stand today I think it was good prophesy.

Respectfully, WILLIAM H. FIELDING

Mr. Fielding has long been identified with the police department of New York city, though we think he now retired, after a record for most distinguished service.

Mr. Miller Sets Us Back Chester, Pa., Dec. 5, 1931.

Dear Mr. Meek: I am enclosing a check for \$5.00. Subtract one more from your delinquent list and add "five" to your general fund.

Yours, S. C. MILLER

Mr. Miller is No. 190 and there are 585 left, after subtracting him. His remittance puts us in a hole, however, because it is gone already, and inasmuch as it paid him nearly two years in advance we have to work that long before we can get out of the red.

TO DEMONSTRATE PROPER OPERATION OF SAW MILLS. Saw mill operators and interested timber owners in Centre county have been invited to attend an all day saw mill demonstration on the farm of Alfred Albright, at Pennsylvania Furnace, on Tuesday, December 22nd, according to county agent R. C. Blaney.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIZE WINNERS IN P. R. R. AID CAMPAIGN.

During the past two or three months an unemployment aid campaign was conducted by P. R. R. employees in the central district of Pennsylvania in an effort to raise a fund for the support of the employees who have been out of work for some time.

1st prize, a general electric refrigerator, Fronata Hdantor, of Renovo.

2nd prize, Easy electric washer, R. M. Gerber, Williamsport.

3rd prize, Philco 11-tube radio, Ed Schriener, of Williamsport.

4th prize, Hoover sweeper, C. K. Snyder, Northumberland.

5th prize, Winchester shot gun and rifle, Francis Rider, of Lock Haven.

6th prize, Ladies or gents 21 jewel magnetic watch, R. R. Stover, of McElhattan.

7th prize, electric clock, Dick Shoff, of Osceola Mills.

8th prize, comfort chair, G. B. VanKirk, Northumberland.

The prizes will be distributed as soon as the committee is informed as to whom and where they are to be sent.

Walkover shoes, our entire stock, all to go at one price, \$3.85, during the Fauble great anniversary sale.

FIFTY YEARS AGO IN CENTRE COUNTY.

Items taken from the Watchman issue of December 23, 1881.

Married.—On November 24, 1881, by the Rev. Zeigler, of Snow Shoe Intersection, James B. Noll and Mary E. Charles, both of Central City, Pa.

—There are several cases of small pox in Altoona.

—The Centre county bank building is under roof.

—Michael Strohm has been appointed post-master at Centre Hill.

—William R. Jenkins, of the firm of W. P. Duncan & Co., has purchased the handsome brick residence on east Linn street built by Dr. Hayes and now ready for occupancy.

—The weather in this section is wet and gloomy, but we infer that it is just the sort the farmers who are short of water want.

—Col. Bob Duncan and Henry Krumrine Esq., of Spring Mills, were in town on Wednesday and Mr. Krumrine informed us that he has sold his grain house in that place to William Rearick.

—Mr. George B. Weaver, of this place, and three other gallant hunters have returned from their hunting trip with twelve deer, an average of three a piece.

—George W. Rodgers has been selected as the man who will be chief engineer at the new nail works. He will have charge of the three engines and all the boilers in the plant.

—Wheat is 1.30; corn .75, oats .50, barley .75, potatoes 1.25, eggs .25, butter .35, hams .16, bacon .10.

General Beaver is being put forward as a possible Republican candidate for Governor. This possibility brings to mind that Centre county seems to be the cradle of Governors.

In 1823 Andrew Gregg, grandfather of ex-Governor Curtin was the unsuccessful Federal party candidate for Governor against Shultz.

In 1847 Gen. James Irwin was the unsuccessful Whig candidate against Shunk. John Bigler was one of the early day editors of Bellefonte and his brother William learned the printing trade with him here.

In 1849 John went to California and in 1851 was elected Governor of that State. His brother William moved to Clearfield to become an editor and lumberman.

In 1851, just a month after his brother was elected Governor of Pennsylvania, William F. Packer, who was elected Governor of Pennsylvania in 1857 was born only a little distance from Bellefonte, in Centre county.

Andrew G. Curtin, still residing here, was elected Governor in 1860 and side were both on the Supreme court Federal posts.

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A HODGE-PODGE OF NEWSY INCIDENTS.

If I were possessed of King Midas' wealth, Had trainloads of trinkets and toys, I'd sally me forth on Christmas eve, And take cheer to the girls and boys.

On one of the cold evenings, during the past week, a little boy and girl stood with noses close to one of the shop windows in Bellefonte in which was displayed an elaborate assortment of Christmas toys.

They were both thinly clad and shivering from the icy blasts of the winter wind. Neither one spoke a word; and just then words were not necessary.

The expression on their little pinched faces as their eyes gloat-ed over the coveted treasures on display inside was one of mixed rapture and woefulness. It was easy to picture the delight just one of the bright, new toys would bring to those two children on Christmas morn and at the same time see in their eyes the hopelessness of any such anticipated joy. Yes,

If I were Santa Claus I'd hunt such girls and boys, And I would make them happy kids With clothes and dolls and toys.

Walking along the street, last Thursday evening, our attention was attracted to two girls, yet in their teens, standing before a specialty shop window in which was displayed a fine line of homey articles suitable for gifts for both girls of their age and women of more sedate years.

They were speculating on what to buy for friends of their own age when one of them remarked that she was pining her list down to the bone, this year, because she wanted to spend most of her allowance on clothes for herself.

She didn't look as if she was in need of clothing of any kind but in these times of depression probably had the "me for safety first" feeling. And then we thought

If I were Santa Claus Trimmed out so nice and neat, I'd visit every lowly home To see if they'd 'nough to eat

Of course we know that the Associated Charities of Bellefonte will do the utmost possible to take care of every man, woman and child in need, but they can't do it on good intentions. It takes money to buy clothing, food and fuel, and the amount set by the executive committee, \$3000, seems a paltry sum to take care of the families of all those who have had no work for weeks and no immediate prospect of any during the winter.

Probably ninety per cent of these people will make known their needs through an appeal for aid, but the other ten per cent will be the ones hard to reach. They are too honest to steal and have too much false pride to beg or appeal for help, and unless friends who are informed of their plight come forth in their behalf they will suffer in silence, even if it means the utmost privation, and possible sickness and death. For these there might be a cheerless Christmas unless some one comes to their aid. Again,

If I were Santa Claus I'd bring good cheer and sweet relief, To all God's children I could find Whose hearts are bowed with grief.

Poverty, privation and hunger are physical discomforts that bear down heavily on the fortitude of all those so unfortunately situated, but a heart bowed down with grief and sorrow at this festive time of year is deserving of deep and thoughtful consideration. No man or woman is able to read the innermost secrets of the hearts of others, and though they perform their daily tasks in a matter of fact way it might simply be a shield to cover a grief almost overwhelming in its intensity. To such as these

A warm hand-clasp And a winning smile, From some one kind and true, A bit of love And a little kiss From some one, who might be you.

Wouldn't that be a long way toward restoring the peace of mind and easing the heartache of all such so that they can enter into the spirit of Christmastide with a cheerfulness befitting the occasion and not with a heart bowed down with suffering and utter desolation. And finally,

If I were Santa Claus There's nothing I would leave undone, No place I'd miss, no heart I'd spurn, To bring Christmas joy to every one.

Unfortunately I'm not King Midas, neither am I Santa Claus, but if good wishes will bring joy and comfort to every man, woman and child in Centre county, and you hang up your stockings on Christmas eve you will find it overflowing with the happiness I wish for you all on Christmas day. And may all the dark clouds of despair and depression which have so persistently hovered around us all during 1931 be blown away by the winds of a most successful and happy New Year—1932.

While the rains of the past week have not noticeably affected Spring creek they have started a small flow of water in a number of mountain streams which have been completely dry for several months, and have also replenished the cistern water supply on farms throughout the county.