Democratic Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., February 26, 1932.

DOLLAR WORTH TEN CENTS MORE THAN A YEAR AGO

The dollar is worth nearly ten cents more than it was a year ago in Pennsylvania's three largest cities.

A survey of the Department of Labor revealed the cost of living has dropped 9.3 per cent. in Pittsburgh and Scranton and 8.5 per cent. in Philadelphia from what it was a year ago in those places. The figures are as of last month.

In the six months between June, 1931, and December, Pittsburgh experienced the largest drop in the main items of household expense. Three prices dropped 3.6 per cent., while in Philadelphia the decline amounted to 3.1 and in Scranton to 3 per cent.

During the period from June, 1920 to December, 1931, the reductions were 29.9 per cent. in Pittsburgh, 29.5 in Philadelphia and 28.4 in Scranton.

In all but the last set of figures, the declines in the three Pennsylvania municipalities were approximately the same as the average for 32 principal cities of the nation.

The national average decline for the year between December, 1930 and last month was 9.3 per cent., the same as that recorded in Pittsburgh and Scranton and slightly greater than the Philadelphia percentage.

For the six month period the national figure was three per cent., the same as in Scranton but less marked than the decline in the other two cities. The 32.7 per cent. reduction for the time between 1920 and last December was greater than the decline in any of the three cities.

On the basis of prices of December, 1914, the cost of living in Philadelphia is still 50.5 per cent. above pre-war costs. That figure is made up of an increase of 17 per cent. in food, 42 in clothing, 40.3 in rent, 91.7 in fuel and light, 54.1 in house furnishings, and 117.6 in miscellaneous items.

In Pttsburgh the composite prices of today are only 4.5 per cent higher than in Decmber, 1917. The Scranton increase for the same period is 8.4 per cent.

Both cities are getting food and clothing cheaper than they did in 1917, Pittsburgh's food bill being 29.2 per cent. less and Scranton's, 22.8 per cent. less. In Pittsburgh the decline in clothing prices amounted to 13.3 and in Scranton to 7.1 per cent. Rent in Pittsburgh is still 52.3 per cent. higher, fuel and light, 83.8 and miscellaneous items cost 45.6 per cent. more.

For the same things, Scranton is paying 51.8, 69.5 and 55.2 per cent. more respectively, while house furnishings also cost 7.3 per cent. more than they did in 1917.

STATE ALUMNI IN COUNTY TO ORGANIZE A CLUB

The new athletic policy of the college will be fully explained by speakers at the organization meeting of Centre County alumni of the Pennsylvania State College called for Monday evening, February 29, at 8 o'clock in the little theatre in "Old Main," at State College.

Developments in recent months have brought to the attention of athletic officials at the college the fact that a few former students can express familiarity with all phases of the "athletics for all" program that has been adopted over the past five years. For this reason the committee in charge of the meeting called primarily for organization of a Penn State Club of Centre County, decided that the chief topic for discussion would be the athletic situation.

The athletic program as it now stands will be covered by R. A. Warnock, dean of men at the college and a member of the college athletic board of control and of the College Senate committee on athletics. Early history of the present program dates back to the time when George R. Meek, of Bellefonte, was the first graduate manager, and he and R. H. Smith, who held that office for many years, will tell of events leading up to the present program. Others will speak informally, and a feature of the gathering will be an alumni dinner in the "Old Main" sandwich shop at 6:30 prior to the meeting in the little theatre.

WHAT IS "BIMETALISM?"

A.—It is the name of that theory of money that is based upon both gold and silver as standards, the value and ratio of these metals being fixed by law and international agreement.

Q.—What salary did George Washington receive as the President of the United States? In what administrations has the salary of the President been increased?

A.—George Washington declined to accept a salary while he was President of the United States, but in order not to establish a precedent, he accepted of the $25,000 appropriated enough to cover his expenses. The salary of the President remained at $25,000 until Grant's second term (March 3, 1873), when it was increased to $50,000; in the second session of the Sixtieth Congress the salary was fixed at $75,000, during the administration of President Taft The salary at present is $75,000 a year with an allowance for traveling expenses.

Q.—What is the total income of the people of the United States?

A.—For the year 1929 (preliminary estimate), the National Bureau of Economic Research estimated that the total realized income of the people of the United States was $84,000,000,000.

TEN-YEAR EDUCATION PLAN WORKED OUT IN DETAIL.

Details of the 10-year educational plan being worked out by the State department of education were presented to school directors of the State at their annual convention in Harrisburg, February 2-4.

Principal speakers at the convention were Dr. J. N. Rule, State superintendent of public instruction, Dr. LeRoy King, of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. J. L. Eisenberg, president of Slippery Rock teachers' college, Congressman Clyde N. Kelly, Dr. C. Wallace Petty, Pittsburgh.

Features of the new system are a re-adjustment of school tax system, redistricting of the school districts, and increasing advantages to children in the rural districts with decreased cost.

The tax situation has not yet been worked out in detail, and it is recognized that it presents some complex feaures, but under the plan in its present state it is thought possible to work out a system where a uniform tax levy of five mills for school purposes would take care of the situation, with the State standing any cost above what that millage would return.

The redistricting would create larger districts with a larger unit of administration, with increased powers, tending toward decentralization of the present system, made absolutely necessary to bring the level of education throughout the State to the point it now enjoys.

There would be increased opportunity for rural school children, giving them access to facilities and curriculum now enjoyed only by larger schools and doing so without having over a half-hour haul for any of the children. This plan would work out in all communities except the most remote and sparsely settled ones, where the smaller schools would have to be maintained.

It is not the object of the department to spend more money, but in this connection it was pointed out to the directors that only one per cept of all the money spent for educational purposes in Pennsylvania goes for the upkeep of the department. Ten years ago it required ten per cent.

Comparing Pennsylvania with other States, the following figures are interesting: Connecticut, 9 per cent; Massachusetts 4¼ per cent; New York, 1.6 per cent; Ohio 10 per cent; Virginia 4 per cent.

There are 2300 schools in the fourth class districts of the State. Half the children in the State are in the fourth class districts.

The poorest district in the State has a valuation as low as $7,000 back of each teacher while in the richest district there is a valuation of $2,300,000 back of each teacher.

Thirteen hundred and nineteen of the districts out of the 2300 are unable to offer opportunity to its children and there are eighteen districts without a teacher, and 536 with four or less teachers.

Under the proposed plan the taxpayers would save from eight to ten million dollars in operating expenses.

The high cost for collection of taxes came in for good lacing. It costs school districts of the fourth class an average of $4 to collect $100 in taxes, as against 10 cents in first class districts such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, where there is a central office for such taxes to be paid.

In Pennsylvania the local districts are carrying 85 per cent of the burden of schools. In North Carolina the department carries 100 per cent of the burden, in Florida 75 per cent, in Texas and New York 50 per cent.

Education for the biennium in our public schools costs $63,000,000 and in the schools for higher education $30,000,000.

Another feature brought out was that the farmer spends 13.6 per cent of his returns for taxes, while other occupations in the State spend 9 per cent, showing some of the inequalization existing under the present system.

PENNSYLVANIA RETAINS LEADING POSITION

Despite depression and drought, one or both of which have been encountered on every farm in the Commonwealth during the past two years, the agricultural industry of Pennsylvania continued in the forefront when compared to other States, the bureau of statistics and information, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, reports.

Pennsylvania farmers produced in 1931 the most valuable potato crop of any State in the Union. Only three States produced more valuable apple crops and only two States, more valuable hay crops.

Estimates on the production of principal crops show that Pennsylvania has regained first place in buckwheat production and has retained leading position in raising cigar-filler tobacco.

The rank of Pennsylvania among all States in 1931 production of various crops is as follows:

First in cigar-filler tobacco.
First in buckwheat.
Fourth in potatoes (first in value.)
Fourth in grapes.
Fifth in total apple crop (fourth in value).
Fifth in maple products.
Sixth in tame hay (third in value.)
Seventh in commercial apples, peaches, and rye.
Tenth in winter wheat and pears.
Twelfth in corn.
Thirteenth in oats.

In the farm value of the 22 principal field crops, Pennsylvania ranks eleventh.

Blaisdell: "The New Year is always represented by a lusty infant."

Newlywed: "They overdid it in my case."

Blaisdell: "How so?"

Newlywed: "Mine was represented by twins!"

DIVORCE LAWS VARY WIDELY IN STATES

There are as many sepcifications for cutting the marital knot as there are States in the Union.

Lawmakers, it would appear from a survey made by the California legislative bureau, do not see alike when it comes to the question of divorce. The requirements, as a rule, are many and varied.

In Nevada, where the divorce business is considered in the light of a major industry, a marriage may be dissolved for anyone who has lived in the State six weeks. As contrasted to this, South Carolina recognizes no such thing as divorce except by special legislative act in the individual case.

In Tennessee, proceedings may be based on any one of 13 grounds, while New York and the District of Columbia recognize only a charge of infidelity, and in the latter the defendant may never remarry. In Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Tennessee, the defendant may not marry the correspondent until after the death of the plaintiff—an arrangement, incidentally, which puts a premium on the disappearance of the innocent party.

While these points would indicate that the disagreement over divorce details is general, the survey points out that the States do agree on certain matters.

With only a few noticeable exceptions, the States agree that in certain types of divorce cases the parties must have resided in the State for at least one year.

The exceptions range from Nevada, with its six weeks' law, and Idaho asking a three months' stay, to Connecticut, which requires a residence of three years, and Massachusetts which recognizes only those who have lived in the State five years.

The survey indicates there is a definite concensus concerning causes for divorces as outlined in the statutes. Thirty-even States have at least seven grounds, and only four, in addition to the District of Columbia, recognize less than five.

Eleven States apparently have no sympathy for the defendant by setting up restrictions concerning the right to remarry which do not apply to the plaintiff.

COUNTIES SPONSOR SPRING FIELD DAY

A recent study made by the department of public instruction shows that thirty-one counties sponsor a spring field day. These field days are under the supervision of the county superintendent and his staff. The competition offered is largely of an athletic nature, although many counties have competition in scholastic events as well. Preliminary contests are held in many of the school districts to determine who shall represent the district at the field day.

The athletic events include the short dashes, longer runs, various types of jumping, chinning the bar, baseball and basketball throwing for accuracy and distance, and relay races. Special events include marble tournaments, athletic badge tests, Boy Scout tests, Maypole dances and group games.

Scholastic competition includes spelling, English, declamation, geography, history, arithmetic, algebra, penmanship, story telling, art, Latin, vocal and instrumental music, commercial subjects and vocational subjects.

Approximately 55,000 pupils take part in the preliminary tryouts and about 18,000 represent their schools in the county finals. Attempts are being made in a number of counties to revise the program to include an even greater number of pupils.

OLD AGE PENSIONS

The movement for old age pensions under some system of State supervision, or directly by the States with funds raised by taxation, is growing strongly all over the United States. The American Association for Old Age Security, which is a group of philanthropic-minded people trying to advance the cause of old age pensions, reports that out of 1,345 newspapers which have editorially discussed the subject in the past two years, more than a thousand are definitely in favor of the movement.

The old-fashioned "poorhouse," with its stigma of pauperism, has been abolished in seventeen States where old age pension systems are in effect. It is no disgrace for old folk who have worked hard all their lives to take help from the social group which has benefitted by their labors. The best of all old-age pension systems for wage-earners would be one in which employers and worker alike contribute to an insurance fund to be available whenever either illness, accident or age removes the worker from the ranks of active industry. But it would take a great many years to realize the full effect of such a plan, even if it were put into universal effect at once. And even it might not reach all of the aged people.

Experience in the States where old age pensions have been adpoted is that it is a more economical way of taking care of the aged poor than the poorhouse used to be. It certainly seems to be more in harmony with our civilized social conscience than the old system of making "paupers" of these unfortunates.

AND SHE DID

Mother—"What do you mean—sitting on that young man's lap!"

Daughter—"Why mother, you told me to!"

Mother—"I told you? Why I did nothing of the sort!"

Daughter—"You did, too! You said if he tried to get fresh I was to sit on him!"

Persian "Music" Apt to Grate on Western Ears

Persia's pictorial and decorative art was widely published at an exhibition recently held in London. But beside this art, there is a good deal of music in Persia. The Persian orchestra usually consists of a zither, played with wooden sticks, a very ancient and primitive style of guitar, made of mulberry wood, with only three strings, played with a bone "plectrum," viols that look like mandolins, a pipe, and a horn, a large drum, and two small ones on the same principle as our kettle drums.

The viols are made out of pumpkins strengthened with ribs of wood, ivory and bits of metal, while each has a long spike to rest on the ground, so that the instrument is played like the violoncello. The noise of such an orchestra is terrific, especially when "singers," who shriek at the top of their voices, join in. But as the only type of western music that has been introduced is that of inferior brass bands, the Persians usually prefer the native music to that which is imported.

Perkins Quick to See Value of Imagination

Perkins was feeling queer; he couldn't get on with his work; he couldn't do anything. So he decided to see his doctor.

"I don't feel up to the mark," he said to the man of medicine. "Can you give me a tonic?"

The doctor surveyed him for a moment or two, and, rising from his chair, remarked: "Has it ever occurred to you that there's a great deal in imagination, Mr. Perkins?"

"Certainly, doctor."

"Then imagine there's nothing the matter with you. Come back in a week and let me know how you feel!"

The patient went, doctored himself, and returned at the appointed time

"Ah," said the doctor. "You are feeling better. Didn't I tell you there's a great deal in imagination?"

"That's true," said Perkins. "What is your charge?"

"One guinea," said the doctor.

"Well, imagine you've got it," said Perkins.—London Tit-Bits.

Toll of Horseshoes

The levying of horseshoes from famous riders has been long a custom at Oakham, in Rutlandshire, England. These shoes have been levied as tribute from famous men who have ridden through the town, for no visitor of high rank was formerly permitted to enter unless he paid a toll of one horseshoe. The shoes, many of them large and ornamental, now hang in the county hall, which was originally the banqueting hall of the castle. It seems that the manorial rights of the castle were once held by the count of Derby, who was official farrier to William the Conquerer. His descendants still have six black horseshoes on a silver ground in their arms.

Penny Theater Actor

The Penny theater actor's life must indeed have been a wretched one. Like the strolling player of Shakespeare's time, his wardrobe was a mass of rags and his appearance starvation personified. Tenpence a night was thought a fair wage for taking part in six or seven successive performances, while seven shillings a week was considered high remuneration. Yet the poor performer frequently found himself in arrears of even this inconsiderable salary, and a public dispute would be carried on between actor and proprietor while the whole performance was held up.—Brian FitzGerald in the London Saturday Review.

Marked Special Days

"Red-letter days," a term now extended to any gala occasion of memorable day, originally was an ecclesiastical term used to characterize the more important festivals and saints' days of the church, which appear in red letters in the calendar, wrote William S. Walsh in "Curiosities of Popular Customs."

In ordinary prayer books both of the English and the Roman church, where two colors are not used in the printing, these days are characterized by italics or Gothic capitals and the black-letter days or minor festivals by lower-case Roman type.

Convincing Attorney

Years ago this happened in Atchison:

Jude Johnson and Julius Roar were arrested for stealing chickens.

Jude, who has always been a smart alec, insisted on acting as attorney for himself and Mr. Roar.

Putting Mr. Roar on the witness stand, Jude protruded his chest, struck a Napoleonic attitude, and with a deep voice asked: "Mr. Roar, will you be so kind as to tell the court and the jury where you were on the night we stole those chickens?"

The jury was out five seconds.—Atchison Globe.

"Veritable Calvados"

Less than a hundred miles by road from Paris you can find Lisieux, a very charming little city of 13,000 inhabitants, situated on the Touques river, whose old mansions and churches are known to many thousands. Lisieux is a shrine and every year thousands of pilgrims come to the little place to make their devotions to Sister Therese de l'enfant Jesus. All about the town are lovely Normandy walks and many an hour can be spent at the concerts provided.—Exchange.

WHOA, JACKIE!

A small boy, leading a donkey, passed by an army camp. A couple of soldiers wanted to have some fun with the lad.

"What are you holding on to your brother so tight for, sonny?" said one of them.

"So he won't join the army," the youngster replied, without blinking an eye.—The Baptist.

WORRYING THRU

City Cousin—"Is it true, what they say about you're having such hard times down on the farm?"

Farmer John—"Wall, all we raise goes into the cows and the chickens but the chickens pay the grocery bill and the cows keep up the radio so I guess we'll pull thru the winter."