

Evening Public Ledger
THE EVENING TELEGRAPH
PUBLIC LEDGER COMPANY
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Published daily at Public Ledger Building, Independence Square, Philadelphia.
 ATLANTIC CITY: Press-Bureau Building, 200 Metropolitan Tower, Atlantic City, N. J.
 DETROIT: 103 Ford Building, 103 Ford Building, Detroit, Mich.
 CHICAGO: 1000 Madison Building, 1000 Madison Building, Chicago, Ill.
 NEWS BUREAUS:
 WASHINGTON BUREAU: N. E. Cor. Pennsylvania Ave. and 14th St.
 NEW YORK BUREAU: 200 West Building, 200 West Building, New York, N. Y.
 LONDON BUREAU: 1000 Madison Building, 1000 Madison Building, London, Eng.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS:
 The Evening Public Ledger is served to subscribers in Philadelphia and surrounding towns at the rate of twelve (12) cents per week, payable in the advance.
 By mail to points outside of Philadelphia, in the United States, postage free, 450 cents per month. Six (6) dollars per year, payable in advance.
 To all foreign countries, \$11 dollar per month.
 Notice—Subscribers wishing address changed must give old as well as new address.

WELL, 2000 WALNUT, KEYSTONE, MAIN 3000
 27 Address of circulation in Evening Public Ledger, Independence Square, Philadelphia.

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Philadelphia, Thursday, March 20, 1919

SEEKING WHAT WE ALL WANT
 The extension of the Chamber of Commerce majority referendum from its own membership to the membership of more than a thousand other organizations is wise.

What it is necessary to do just now is to concentrate the thinking of the people upon the kind of government which they want and on the kind of a Mayor they wish to elect to give them that kind of government.
 It is estimated that the referendum will reach 100,000 citizens. No man can fill out the Chamber of Commerce's questionnaire without giving serious thought to the whole subject, and when the nominating primaries are held he will be prepared to vote for the candidates pledged to the kind of program to which he has committed himself.
 As we understand the situation, the Chamber is committed to no candidates and to no faction, but is merely seeking to create an intelligent and active public sentiment which will insist on the nomination of candidates pledged to a constructive program of good government. We have no doubt that the other organizations which it is asking to co-operate with it will gladly consent.

THE LEAGUE POLL PROGRESSES
 IF ANY ONE thinks that the people are not interested in the league of nations plan he will discover his error if he will accompany the men representing this newspaper who are making a poll of the citizens.

Virtually every citizen questioned has positive opinions on the subject. Many of them want to argue the question. They know what they think and they have reasons for their opinions, whether they favor or oppose the plan. They are eager to be recorded.
 A group of workmen in a factory could not wait until the canvassers called on them, but they bought postal cards and sent their vote in by mail.
 The significance of this widespread interest in the subject will not be lost upon the politicians. They cannot put anything over on the voters under the assumption that the public is indifferent. The public is not indifferent. It is anxious that some plan be adopted which will make war difficult and will penalize any selfish nation which attempts to disturb the peace of the world. Even those who oppose the league covenant as drafted want some kind of an international agreement to insure peace for a generation at the least.

THERE IS AND THERE ISN'T
 AN AUTHORITY answer to the question whether business in this part of the country is resuming its normal condition is afforded by the report of the investigators of the Federal Reserve Board.

The answer is that it is and it isn't. Prices of manufactured products have been reduced by 148 establishments, while ninety-three establishments have made no reductions. Labor is less restless than it was, according to the observation of 147 men, and ninety-one report no change. Seventeen men reply that there has been a reduction of wages and 228 report that wages remain unchanged. The price of raw materials has been reduced, according to the experience of 131 buyers, and eighty-nine say that there has been no reduction. Eighty-one men say that they have a satisfactory amount of orders on hand and 150 are unsatisfied with the number of orders.
 While this report seems to give no definite information, the explanation of the contradictory replies made by those interviewed would doubtless appear if the nature of the industry in which each man is engaged were disclosed. Certain industries are rapidly adjusting themselves to a peace basis and certain others find the task of readjustment slow and difficult.

HITCHCOCK AT COBLENZ
 WANDERING bands of Congressmen and nomad politicians of various types have been appearing at intervals in Europe ever since the armistice was signed. They came and went. No one seems to know what they sought or hoped. Most of them had the look of lonely strays puzzled and homesick and dispirited in an alien world.
 Frank H. Hitchcock, who used to be chairman of the Republican National Committee and also Postmaster General, seems commanding among these adventurous Americans with a new and unrecognizable significance. He landed in Coblenz recently and checked his baggage at the hotel. He is in or about

Coblenz that General Pershing is usually to be found. Is it fair to assume that Mr. Hitchcock bears a message of profoundest import to General Pershing—a message that might be disquieting to the friends of Mr. Taft if they were able to read the heart of a former chairman of the Republican National Committee?

Events that develop so swiftly nowadays under the deft manipulations of destiny make it appear that Mr. Hitchcock does actually bear a message to General Pershing. Those prophets and seers who learn and listen in Washington are already in a mood to admit what was suggested in these columns a month ago—that Mr. Taft has become the greatest Republican alive simply because he has tried to serve the country without selfish motives. Is the narrow-minded element in the party preparing to entice General Pershing into the field as a last resort in order to pit the soldier vote against Mr. Taft in 1920?

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT THE WORLD LAST MARCH 21?

Well, Then, Remembering What Has Happened Since, Is There Room for Gloom Today?

(CIVILIZATION is so anxious to attack its problems today, so eager to solve them rightly, that its self-consciousness is abnormally acute.

This sensitiveness has begotten the most fervid espousal of the most divergent remedies for the world's ills. Alleged cures are called curses in some camps, and vice versa.

Yet these lines of cleavage, particularly exemplified in the sentiment for and against a league of nations, are not fundamental. They outline, it is true, widely differing routes to a goal, but that end, whether it be Mr. Wilson's or Mr. Borah's, is essentially the same.

What every one desires—and this includes all but mad Bolsheviks and all but a small discredited group in Germany—is a world at peace and a world faithful to the principles of democracy.

In some quarters the very magnitude of the task and the clash of the workers inspire depression. Dark and menacing looms the future to those timid spirits. "Can redemption on so vast a scale be achieved?" is fearfully asked. Can it unless the law of proportions has ceased to be operative.

For the darkest danger today is luminous compared with that monster which leaped at civilization's throat exactly one year ago tomorrow. On that memorable day was launched the great German offensive—the most terrific challenge of the past to the present which time has ever revealed.

All the previous agonizing years of strife were in a sense preliminary to that grim hour. By March 21 all the material and spiritual resources involved in the struggle were lined up and crystallized at last.

The Entente was stolidized. Its membership was complete, its championship of freedom solid and unimpeachable. Its cards were on the table.

So were Germany's. Her government, "clothed in strange trappings and primitive authority," was keenly acquainted with the inventory of its resources. Russia and Rumania had fallen. Concentration on the western front of the full force of Hun arms was possible. In a thunderbolt decision by the only hope of victory, Eric Ludendorff knew this and he struck with all the power at his command. The reward for his gambler's chance hung in the balance.

The thinning of the British line, necessitated by previous French calls for fresher troops further south, the absence as yet of American soldiers in decisive numbers, the lack of a supreme unified command—all these things were vital factors in Ludendorff's favor.

From Arras to La Fere swept the torrent. Within three days General Gough's Fifth British Army was all but lost, its remnants owing their salvation to swift and gallant relief by Fayolle and his weary poilus. Amiens was evacuated as an Allied base. Apparently it was doomed. So also seemed the Channel ports and the defeat of the British presaged similar disaster for the French, with the loss of Paris as the bitter outcome of collapse.

Brief and erratic is the human memory, and yet there are probably few Americans today who would say that he fails to remember vividly and poignantly his emotions on that appalling first day of spring, 1918. Nevertheless, it may be questioned if with all of us the recollection is quite so intense as it should be.

While the war was on it seemed that peace had never been. While peace abides it is not easy to recall in its entirety the mental attitude born of the days of desperate strife.

Psychological flexibility could be very helpful now. One way to stimulate it would be picture the compression of time, to imagine that the defeat of March 21, 1918, was followed by complete victory on March 22.

It can be said that this is to attempt the grasp of the incredible. But time is strictly relative, and surely it involves no more effort today to accomplish the mental feat suggested than it did on that heart-sickening date last spring to conceive of the attainment of the "very stuff of triumph" by November 11 of the same year.

When the British bulwark wavered it appeared utterly impossible, even to the most chronic optimist, that a decision for the right could be so quickly gained. The idea of reaching the verdict within seven months was equally as extravagant as the thought of the accomplishment within twenty-four hours.

Reflection upon the miracle is in order. Not even when Alaric smote Rome was the life of mankind endangered by such basic and oppressive corruption as when Ludendorff, casting the dice for the last time, struck the British line.
 In the spiritual sense the Gothic

hordes were really not more barbaric than the degenerate Roman whom they overwhelmed. Rudimentary yet vital instincts of liberty possessed the minds of the invaders. The less of the once high-souled Roman republic such principles hardly stirred. A wondrous material civilization perished when Rome fell, but its battle with the northern hordes was not essentially between freedom and tyranny.

Such, however, more sharply drawn than ever in the world's history, was the struggle in which civilization reeled last spring. Before any lines whatever of future conduct, political or social, could be determined it was necessary that an utterly preposterous, insanely cynical, cruelly archaic doctrine should be crushed forever.

There is much fretting now, a superabundance of "viewing with alarm," an overplus of "regarding with dismay" the complexities and tangles of the present.

The world, as we pointed out above, is touchily self-conscious. It is aware, as never before, of its pitiful shortcoming. Its sufferings have made it alive to possible defects in every proffered remedy.

Disregarding the comparatively small coterie of absurdly transparent obstructionists who are playing an unclean political game, there are earnest seekers after truth whom the pale cast of sickly thought makes cowardly. Speculation and projective inquiry are commendable processes, but they should be undertaken with the mental apparatus fully equipped. Reckoning upon the future can become excessively wild if the lessons of the past are barred out. Admitting them in these uneasy times should give fortifying emphasis to tomorrow's anniversary.

Can any reasonable person really believe that the victory which we now seek to bring to fruition is more difficult to win than the conquest of Germany appeared to be when that nation concentrated the maximum of her baleful power a year ago?

Memory of the war as it inspires selfish hatred is delectable. Memory of its true glories and their implications can be profound and radiantly heartening.

The high empire of the past must not be cheapened by accepting it cavalierly and with matter of fact indifference.

Let us not forget March 21, 1918. The light that we made to follow that dark day can rightly be summoned to dispel present clouds. He is indeed blind who fails to see this spring's benediction, which no man a year ago dared to hope to see so soon.

CHARTER WILL BE REVISED
 THE VARE budget bill differs in details from the budget provisions drafted by the charter revision committee. But both bills provide for an improved budget system. We shall not attempt at this time to decide which is the better plan. The point that we wish to emphasize is that there is agreement on the need of an improvement over the present system.

The merits and disadvantages of the two budget proposals as well as of the other modifications in the charter will be discussed at a public hearing in Harrisburg in the near future. The changes proposed by the charter revision committee will be considered on their merits, unless we mistake the temper of the Legislature, and no charge that these changes are proposed only by a committee of citizens will be seriously entertained.

Every intelligent legislator knows that a committee of citizens is more nearly representative of popular sentiment than is a single Senator or an elective law officer of the city. To oppose a bill drafted by a committee of a hundred responsible business and professional men because it has "no official standing" and to favor a bill drafted by a single officeholder on the ground that it represents the views of the city is to beg the whole question.

What we want is the best charter possible under existing conditions, and we do not think that the voters care a tinker's dam who drafts it so long as it is good.

"Two and Three-fourths" per cent beer should be sold in this country. We are used to that sort of thing. We have innumerable two-and-three-fourths per cent statesmen, for example, and the dollar in recent months seems to have had a two-and-three-fourths per cent purchasing power. And the country was reconciled long ago to two-and-three-fourths per cent prize fighters.

There are two statements of indisputable fact in the annual report of the P. R. T. The first is that the delay in the completion of the Frankford elevated life is pyramiding the cost of construction and the second is that unless additional transit facilities are provided in the near future the business activities of the city will be seriously interfered with through the inability of the workers to get about.

No fewer than twenty-two newspaper humorists leaped gladly that the new stuff to be made and marketed by the brewers must be called Root-beer. But there was not one, even among the most ardent prohibitionists, who suggested that in so far as the dry laws go Zihu may prove to be the Root of all evil!

A great many people say it should be established because the women of the world favor it. Yet it is said that women aren't influential in this man-made world.

Airplanes, four of them, circled over Amerongen, and went away without dropping anything!

Reflection upon the miracle is in order. Not even when Alaric smote Rome was the life of mankind endangered by such basic and oppressive corruption as when Ludendorff, casting the dice for the last time, struck the British line.
 In the spiritual sense the Gothic

THE GOWNSMAN

The Sabbatarian
 A SABBATHARIAN is one who keeps a recumbent day of rest and worship in strict observance of certain laws and injunctions of his own making, to which he usually attributes a divine origin. Six days of the week he leaves as God made them: to labor in, to cheat in, to love or hate in, to waste or harvest, each man after his own kind. But on the seventh the Sabbatarian concentrates his religion, which is therefore seven-fold as strong as another man's; and this day the Sabbatarian fashions in his own image—which is not that of God. The Sabbatarian knows that the spirit of man is stubborn and refractory; he has dealt much and anxiously with himself. This he calls somewhat profanely "wrestling with God." The Sabbatarian has also dealt much and pitilessly with the sins of others: this he describes somewhat more accurately as "fighting the devil." The Sabbatarian is within his rights when he gives over a day of joy and sun and springtime promise to ponderings on the blackness of the grave and the nebulousity of eternity. It is well for him to think on his sins—perhaps he has little else to think about. It is when the Sabbatarian determines that because he is virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale, that the unregenerate turn in emulation of the worm.

WHAT American of middle life is there who does not recall the neat, bare Sunday parlor, religiously closed and darkened on other days, an awesome place into which no healthy child would venture voluntarily: the Venetian blinds with dangling strings, not to be played with; the uncomfortable sofas, the hatbox-covered chairs inhospitably nipping the sitter off, unless he sit bolt upright—the only Christian attitude in sitting. There was an ingenuity in wax under a glass, alleged to represent flowers of the field, made by one of the maiden aunts of the household before she became an aunt; there were engravings of biblical story and faded pictures of tomb-walls weeping willow; the last resting places of relatives, distantly interested and lingeringly lamented. There was that indescribable thing, a what-not, containing shells and curios and something-or-other made from an olive tree, purporting once to have grown beside the river Jordan. And on the cold marble-top table there were the books of a godly household: Baxter's "Saints' Rest," Blair's "Grave," lugubriously illustrated, Quarles' "Poem" or "Pilgrim's Progress" and the big family Bible, the pictures of which were the only solace of a long Sunday afternoon, when father slept after supper, from which abstinence was alone wanting, and mother read from her own Bible and saw to it that no little feet pattered too loud or little voices rose to its week-day happiness and naturalness to disturb the serenity of a perfect Sabbatarian afternoon.

THE Sabbatarian presumably observes the injunction to do no labor on the Sabbath day. He is careful in this matter as to his ox and his ass and as to the stranger that is within his gate and, except for the necessities of his own creature comforts, as to his man-servant and his maid-servant likewise. It may be observed that the injunction extends not to his inhumanity, but only to the Sabbatarian observe the injunction that he work not; rather will he play, nor yet allow any one else to play—though it be no more than a truantom.

THE Sabbatarian was a logic about the old Puritan Sabbatarian from which our degenerate strain have much deteriorated. The blue laws of Connecticut, which shined into the deep indigo at New Haven, were no myth, and it is doubtful if there have ever been Sabbatarian days of such a complete serenity. In those halcyon times no man might travel, save to church, on Sunday, nor have his hair cut; no woman might cook victuals, make beds, sweep house or kiss her own children. In Boston an English captain, "returned from a cruise on Sunday, was met by his wife at the wharf; he embraced and kissed her before the spectators and thereby gave great offense; it was considered an act of indecency and a flagrant profanation of the Sabbath," for which, it is reported, the captain was "arrested and whipped." These admirable laws for preserving the serenity of the Sabbath provided that no one should walk unnecessarily in the street or fields on the Sabbath day or profane it with "clamorous discourse . . . dancing, jumping, winding horns and the like." And to insure that there should be no mistake in the matter, the Sabbath began on Saturday at sundown and continued, sans intermission or respite, all day Sunday and through Sunday night, a protracted rametta of thirty godly, weary hours, thereby stealing six, weekly, from his routed majesty, Satan.

OR Pennsylvania law which finds iniquity in the conjunction of two harmless, necessary arts, that of music and that of the cuisine, has its original among the Puritan blue laws which forbade "singing, piping or any other music in any public houses"; and provided elsewhere that "no one shall make minced pies . . . nor play on any instrument except the drum, the trumpet and the Jew's-harp." The drum summoned a times to church, and no such aggressive people as the Puritans could deny the function of the trumpet. But why the Jew's-harp? Did some rudimentary stirring of music within the heart of a boy, dimly remembered in stern manhood, begot this exception? Or was it merely a Puritan joke?

THE Sabbatarian is out of date. He has not learned that the sacrifice of the innocent preferences of the many to the prejudices of the few is neither a good American nor sound church doctrine, for that matter. And he does not know that music is an art comparable, in its power to uplift, to religion itself and less beset with petty sectarian prejudices and reactionary throw-backs into an impossible past than the form of religion with which he is acquainted. The hideous Sabbath of the Puritans begat many a backslider into the jaws of Satan and supplied a childish reason, of which the Gownsmen remembers once to have heard, as to why the cherubim and seraphim continually do cry. Let us away with the blue laws.

Lenine's colleagues are said to believe he is crazy. They ought to be connoisseurs.

Though Britain scored a foul when she let Helgoland get away from her, she and the rest of the Entente will make a real base hit when they destroy Germany's formidable North Sea fortress.

"HOW DID THAT GET IN?"



THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

The Whitman Centennial
 WHAT is Philadelphia going to do to celebrate the Walt Whitman centennial? It is only ten weeks away, but we have not yet heard of any considerable public rumpus being planned.

EVERY ONE knows what a hubbub Boston made over the centennial of James Russell Lowell. Distinguished literary men were invited from abroad to tell about Lowell's world-wide influence. In New York the American Academy of Arts and Letters held an intellectual hummer. Edgar Lee Masters wrote a poem, the exact meaning of which is still puzzling many an azure-ribbed stocking. John Galsworthy made a speech. Robert Nichols sat on the platform, and this is only our own private hazard was merely restrained from speaking by the positive assurance of the committee that he had never read a word of Mr. Lowell's writings. Yachel Lindsay drank his nontoxic grog that evening with some pangs of spirit, as he hadn't been invited to the show. It was the general agreement of those present and absent that Mr. Lowell is a world figure and reflects the utmost credit on Boston.

WHICH nobody will wish to deny.

BUT it seems to us, just at this present day of baffling world movements and agonizing discontents, a little sad and a little puzzling that we have heard no one in Philadelphia, or in Camden either, for that matter, utter any plans for commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of one of the most courageous minds that ever wrestled with the miscellaneous pangs of humanity. It is still too early to say what Whitman means. But any man of any liberality of spirit will admit that his voice, nearly thirty years silent, still outcries, nearly living utterance on this continent. His mind was a tree, in which almost all that America has thought since his time may be found nesting. Amazing indeed, during the last few years, it has been to read Whitman's poems, to see how pregnant, how fresh, how full of meaning they are. As vital as a great wind, as broad as the sea, an ample and full of nourishment as the soil underfoot, his message speaks to the mind of man. We have committed many errors in this country, disappointed many ideals, fallen short of many dreams. But we have one assuaging consolation: We brought Whitman to birth. Or did he bring America to birth? Some day we may have to put it that way.

TO SUCH a mind, to such a message, one can admit no impediments. Whitman is an ever-fixed mark. Philadelphia has never seen fit to erect any monument to him. Perhaps it is just as well, for as Mr. Pennell might say, an atrocity that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Mickle street, black, smoke-swept, forlorn, across the river, has forgotten him. The little house to which many great pilgrims came in reverence—Henry Irving, Edmund Gosse, Justin McCarthy, Edwin Arnold, John Morley, John Burroughs and many another—holds no recollection of him. One can hardly resist the feeling that it is still a little indelicate to mention Whitman in Philadelphia. It would be an intolerable thing if this unthrifty eccentric, this talkative old lout, should prove to have been one of the world's great spirits! Now if this were Paris—think what a statue Rodin would have made of him!

THERE is no living man so great that he would not be honored by an invitation to come to Philadelphia at the end of May

to pay tribute to Whitman's memory. There is hardly a living thinker so courageous, so advanced, who will not find his own thoughts already waiting for him in Whitman's pages. Unlettered, garrulous, lacking in humor, careless of the magic of form that sublimates and concentrates, and frequently giving one—as Bliss Perry has admirably said—the sensation of having opened the door of the wrong dressing room—yet he found in himself those elemental truths of human sanity and brotherhood toward which, after a whirlwind of blood and stupidity, we are again sadly groping. Perhaps he was partly a humbug—he who was flabby and timid passing himself off on the world as a creature of hairy bison strength, and ruthless passion!—but who is not? Let all be said against him that is sayable; his great patient words remain.

ENGLISH critics have tried to startle their readers by asserting that the greatest English poet of the war was not Rupert Brooke nor Siegfried Sassoon nor Thomas Hardy nor even the laureate, but a dead man, one Swinburne. In a far, far truer sense Whitman is the great, the only American poet of the war for world freedom. He went through it all in his soul, fifty years ago. He saw it coming. In a thousand splendid strophes he sings its horrors, its hopes and its meanings. To contrast the puny scrawny chirpings of our poets today with the vast voice of this man is to know a sense of sickness, of futility and shame.

PHILADELPHIA was only an accident in Whitman's life. He didn't come here because he thought it the greatest or the bluest blooded city in America. And if Philadelphia chooses to honor his memory now, let it not be with any subcurrent of thought that to do so would be "good publicity" for the town. Let it be done reverently and discreetly, in the hope of passing on to a new generation that greatly needs it the triumphant message of this great man—the message that "The whole theory of the universe is directed unerringly to one single individual—namely to YOU." And that the love of human comradeship, in an inscrutable world, makes everything wholesome, solves all, "fructifies all with the last chemistry."

IT IS to be supposed that Horace Traubel and many others have been thinking about these things. If so, why not tell the public about it? There ought to be meetings arranged for the week of the anniversary. People like John Burroughs and Bliss Perry and Edwin Robinson and Lowell ought to be invited here. Men abroad, like John Morley and William Osler, ought to be written to. Somebody, for the honor of the human intellect, ought to take this matter in hand.

We are hoping that when some of our soldier friends, to whom we did not write the letters we promised to get back from France, they will be so glad to get home again that they will forget to bear us malice for our neglect.

There must be a severe overhead expense in running the Bentinck household these days.

This is the time of year when one wants to get back to terra firma.

"BROAD BE THY LIGHT"

BROAD be thy light, O Land, like water bright. Thy peace like water deep that seems to sleep. Like woods thy soft clouds wherein the light nests warm: Let shadows on thy meadows move like sheep.

Thy birds are lovely birds and lovely voices. And lovely airs they sing in the rainy spring. Silver hair thy streams, drawn through tangled dreams. Of trees and meads and trees that shake and sing . . .

There should no angers move on the face men love. Fear should not be there, nor sick despair; But clear and steady eyes and old histories. And thought invisible made visible there. —E. F. Lower, in the Living Age.

"Fare is foul" in the opinion of those Jerseyites averse to the zone system of tollage charges.

They tell us that "evoque" is bishop and by extension bishop-vestment hue. It's well to know this. Otherwise the uninitiated might conclude that from a millinery standpoint the "First Lady Out of the Land" has simply joined the "reds."

What Do You Know?

QUIZ

1. What is the oldest reigning royal dynasty in the world?
2. What are railway coaches called in England?
3. What is the westernmost cape of Africa?
4. What is the first name of Premier Orlando of Italy?
5. Name two Democratic Presidents who dropped their first names in political life?
6. How much was the population of the city of Rheims reduced as a result of the war?
7. What animal is sometimes called a "molly-cottontail"?
8. What is the meaning of the Latin phrase "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori"?
9. Who wrote the "New World Symphony"?
10. What syllable should be stressed in the word Panama?

Answers to Yesterday's Quiz

1. The shortest route from continent to continent across the Atlantic Ocean is Dakar, Senegal, Africa, to Pernambuco, Brazil.
2. General Pershing's middle name is Joseph.
3. The great German offensive last year began on March 21.
4. "Cap-a-pie" means from head to foot.
5. Counterpoint: melody added as accompaniment to given melody; art, mode of adding melodies as accompaniment according to fixed rules.
6. Rembrandt Peale was an American portrait and historical painter and author. He was born in Bucks County, Pa., in 1778, and died in Philadelphia in 1860.
7. Mount Parnassus in Greece was dedicated to the Muses. Hence the adoption of the name Parnassians by a group of French poets, which included de Banville, Gautier and Leconte de Lisle.
8. A pantisocracy is a community in which all are equal and all rule.
9. The Children's Crusade occurred in the thirteenth century.
10. A cedula is a mark resembling an apostrophe placed under the letter "c" to indicate that it is pronounced like "s."