

NEWS ITEMS FROM STATE CAPITOL

Items of Interest Picked Up Among the Lawmakers.

BILLS STILL BEING INTRODUCED

Measures Affecting Persons in All Walks of Life Making Their Appearance—Committee Busy Acting on Various Bills and Resolutions of Both Houses Are Well Piled.

Harrisburg, Pa., May 1.—A "drying" Pennsylvania during the rest of the war is provided for in a prohibition bill introduced in the house by Representative Mitchell, of Jefferson, one of the "dry" leaders of the legislature.

Mr. Mitchell recently tried to have another prohibition measure he had previously sponsored so amended as to make it a "war bill," but the house law and order committee, of which Representative Wagner, Allegheny, an avowed "wet," is chairman, reported it out with a negative recommendation.

Undismayed by the committee's action Mr. Mitchell prepared the new bill which made its appearance today and about which one of the biggest and bitterest anti-liquor fights in the history of the state is regarded as certain to be waged.

Representative Isadore Stern has introduced a bill in the house, passage of which would silence advocates of birth control in Pennsylvania. The bill prohibits the publication, advertising, selling, distributing or otherwise disseminating knowledge or information tending to interfere with or diminish the birth of human beings. Violations of the act, it is specified, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$250 nor more than \$1000 or imprisonment for three months or one year.

The long expected bill to establish a text-book commission for fourth-class school districts of Pennsylvania has made its appearance in the senate. Senator Charles A. Snyder, of Schuylkill, made the introduction of this bill his last official act as a senator and as it followed his retirement speech, in which he took occasion to say that during his career as a legislator he was more interested in public school matters than anything else, the senate had the text-book bill immediately reported out and by unanimous consent put through on first reading.

By the terms of the Snyder bill the commission would consist of the county superintendent, two superintendents or supervising principals of the fourth class school districts, and the two school directors chosen at the convention of school directors. All books for use in fourth-class school districts which include places of 5000 population and under, must first be submitted to the department of public instruction and from this the superintendent will furnish each text-book commission with an authorized list of books from which selections must be made.

The bill is modeled after similar bills in other states and, according to the author, is of tremendous importance to the rural schools of the state. "A body composed of school men selected for this special purpose will feel keenly the responsibility of getting the best books adapted to the needs of the pupils," said Senator Snyder. "Also, when teachers change positions they will know the books and the same applies to pupils, who in moving from one district to another, will not have to go over the same matter on account of subjects being treated differently by the several school book authors."

The Schantz bill to enable Bethlehem and South Bethlehem to consolidate is through both branches and ready for action by the governor. Charles Schwab, president of the Bethlehem Steel company, is an advocate of this measure.

Recently the house rejected the Thomas bill to prohibit the sale of deadly weapons or the carrying of firearms without a permit from the sheriff. It was modeled after the famous Sullivan act of New York.

If the senate puts through the Powell bill, which passed the house last week by a vote of 105 to 55, and if it receives the approval of the governor, every hunter in the future will have to wear a red coat or a red cap or a red hat when out in quest of game. This is backed by many hunters and the purpose is to safeguard human life.

The house has fixed May 1 as the last day of the session of 1917 upon which bills can be introduced. There are over 1600 bills on the house list now. The resolution to fix a time was presented by Mr. Lewis, Jefferson, and an unsuccessful effort was made by Mr. Shaffer, Columbia, to substitute May 7.

A bill making it lawful for any theatre, moving picture theatre, music hall or assembly room to exhibit moving pictures on Sundays, after twelve o'clock noon, with or without music, and to charge the regular admission prices was introduced in the house by Representative J. W. Smith, of Philadelphia.

NEW OFFICIALS ASSUME DUTIES

Snyder and Kephart Sworn In Before Senate.

MANY WITNESS CEREMONY

Appointments of Auditor General and State Treasurer Not Yet Announced—Bill Introduced in Legislature to Suspend Full Crew Law During War With Germany.

Harrisburg, Pa., May 1.—Pennsylvania now has two new state officers. On Tuesday of last week Senator Charles A. Snyder took the oath as auditor general and this week Harmon M. Kephart, who for ten years past has been chief clerk of the senate, began the duties of state treasurer, to which place he was elected last November by over 200,000 majority.

Both men were sworn in before the bar of the state senate. This was an unusual proceeding, but those who arranged it believed that inasmuch as they had been conspicuous in the senate it was but fitting and proper that the oath should be administered to them in that chamber and in the presence of the men with whom they had been associated.



HON. CHARLES A. SNYDER
Pennsylvania's New Auditor General.

Neither Snyder or Kephart has made any official announcement as yet regarding appointments other than the former's naming of J. Lord Rigby, of Media, as chief of the bureau of corporations. Semi-officially it is known that Attorney John H. Fertig, of Pottsville will be deputy auditor general and that Attorneys Gabriel Moyer, of Lebanon, and Samuel Lewis, of York, will be given responsible places in the same office.

Friends on Hand.
The inauguration of Snyder was witnessed by hundreds of loyal friends, especially from the northeastern part of the state, where the new auditor general has resided all his life.

On motion of Senator Sprout, of Delaware, Lieutenant Governor McClain, who was presiding, named Senators Sprout, Republican, and Sones, Democrat, of Lycoming, a committee to escort the auditor general-elect to the senate chamber. A second later, Mr. Snyder, walking between his escorts emerged from the lounge room at the rear of the senate chamber. There was a wave of applause as the trio moved over to the bar of the senate where the oath was administered by Secretary Woods. The senate, on motion of Vare, of Philadelphia, then took a recess in order that the members might congratulate the new auditor general. Forming in line, senators and attaches of the senate and many of Auditor General Snyder's friends passed along and with a clasp of the hand wished the Schuylkill man a successful administration.

Secretary Woods also administered the oath to Mr. Kephart. Before this was done the resignation of Kephart as chief clerk of the senate was read, and William P. Gallagher, of Wilkes-Barre, was elected as his successor. The state treasurer-elect was escorted to the bar of the senate by Senators Byrne, of Chester, and Crow, of Fayette.

A recess of ten minutes was taken to extend congratulations to the new official. Lieutenant Governor McClain read Mr. Kephart's parting words to the senate. He regretted the severance of relations and would always remember the kindness and companionship of senators. Gratitude to Senator Crow, who had influenced his appointment as chief clerk and later was instrumental in having him nominated for the state treasurership, was expressed in the farewell, "I shall be with you often," the valedictory set forth, "and the hatching to my roof will always be out."

Suspend Full Crew Law.
Senator McKee, of Allegheny, has introduced a supplement to the full crew law, providing that the provisions of the act shall not be in force during the time the United States is engaged in the war with Germany and for six months after the close of the war. The bill recites that state and nation are suffering from a shortage of labor owing to the extraordinary demands made upon industry by the enlistment of large numbers of citizens into the army and navy, and that it is believed the industrial situation may be largely relieved by the suspension for a specified time of labor laws. The bill was referred to the committee on railroads.

STATE MAY TAKE LAST WHITE PINE

Movement on to Acquire Famous Cook Forest.

TRACT IS IN THREE COUNTIES

Has Over 7,000 Acres and is a Natural Refuge and Breeding Place of Every Variety of Wild Life—If Made a State Park Would Rival Great Yellowstone.

Harrisburg, Pa., May 1.—With the support of practically every conservation association and large sportsmen's organizations in the state, the movement for the acquisition of a great forest by the commonwealth is assuming notable proportions before the legislature.

The Cook forest, including 769 acres in Jefferson, Forest and Clarion counties, seems to offer the last opportunity for the preservation of any considerable amount of the primeval beauties of the commonwealth, and it is rarely for this reason that its acquisition and maintenance as a state park is being urged by the conservationists of the state.

If passed by the legislature and approved by the governor the bill for the purchase of the Cook forest will secure for Pennsylvania the most beautiful and wonderful park in the eastern United States. On it are trees that were standing when Columbus discovered America. They are of the rarest of all our American woods, the Pennsylvania white pine. Many of these trees are seven feet and more in diameter, 250 feet high and 150 feet from the ground to the first limb. Nothing like them exist anywhere in the known world.

Conservation associations point out that if the Cook forest is preserved and maintained as a state park it will be as great a resort for tourists as sight-seers as the Yellowstone Park and the great Redwood trees of California, and as a matter of fact, it will probably be visited by more people than these noted parks have attracted. It has been conservatively estimated by men who are familiar with this forest that it is worth more than \$1,000,000, but so anxious has been this family to have these mighty trees preserved as the last of "Penn's Woods" that they practically made a reduction of at least a fourth of the million by asking of the state only \$700,000 for the property.

Would Maintain Itself.
The value of the property was pretty thoroughly established by numerous investigators, both public and private, about six years ago. Since that time the valuation of standing timber of all varieties included in the Cook forest has increased more than 25 per cent. The bark of many trees not previously used is now of value, and there is a crying demand for the pop-wood and chemical wood.

The Cook forest proposition has attracted the attention of the state as more than a sentimental project. It is the only matter of this sort under consideration by the present legislature, which will not require a continuous series of appropriations for maintenance, to say nothing of the question of the state setting back the principal of any amount it might invest. The Cook forest by its gas revenue alone is sufficient to pay all of the expenses and maintenance, including the upkeep of the roads, and above that to make an annual return to the state of approximately \$18,000, of which if placed at compound interest should return the full price paid by the state in a little over twenty years.

Endorsed by Many.
The plan to make this great forest a state park has the endorsement of the Wild Life League of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania State Forest Association, the Pennsylvania Conservation Association, United Sportsmen of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State Sportsmen's Association, some seventy county and local sportsmen's associations, as well as many of the women's clubs, historical societies and civic bodies throughout the state. The necessity for having the purchase approved at this session of the legislature arises from the fact that the estate, the majority of whom desire to have the estate settled up and have forced the adoption of a resolution to sell the property at once. Taking the influence of one or two of the heirs this action was held up until this appeal was made to the state to buy and preserve this timber.

If this legislature fails to act, the lumberman's axe must fall on these forest giants and something will have vanished from the face of the earth never to be seen again in all probability, for thirty generations of man must live and have their being while one of these monster pines is attaining its full growth.

Ideal for a Park.
For park purposes the Cook forest is ideal. It lies in the midst of a region noted for its scenic grandeur, through it winds the Clarion river, the most beautiful of Pennsylvania streams, and down the slopes of the mountains come tumbling scores of trout brooks. The family pride which, for 150 years, has kept this magnificent collection of trees from being cut has also caused the opening of roads and paths that reach every part of the property to a degree that it is suitable for park purposes today without any material improvement.

The Cook forest today, is the natural refuge and breeding place of every new wild life that inhabits Pennsylvania mountains. The birds and animals here are practically never seen elsewhere, and with its convenient location, natural scenic grandeur and the presence of these gigantic trees, there can be no question that if preserved and maintained as a state park it will rival in drawing power Yellowstone itself.

FARMERS

The world-wide food shortage has put YOU on the firing line

The Hunger Cry at Home and Abroad Bids You

SPEED UP!

You know the wheat crop is more than 125,000,000 bushels short in the face of a bigger demand than ever. Other crops must make up this shortage

Here is how you can help:

Give first consideration to the non-perishable crops. Increase your acreage of beans and corn. Sow more buckwheat. Plant forage crops to supplement grain feed. Increase your live stock—especially hogs. Raise more chickens for quick meat.

If you have more of any kind of seed than you can use, see that some one else gets it.

WE MUST FEED THE ALLIES AND OURSELVES

THE WORLD IS WAITING TO BUY

Don't Be Afraid of Low Prices

If you need help to do your part ask the Local Committee of Public Safety for Aid

ISSUED BY
THE PENNSYLVANIA COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD SUPPLY
SOUTH PENN SQUARE—PHILADELPHIA