

The West Virginian

"THE PAPER THAT GOES HOME."
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SATURDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 29, 1917.



REGULATION BY COMMISSION.

It is apparent from what little the proprietors permitted him to say yesterday to the representatives of the cities in this end of the state who appeared informally before the Public Service commission that Judge E. F. Morgan, chairman of that body, shares Governor Cornwell's belief that the Public Service commission is competent to deal with the situation in an adequate and satisfactory manner. What is even more significant, Judge Morgan intimated that the Legislature could not confer upon the commission any powers bearing upon this matter which it does not now have. This indicates that the head of the West Virginia Public Service commission is a believer in the theory that these regulatory bodies have great powers that have not yet been developed in practice. This ought to put an end to all efforts to force a special session of the Legislature until the theory now known to be held in common by the Governor and the chairman of the Public Service commission is tested before the Supreme court. Regulation through the commission is much to be preferred over any other method and it happens that if it can be obtained at all it can be had much quicker along that line than in any other way.

ONE OF THE BIG JOBS.

ONE of the most difficult problems facing the railroad men who have undertaken to put the railroad plant of the country upon its feet under government auspices will be to restore the proper verve to the rank and file of the railroad employes of the country. After the first few months of the struggle to carry the great load which the war thrust upon the railroads, many of the men, even on some of the best organized roads, simply crumpled up. They found the public would take "on account of the war" as an excuse with the utmost good nature and they made it serve for everything, even for delinquencies that could have been avoided by a little better attention to business upon the part of themselves or their subordinates. This indifference; this disposition to let the condition at large take the blame for trouble that is entirely local and sometimes purely personal will have to be shaken out of the men before they can be put back on their toes. When it is done a large percentage of the petty annoyances which the public complains of now will disappear.

WOODEN SHIPS.

WHEN General Goethals permitted it to become known that he did not have the least faith in the wooden ship building plan there was a storm which reverberated from coast to coast. Admiral Bowles denounced the same scheme as a flat failure at the Senate Commerce committee hearing the other day and not a thing has happened in the way of dissent or denial. Yet both critics of the plan based their opinion upon the same weakness—the inability of the lumbermen to turn out the timber which is needed in the time that is at the disposal of the Ship Building corporation. It would be interesting to know whether the time that has elapsed since Goethals admitted that he was pinning his faith to steel ships has convinced every one, including the southern pine interests which hoped to make millions out of the wooden ship scheme, that the thing cannot be done, or the matter of fact way in which Admiral Bowles stated his conclusions aroused less antagonism than Goethals' stinging remark that the birds are still nesting in the trees that the proponents of the wooden ship project expected him to build ships of. There must be some explanation for the difference in the reception of the two opinions which

RUFF STUFF

American aviators have at last reached Italy and are the first Americans to get there. But the big Austrian push is not yet over—they were sent to southern Italy for training. Now that Uncle Sam is running the rail roads, hope he takes a little look around these diggings. He'll find lots of things that are not up to snuff. By the look of things this morning there'll be a lot of householders measurable to fine for not having snow cleared off their sidewalks before daylight. Ought to shovel off the sidewalks. It's such good exercise and makes you feel so all fired virtuous. Especially if the lazy duffer next

What People Say and Some Side Remarks

door has not done his full duty. Educators at Clarksburg showed signs of wanting to take the schools of the state out of politics. Don't they know that if this happens a lot of patriots will lose their interest in the great cause of education? But perhaps the reason they want to take the schools out of politics is to lose some of the guys who are in them on account of politics. The Kaiser's friend Senator Jim Reed thinks miners make so much money they do not want to work full time. We do not know how it is in Missouri, but up in these hills the man who does not work all the time can never get out of the sound of the howling of the well known wolf. Looks as if the most interesting thing about that basketball game Monday night will be the announcement of who is going in for the Y.

are so strikingly alike in their meaning. It is a dangerous thing to indulge in sometimes. But it does not matter much. The wooden ship scheme seems to have been a complete failure and one which is going to prove very troublesome to the nation in its effort to keep an army in Europe well supplied. It was one of those things which are all right in theory and all wrong in practice, like the American method of developing inland waterways, for instance. It seemed reasonable to assume that all that we needed to do to go back to the use of canal boats and river steamers was to turn the water back into the disused canals and put a few locks in the rivers. But it did not work out because in the meantime we had permitted the railroads to grab all the terminal facilities and made no provision to supply the water ways either with new ones or to let them share the old ones with the railroads. We used to be the greatest builders of ships in the world back in the days of clipper ships, and we have an abundance of standing ship timber yet. But we cannot go back to the clipper ship days merely by passing a resolution and getting a naval architect to lay down a plan for a ship that any saw and hammer carpenter could do most of the work on. There are other things that must be considered, and one of them is the time necessary to turn the tree in the forest into the stick in the improvised ship yard. The lumbermen who got the government into this ship building scrape overlooked that and no one outside of their immediate clique will weep if it should transpire that they have lost a great deal of money instead of made fortunes.

THE COAL PROFITEER.

IF it is true that bituminous coal is selling to the householders of Washington at \$9 per ton, as was stated in a letter written by a government clerk and read at the Senate inquiry by Senator Kenyon yesterday, it proves two things—that it is practically impossible to fix a price for a necessity when the demand far outruns the supply, and that the Fuel administration is not doing its full duty when it does not make an effort to punish the retail dealers who are profiteering right under its nose. About 99 per cent of the bad feeling which the public entertains toward the coal industry is due to the rapacity of retail distributors and the jobbers from whom they secure their supplies. They have always taken all they could get and precious few of them have ever taken the trouble to give the service and the other little attentions that good dealers give. And the coal producers who are the only ones who risk any large amount of capital in the coal trade are made the target for the public wrath which results. When the government price fixing policy was announced coal producers shared the hope of the consuming public that it would result in keeping the profit grabbing small dealer within bounds, but beyond announcing a schedule of prices nothing seems to have been done. Representatives of the Food administration have been hard at work in New York, Chicago and other cities making it hot for the dealers in food who do not fall in with the suggestions of that office. Dr. Garfield's subordinates at least ought to be able to make the dealers in Washington behave.

Admiral Bowles testifying before the Senate committee inquiring into the ship building muddle said yesterday that one of the things that is holding up developments is the fear of ship builders that the excess profits feature of the tax law will rob them of their profits if they undertake to build ships for government account. The idea that war is a private snap for a selected few people dies hard, but it will have to die. Leon Trotzky, the Bolshevik foreign minister, who is said to be preparing an address to the allies in favor of a general peace along the lines developed at Brest-Litovsk, will find that while it is easy to fool the ignorant and credulous people of Petrograd, it takes quite another kind of intellect, and moral force too, for that matter to move public opinion in other countries.

Senator Reed, who seems to know more things that are not so than any man in Congress, and to have a poorer opinion of his fellow men than any Senator since John Randolph, tried to get a witness to say yesterday that one of the reasons there is a coal shortage is that miners get such high pay that they earn enough in four days to satisfy their wants and will not work the other two. Some one ought to tell the Missouri misfit that if the miners throughout the country had been able to work four days of each week since April 6, when the war was declared, there would be no fuel famine.

West Virginia public service company tax payments show a gratifying increase, according to a report which State Auditor Darst issued last night. But corporation managers will be wise not to throw out their chests and wax arrogant on that score. The cost of government is going up too, and they will be lucky if their rates are not hitched up a notch or two by the next Legislature.

According to cables from Britain some of the London papers are inclined to believe that the German peace terms announced at Brest-Litovsk are a bona fide peace gesture toward the Entente. If that is true it is an indication that the Germans have at last made up their minds that in spite of their military successes they must take the initiative in the peace movement, but they have not yet brought themselves to the point where they are willing to offer terms that will interest free people who are fighting them.

Things have come to the pass in Russia where the Bolshevik government have no revenues at all. This probably explains why the banks have been seized by the finance commissioner. Bolshevik economists and statesmen have yet to learn that it is not money but credit which makes the wheels of all business, including that of government, go 'round.

By the way Jim Reed, the Houn' dog statesman, who has such a poor opinion of miners is the same guy who invented the bone dry amendment. Now we know why he did it. Just for spite.

Ex-Governor A. B. Fleming was recalling mining conditions in the Fairmont field in the early days yesterday and referred to the fact that nearly all the development was in Marion county. He remarked: "I cannot recall a single mine in Monongalia county in those days and now think of the coal development there!" Coal did not figure so importantly in the Civil War as in this war and Governor Fleming does not recall that there was any particular effort

OUTBURSTS OF EVERETT TRUE (BY CONDO)



MISS, SNICKERSEN, BRING YOUR NOTE BOOK HERE, PLEASE, I WANT TO DICTATE A LETTER.

THE SO-AND-SO EMPLOYMENT AGENCY, CITY. GENTLEMEN: BY RETURN MAIL LET ME KNOW WHAT THE CHANCES ARE OF FURNISHING ME A STENOGRAPHER WHO CAN PERFORM HER OFFICE DUTIES WITHOUT CHWING GUM ALL DAY.

RESPECTFULLY,

made around Fairmont to mine a great deal of coal in that period.

D. R. Lawson, who is now Deputy Distributor of the Federal Fuel Administration as well as secretary of the Central West Virginia Coal Operators' Association, knows the railroad business quite as well as the coal business, having been telegraph operator for the Santa Fee at La Junta, Col., and held important clerkships in the Illinois Central offices in Chicago, before coming here in November 1914. He was heard to say: "I grew up in the railroad business; my coat experience before I came to Fairmont was as a salesman in Chicago and adjacent territory." Kathleen Burks, an English girl, has returned to London after an American tour and is telling about conditions over there, making it plain that a waste of life is even more objectionable to Uncle Sam than a waste of money, although willing to make all useful and necessary sacrifices: "Uncle Sam is going to see this thing through to a satisfactory finish, the sort of finish that is going, once for all, to make a repetition of the present sorrow impossible. He is prepared to make enormous sacrifices to do it. He doesn't care what the bill is or how much he pays, so long as he isn't asked to pay for waste."

MANNINGTON

Returns to Colorado. Hugh W. Prichard left yesterday for Colorado after spending the summer with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Prichard and family in Pleasant street.

For Special Training. A message from Harry J. Anderson to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Anderson, of Franklin street, announces that he has been transferred from Camp Shelby, Hattiesburg, Miss., to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he goes for special training.

Miss Phillips Entertains. Miss Helen Phillips entertained at

Hotel Arrivals. Bartlett—J. O. Ash, Sistersville; C. S. King, Allentown, Pa.; Mrs. W. F. Morton, Glover Gap; Mrs. Bertus Miller, Tunnelton; Geo. M. Weldley, Pennsboro; John A. Ford, Columbus, C.; M. R. Da So, Cleveland, O. Wolla—F. O. Wilson, Middleburg, Md.; W. A. Dye, Hundred; J. E. Acker-

CONFIDENCE IS DOMINANT NOTE

In Spite of Unprecedented Changes There is No Move to Cancel.

NEW YORK, Dec. 29.—Dun's review of trade for this week says: What has been in many respects the most eventful year of economic history neared its closing with the announcement of governmental control of the country's transportation systems, causing a striking recovery in prices of securities, but with the recognition that not all of the readjustments arising from war conditions have yet been witnessed. With the business outlook still obscure and likely to remain uncertain, there is no abatement of the disposition to operate ahead with caution, and the customary policy of deferring important engagements until after the year end now appears in many quarters. But what has stood out prominently through recent months of unprecedented changes, has been the absence of conspicuous loss of confidence and of any general movement toward cancellation of existing contracts, the fact is that while some settlements have necessarily been experienced in trade and industry and though there has been not a little hesitation in most directions, faith in the future has not appreciably diminished and not only have many new concerns started but the year's solvency returns make the best numerical exhibits since 1911.

Weekly bank clearings \$4,405,230.82.

Personal.
Miss Sue Slater has gone to Cameron for a visit with friends.
Mrs. Ray Holmes, of East Palestine, Ohio, and Mrs. Lillian Chaddock, of Cameron, have returned to their homes after a visit with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chaddock in Clayton street.
Ben F. Wells, of Glover Gap, was a business visitor in the city yesterday.
Miss Alice Goodwin has returned to her home in Clarksburg after a visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Coffman and family. Miss Lois Coffman accompanied her for a visit there.
Clarence Ryan and Claude Sine have returned after a week's visit with relatives in Wheeling.
Fred G. Barlow has returned from a business visit in Fairmont.
Frank O. Wilson, of Middleburg, Md., is a business visitor in the city.
Mrs. R. B. Hooton has returned to her home in Rowlesburg after a visit with Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Sturm near here.
Mayor James D. Charlton was a business visitor in Fairmont yesterday.
Mrs. Bertus Miller, of Tunnelton, is the guest of relatives in Buffalo street.
Miss Marie Burt and Miss Laura Free spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Burt in Fairmont.
Miss Jennie Barlow left yesterday for a visit with relatives in Oakland, Md.
C. S. King, of Allentown, Pa., is here for a visit with friends in Washington street.
S. E. (Scotty) Leech, of Cameron, was a visitor in the city yesterday.
Mrs. Gilbert Overholt and little son, of Elkins, are guests of the former's parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Beall and family in Jefferson street.
Charles L. Broadwater returned yesterday from a visit with his parents in New Martinsville.
Mrs. Thomas Campbell has returned from a visit with friends in Wheeling. Charles Stealey and James Hoban spent Christmas at their homes in East Palestine, Ohio.
Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Lazear returned yesterday from a visit with relatives in New Martinsville.
Phil H. Pitzer has returned from a visit with his brother at Camp Lee, Petersburg, Va.
Frank H. Magers was the guest of friends in Fairmont yesterday.
Luther A. Lincoln, of Burton, was a business visitor here yesterday.
Miss Mary McGonigal, of Fairmont, is a guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Devore and family.
Mr. and Mrs. Ira W. Davis have returned from a visit with the latter's brother, C. J. Startzman and family in Caldwell, Ohio.
Mrs. Harvey and daughter, Miss Milfred Harvey, of Fairmont, are guests of the former's sister, Dr. Phoebe G. Moore.
George M. Weldley, of Pennsboro, was a business visitor here this week.
Mrs. W. Y. Raiguel, of Shinnston, is the guest of friends in the city.
Mr. and Mrs. Donley S. Jones and little sons will spend Sunday with the former's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Z. W. Jones, in Moundsville.
Miss Virgie Rader has gone to Fairmont for a visit with her mother, Mrs. McGuffin.
Alex Midlock has arrived here and will again be employed at the Marlon Window Glass factory, after having spent the past season at Quinton, N. J.

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

Money Helps to Make a Merry Christmas Here's the Way to Have Both

WATCH IT ROW!

Christmas Savings Club

Hundreds are flocking to join our Christmas Savings Club and you should not let the chance go by. Costs nothing to become a member—no fees, no fines, nothing to lose.

CLUB NOW FORMING---JOIN

It will enable you to save when you couldn't do it otherwise. You will have money for Christmas or other use and wonder how you accumulated so much. A little each week regularly. Watch your savings grow. It's a great co-operative plan. You get your share of the general benefit. Save for your family and friends. Get others to join. Act now while you are thinking about it. CALL FOR PARTICULARS.

The Peoples National Bank of Fairmont