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Our National Capital

Events of Interest from the Seat of Government by the
News Special Correspondent, J. E. Jones

THE ISSUE OF 1916

Washington, D. C., Dec. 26.—The Democrats claim that they have a walk-away in 1916. The Republicans assert that the country is already tired of the Democratic administration, and they charge that the low tariff has been producing hard times. Their theory is that they will have a walk-away in 1916. Progressives confidently assert that the only strength in either one of the old parties remains in the pledges to the people that they will carry out Progressive principles in the future. They assert that notwithstanding the fact that they slumped nearly three-fourths of their strength in the recent election, that the reason all laid in the fact that the Progressives joined with the Republicans simply to lick the Democrats. The Progressives insist that in a national election where a President is to be voted for that the most progressive members of both the old parties will stand together for real progressive progress under the Progressive Party banner in 1916. The Prohibition party is "perk-ing up," and its members assert that the country is coming around to their idea by leaps and bounds. Their joy knows no bounds since they attained a majority in the House of Representatives on the question of a constitutional amendment providing for national prohibition. Who will deny that America is next door to political utopia since nearly every one interested in politics can figure out their coming victories?

The Post Office Surplus

Former Postmaster General Hitchcock claimed to have achieved a surplus in the Post Office Department, but no sooner did he lose himself in the mining regions of Arizona than his successor, General Burleson, challenged the statement, and claimed that there has been a deficit of nearly a million dollars. Now the Postmaster General asserts that he has a real surplus of receipts of \$3,500,000 or more over operating expenses. Perhaps it serves Mr. Burleson right to have the critics refuse to admit this claim. They declare that if all the general expenses were paid from postal receipts, and not from the Treasury direct, that the surplus would vanish into thin air. Postmaster Generals have been juggling with the surplus and deficits for years, principally because there has never been an intelligent accounting in the Post Office Department. They do not know, and neither does anyone else know, the true state of Post Office finances. Millions of dollars worth of public property and buildings owned and occupied by the government appear to obscure the power of the Department to arrive at a true balance.

National Preparedness

The evidence is strong that the people who would dig into conditions surrounding the lack of national preparedness are losing ground. President Wilson and the "War Ministers" of the Cabinet promptly discouraged a Congressional investigation, and former President Taft came to the support of the Administration in saying that such investigations are useless. The result of the agitation indicates that the numerous investigations which have heretofore been had along these lines produced more information than the country is willing or able to use. Uncle Sam apparently has a lot of cards up his sleeve which he could use in the war game if it really became necessary.

It's a Long Way

As a result of his recent unfortunate experience before the Supreme Court, it has been suggested at the National Capital that Harry K. Thaw might revise the words, "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" and substitute "It's a Long Way to Freedom."

The California Expositions

It has been announced that the opening of the San Diego Exposition has been postponed for several weeks. The San Francisco Exposition apparently has become a sort of side issue for the San Diego affair, if one is to judge conditions by the representation given to the two shows in the public print. Both Expositions claim, as the reason for their existence, that they are commemorating the completion of the Panama Canal and while in these troublesome war times the Panama Canal is remaining neutral yet there appears to be little neutrality among the competing expositions. The California people are too outward appearance, working without friction, yet it is a well known fact that one of the big transcontinental railroads is backing the San Diego proposition as a competitor of the San Francisco Fair. The experiences of past years has demonstrated that one great exposition has been sufficient to satisfy everybody for a period of several years, but California is defying the fates and is attempting to pull off a double-header. Of course it is unfortunate for the promoters of the expositions that there should be a great war to detract attention from the magnificent fairlands they claim to have created. Perhaps the most disastrous feature will be the discouragement of exhibitors. The California people are keeping mum about this important phase of the situation. The schemes by which people are induced to save up their money, or enter competition to secure transportation to California are not producing much enthusiasm. California is a great state and a wonderful show in itself, but the indications are that it has an overdose of expositions.

Fifty Years at the White House

Colonel William H. Crook is chief disbursing officer at the White House. On January 5th he will complete his fifty years of service as a White House employee. Colonel Crook was the bodyguard of President Lincoln and he has known the family life and habits of every occupant of the Executive mansion for half a century. At one time he wrote his reminiscences, and they were published in the Saturday Evening Post. Through enmity he made it appear that all our Presidents were men. Colonel Crook was the bodyguard of President Lincoln and was constantly with him in the Civil War. He was off duty the night Lincoln was assassinated. He is the grand old man at the White House lot.

Lost — 1,000 Jobs

In 1909 there was concluded authority under the Census Act for taking an agricultural census of the United States, but no money was appropriated for that purpose. In view of the fact that each Democratic Congressman has been distressed by questions of patronage the scheme was evolved recently to appropriate something over \$2,000,000 to defray the cost of the proposed census. There was no attempt to deny that the purpose of the legislation was to give "sop" to 1000 hungry Democrats. But it didn't work. Congress dare not do these things any more, even though there might be a disposition to do so.

Philippine Independence

A Committee of the United States Senate has been holding hearings upon the bill designed to

Typhoid Fever at A Church Dinner

PUBLIC HEALTH HINTS

Prepared Each Week For the Readers of This Newspaper by the New York State Department of Health.

A MYSTERIOUS epidemic of typhoid fever recently traced to its source by the good detective work of the California State Board of Health is of general interest because it shows that in certain cases disease germs may be carried even by COOKED FOODS—in this case Spanish spaghetti.

During March, 1914, the city of Hanford, Cal., experienced a severe outbreak of typhoid fever. The local health authorities and physicians and the State Board of Health immediately began to investigate this outbreak. Upon inquiry it appeared that the one common bond between those affected was that they had attended a public church dinner held on March 17. All those present at this dinner (150) were followed up, and of this number it was found that eighty-five had become infected, while the eight others who had typhoid had had food from the dinner brought to them at their houses. Many of the victims had come to the dinner from a long way off and carried home the infection with them to their distant homes.

The next problem was to find the particular person who had sown the seed of infection at the dinner. Careful study showed that no single food of those served at the meal had been eaten by all the patients. Most of them had eaten chicken pie, but the chicken pie was of three or more different lots. The next thing which had been most generally eaten by the typhoid cases was Spanish spaghetti, but NOT ALL had eaten this. So it was clear that the person who caused the infection must have been in the kitchen in which the food was prepared and served so as to infect various articles of food. There was plenty of chance for such a transfer of infection in the serving of the food and the hurried washing of dishes and utensils.

A study of the people who helped in the kitchen soon narrowed down to seven women, and samples of discharges were taken from all of these women for bacteriological examination.

The history of one of these women—Mrs. X.—was particularly suspicious. She had formerly kept a boarding house, and it appeared that during the last eight years four cases of typhoid had occurred AMONG HER BOARDERS. It was no surprise, therefore, when the laboratory telegraphed that the bacteriological examination showed HER to be the carrier of the typhoid bacilli.

It was Mrs. X. who had prepared the Spanish spaghetti for the dinner. The spaghetti and the Spanish sauce were prepared in her home on the day before and mixed and cooked VERY HOTLY just before the dinner. Experiments made by the Board of Health showed that typhoid germs would grow and increase rapidly in the Spanish sauce and that the process of baking actually used would not raise the spaghetti even to a pasteurizing temperature and WOULD NOT DESTROY the typhoid germs.

This epidemic teaches that SOME PROCESSES of cooking do not make food safe and that the greatest care should be used by those preparing foods to WASH THEIR HANDS since any one may be growing germs in his or her body and spreading them about as Mrs. X. was doing without suspecting it at all. Most cases of typhoid come, of course, from other recognized cases of the disease, but there are hundreds of cases like this one on record where the germs have been spread by a well person or "carrier."

give ultimate independence to the Philippine Islands. It is determined that such a policy will be carried out; but there appears to be a great deal of lack of decision as to the manner in which this is to be brought about.

The Literacy Test

The Washington government realizes that now more than ever that there should be intelligent legislation in reference to immigration. President Wilson reiterates the contentions of President Taft, who vetoed an immigration bill just before the close of his term, that the literacy test is fair neither to the immigrant nor to the country. While the United States has held open its doors to desirable immigrants, yet there has been a strong sentiment that more restrictive methods should be adopted. Evidently President Wilson and his predecessor believe that all other conditions being favorable, it is time enough for immigrants to learn to read and write the English language after entering upon their residence in this country.

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Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA



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