

Comment--and Discomment

Perhaps the most amusing thing that has happened in Alliance in ten years is the headline that Boiler Plate Ben chose to place over a carefully fabricated article that appeared in a recent issue of the Times: "Facts—not fancies." For a man who within the past ten days has audited his books and discovered some seven or eight hundred subscribers that do not exist to talk about "facts" in such a solemn way is in reality the epitome of humor. Exaggeration is the chief basis of humor, and Bennie of the Boundless Enthusiasm has shown himself prone to exaggerate.

As a matter of fact, few Times readers will be deceived by the carefully framed statements that his newspaper has been spreading. No man who takes both newspapers will be in doubt for an instant. And Alliance advertisers, some of whom may have believed the semi-weekly Sallow, need only to be shown the difference between his sworn circulation figures and those he prepared for their especial benefit to be convinced that practically everything he says needs to be taken with a good deal of salt.

There are some charges that are so absurd that even a newspaper doesn't need to answer them. The comparison of The Herald and Times prepared by the latter falls in that class. Let's consider the first item, just to get a good laugh. One can't have too many laughs in these trying days, and practically every line of that comparison is good for a regular guffaw. In the heading, for instance, the comparison is for the "Week of December, 1919"—and the particular week isn't mentioned. The first item is "headed reading articles," which, of course, is not a fair basis of comparison, for this news-

paper runs as much as two pages of short reading articles. We don't place a head on an article unless it is worth it. Heads take up space that might be occupied by real news.

These are the figures for the "week of December," whatever that is: Headed reading articles, Herald 57, Times 97. Included in The Times' capitulation is the boiler plate that fills, on an average, over half of the pages of that newspaper. This is not guesswork—any man who can read knows what is legitimate news and what is plain filler. This boiler plate stuff can be purchased for less than 20 cents a column. It costs three times that amount to set a column of type matter.

Now there are several kinds of boiler plate. Our comprehensive report of the constitutional convention, which is appearing this week and will continue to appear, is a special service, for which we pay a special price. It is interesting reading, timely and of interest to nearly everyone. But we do not insult the intelligence of our readers—or advertisers—by printing articles telling about the price trappers in Kane, Pa., get for mink; discussions of a new dread disease that is afflicting the cats in London; tales of eternal youth in microbes, and other bunk that succeeds only in filling space.

In addition to column after column of this deadly stuff, we find numerous other columns clipped from the dailies. Some of it is reasonably interesting; some of it merely fills space. All of it is old. There is only one way for a newspaper to publish up-to-the-minute news from the state and country, and that is by means of a leased wire or a regular press service. No Alliance newspaper has this, and any news you see in either along this line is frankly "stolen" from the city papers that do. The Herald offends now and then in this regard, but only when legitimate news is scarce. Our aim is to be an Alliance newspaper, and anyone who is sufficiently interested to take a yardstick and measure the comparative number of inches of le-

gitimate, bona-fide, home news will soon discover that The Herald leads.

It's not enough to have home news—it must be well written. With all due regard for Boiler Plate Ben's feelings, which are tender enough, heaven knows, he's no writer—and never will be. If one wished to be technical, he could take any article that the Sallow ever wrote and discover crudities by the dozen. We're not the most finished performer in this respect, but we won't take off our hats to Ben—or the office boy, either, although the latter knows more about the technique of writing now than his chief ever will. With pastepot and shears, with columns of boiler plate, with plenty of brag and bluster, with all sorts of arrogance, The Times marches on—and will probably continue to do so to the end of the chapter. We're perfectly willing that it should do so. We expect to have competition in as good a city as this, and couldn't pick out any easier if we set out to do so.

Reverting for a moment to the former pugilist's pathetic attempts to make the English language roll over and bark for him, we are reminded to say a word about his

"Peepsights." Nine times out of ten they are so rotten that any number of self-respecting citizens of Alliance have protested against their sliminess—"sliminess" being a derivative of "silme."

But now and then there is a "Peep-sight" which is really good. It is clean and refreshing and humorous. And whenever we strike one of that variety we can't help wondering if Rufus Jones wrote it. Somehow they read just about like Rufe, who, before he became a commercial secretary, was one of the brightest newspaper men in the south.

Some of these days we are going to ask Secretary Rufe about this. He probably won't discuss it with us, though. The sec. has shown a perfectly commendable disposition to stand aside as a disinterested spectator and watch the little scrap 'twixt the two newspapers.

—Have you ever tasted the delicious toast that can be prepared by an electric toaster? Nothing is more convenient for a light breakfast. See them at Newberry's Hardware, for \$6.75. If you are puzzling over their gift—look no further.

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The Love Story of an Orphan

The Story Alone Cost \$40,000.

Admission 25c & 35c

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Act 2. Clarence Leigh "From the Mimic World." Humor, melody, whistling and imitations.

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Act 4. Sam and Goldie Harris present a comedy satire, "The End of the Line."

Act 5. Lucy Lucier Trio, the great comedy novelty and harmony singers.

—PHOTOPLAY—

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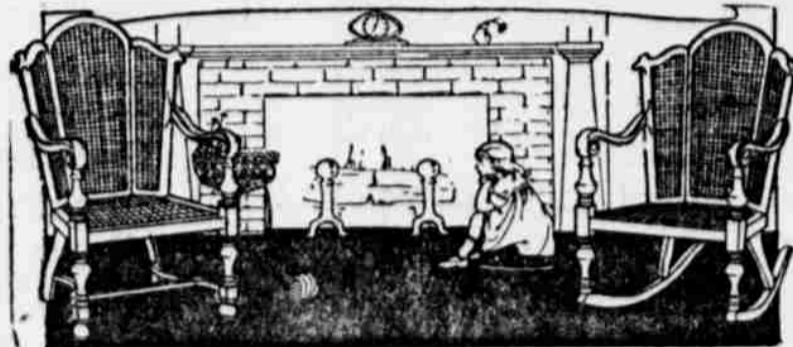


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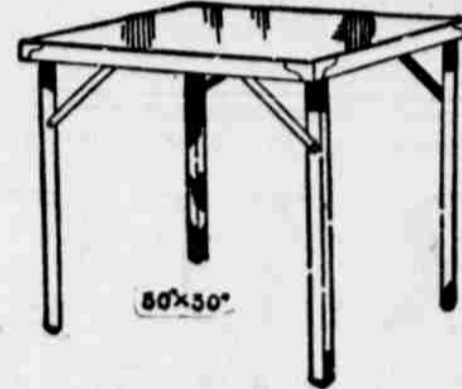


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