

Our Washington Letter

Story of Secretary Taft, Who Will Enter the Presidential Race—
Comptroller to Rigidly Enforce National Banking Laws—Other
Notes of Interest.



WASHINGTON.—The rumor of Secretary Taft's presidential ambitions is again broad. Although no authorized statement making known his candidacy has ever been given out by the ponderous head of the war department, the story that he will seek the Republican nomination at the next convention is circulated with great regularity.

The present rumor says the secretary is about to decline the offer of a seat on the supreme bench, made to him some time ago, and that he will then enter the field for the nomination.

Speaking of the big war the secretary recalls the following story: A certain colonel in the army, within two years of the retiring age, was ordered to the Philippines. He didn't want to go. He thought it ungracious on the part of the war department to send him so far away when he

was almost ready to drop out. His protests availed nothing, and as a last resort he had a few of his friends call on Secretary Taft and suggest to the secretary that it would be a very nice thing to allow the colonel, who had served the country well for so many years, to remain at home instead of shoving him off to the tropics.

Secretary Taft listened patiently. His friends made all the arguments about long and faithful service.

Then, as a clincher, one of them said: "And, Mr. Secretary, you have lived in the Philippines and you know about the climate there. To be frank with you, the colonel is not well. He is getting very fat and we are afraid he can't live over there."

Taft took a slow survey of his own 300 pounds. Then he asked gravely: "Did Taft live?"

BLEW UP HIS OWN HOUSE.

The late Daniel V. Colcazler, whose death occurred the other day, was a conspicuous figure during the confederate attacks on Washington during the civil war. Mr. Colcazler and his family then lived on his farm not far from Fort Stevens. On the advance of the confederates he hastily brought his family to the city, and then immediately returned to the fort. By that time the guns of the fort were in action and the enemy was approaching. Mr. Colcazler, noticing a confederate ammunition wagon near his house and observing that one of the union guns was idle, went to the commanding officer and volunteered to work it, saying that he had had experience in that line as a militiaman. His offer was accepted and he trained the gun on his own house, which with a few shots was demolished.

When President Lincoln came upon the scene Colcazler being the only man not informed at the guns, the attention of the president was attracted and he, learning the circumstances of Colcazler's presence, the president directed him to call on the secretary of war the following morning. This Mr. Colcazler did and he was sent to Gen. L. C. Baker, who appointed him on his force of secret service men and one of the bodyguard of the president. Mr. Colcazler was made a sergeant.

On one occasion when Mr. Colcazler was in this bodyguard, a week or ten days before the assassination of the president, he had an exciting time near the soldiers' home. Mr. Lincoln had just alighted in front of his summer residence and had scarcely taken two steps on the walk when a sharp report was heard. The mounted men with all haste rode in the direction whence came the report, but failed to come up with the party of would-be assassins, who rode down Seventh street into the city. The secret service men learned that four or five men in the party and that at Boundary avenue they scattered in different directions. The bullet fired grazed one sleeve of the president's coat.

BANK LAW TO BE RIGIDLY ENFORCED.

Directors of national banks who, by constantly ignoring the law, threaten the solvency of the banks with which they are connected, are to be made examples of by the treasury department. Hereafter the law regulating the making of loans by national banks is to be rigidly enforced and the first bank that willfully and flagrantly violates it will have its charter forfeited. This statement was made by a treasury official the other day while discussing the failure of a Massachusetts national bank.

The downfall of this bank was due to an aggravated trouble of which a surprisingly large number of other banks are guilty—excessive loans to bank directors and officers.

The admission was made at the treasury department that two-thirds of the banks habitually disregard the limitations of the law in regard to the amounts of loans that may be made. What is more, the department is regularly informed of these violations of law, which are duly reported to the controller of the currency by bank examiners. It has long been the custom of the controller to send a warning letter to the controller of the currency by bank examiners, and beyond calling the offending banks' attention to the excess loans and perhaps an admonition to avoid a repetition of the offense, nothing is done.

In other words, the treasury department winks at violations of the law which every now and then wreck a bank. The only punishment that can be meted out to directors who imperil the safety of banks by lending amounts of money in excess of the lawful allowances, is to secure the forfeiture of their charters. This is a step which controllers of recent years considered too drastic to be taken, with the result that not a single bank has been subjected to anything more severe than a reprimand.

A new policy has been decided upon by Controller of the Currency Ridgeley. Hereafter he will require banks to live strictly up to the law, and in order to convince the banking world that he is earnest the controller will inflict the full penalty— forfeiture of the charter—on the first bank whose directors willfully violate the law limiting the making of loans. A new law was passed at the recent session of congress, giving to the banks greater latitude in lending money. Prior to this enactment individual loans were restricted to ten per cent. of the capital of the banks. The new law permits loans of ten per cent. of the capital and ten per cent. of the surplus, but in no case shall they exceed 30 per cent. of the capital. These provisions are to be rigidly enforced.

STRANGE OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN.

Someone with a talent for figures and an earnest interest in the sex has been raking over the last government census and extracting therefrom a bundle of statistics showing some of the strange occupations in which the women of our country are engaged.

A brief glance at this interesting list is enough to reform any mere man who might have thought that the world was a "fancy critter," only fit for fancy feather stitching and similar dainty pursuits, and so entitled to the gentle consideration of the sterner sex.

The sex has surely "arrived" and no longer stands in need of protection when it is stated that about one-third of the adult women in the United States are earning their own living, not counting those who are surely earning a living after the good old orthodox fashion, in cooking, sweeping, sewing and spanking, and performing the other duties incident to raising broods of children and maintaining homes for husbands.

It is well known by this time that women have invaded the business world as stenographers, bookkeepers, confidential secretaries and what not; that thousands of them have achieved proprietorship in many lucrative branches of business.

Yet a glance at the official list of occupations in which thousands of others are gaining a livelihood is calculated to scare the breath out of sturdy manhood. Who, for instance, would imagine that there are feminine fishermen and oystermen to the number of 1,805 in the United States? That is the number according to the census schedule, and further than that, there are 1,947 stock raisers and drovers and 1,320 women are listed as "guides, trappers, hunters and scouts."

These are some of the leading occupations, but there are others without number, and when a list of this sort contains 213 lumbermen and woodchoppers, 154 sailors, 43 hack drivers, 196 blacksmiths, 31 brakemen, 26 switchmen, six ship carpenters, 167 masons, 126 plumbers and 879 policemen and watchmen, who will dare to say that woman's sphere is in any way restricted?

The census figures help to explain, perhaps, why it is that a man out of a job has so hard a time trying to land another one that will give him a living.

RULES TO REGULATE FOODS.

A syllabus has been prepared by the commission appointed by the secretary of the treasury, the secretary of commerce and labor and the secretary of agriculture to formulate rules and regulations for the foods and drugs act, commonly known as the pure food law, in order that the suggestions interested in a systematic and compact manner. These suggestions will be offered at a hearing to be held in New York between September 17 and September 23. The syllabus divides the questions of ruling into 12 groups.

They deal with the original package as prepared for export, the collection of samples, hearings and publications, the use of colors, flavors and preservatives, misbranding, imitations and blends, proprietary foods, drug adulteration and misbranding confectionery, the establishment of the government guarantee and the inspection of imported goods.

Circulars announcing the field to be covered are being sent out to all the food manufacturers interested and those who wish to appear either in person or by proxy are asked to file briefs, and directed to make their request to Dr. Wiley, of the department of agriculture.

The Automobile of 76 Years Ago.



Inquiry into the earliest forms of the automobile has brought to light Church's steam coach, which ran between London and Birmingham, England, as early as 1830. It was something like a double stage coach and was constructed to carry twenty-eight inside passengers and twenty-two outside. The chauffeur wore a great coat with many capes, as was the style with old-time coachmen.

A committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1831 to report on the growing automobile movement, and found its practicability fully established. Popular prejudice, however, it was pointed out, was strong and led to the imposition of heavy tolls, fees and licenses, so the motor fiend would seem to have had a rocky road even to those early days.

The railroads, then coming into general use, secured the passage of a law requiring each automobile to keep a man one hundred yards in advance with a red flag by day and a red lantern by night.

SPENT HALF HIS LIFE IN JAIL.

"BIG BILL" MASON, NOTED CRIMINAL, AGAIN BEHIND BARS.

Was Well Known in Chicago Gambling Circles—Arrested in Wisconsin, Sent to Waupun, But Made His Escape.

Laporte, Ind.—The doors of the Indiana state prison have opened again to one of the most noted criminals in the country. His real name is Richard Keegan, but he is best known as "Big Bill" Mason.

Mason as W. T. Wright was sent up under the old law to serve seven years. After about three years he escaped and was finally located at Cherry Hill, Pa. He was given no possible chance after and went out only at the expiration of his term.

"Big Bill" Mason is particularly well known in Chicago, where was the scene of many of his exploits. Around "Mike" McDonald's and George Hankins' gambling houses he was known as the high "roller of faro."

He has pursued all the branches of crime, and while he has been successful in them all he has spent nearly 25 years in prison. So that in the balance he strikes in his fifty-fifth year the account is heavily against him. In the Northfield bank raid, in which he participated with the Younger and James boys, he was "the kid." In all of Mason's arrests he was well provided with "bail money" and was able to get the best of criminal talent at the bar to fight his cases. "It was his boast that he never pleaded guilty."

After a wild spectacular career Mason appeared in Chicago and made his headquarters at Dave Thornton's "House of David" in Clerk street. He was always well provided with money and ostensibly his business was to make a show of it by buying drinks for anybody and everybody.

Meanwhile he was playing faro in McDonald's place, and occasionally in Hankins' place across the street. He was gone rally a winner and was accustomed to leave a sum of money in Thornton's to the credit of fellows who were down and out. Usually it was, he said, 10 per cent. of his winnings. If he lost he put a \$10 bill there anyway for the same purpose, saying that the Lord and the gambler alike loved a cheerful giver and he wouldn't have luck if he were not ready to divide.

Mason at this time was about 25 or 26 years old. In a appearance he was a striking figure, six feet tall, straight as a dart, broad shoulders and with

NECK BROKEN NINETEEN YEARS.

Railway Engineer Mangled in Wreck Survives Injuries.

Albuquerque, N. M.—Barney Baldwin, known the world over as the "man with the broken neck," was here the other day renewing acquaintances made in 1880-83, when he was an engineer. Baldwin's neck was broken in a railway accident at Birmingham, Ala., in 1887. He wears his neck and head in harness continually. When he lays down the vertebrae slips out

of place, and his bones wobble and often come unjointed. If he raises his right hand, the left also bobs up. In the wreck he had his right arm, five ribs and both legs fractured, his watch crushed out of sight in his bowels, and an iron bolt driven into him with force enough to break his collar bone. Doctors here, as everywhere, pronounce him the most puzzling case ever dealt with, because a man could be so torn and broken and still live. Baldwin, who is married and lives at San Bernardino, Cal., claims the railroad on which he was hurt, pays him a handsome monthly

stipend. Baldwin was the man who had pulled the special train that brought the famous New Mexican murderer, Milton Yarberry, to this city to be hanged.

Man Reforms at Age of 95.

Winthrop, Me.—Ellis M. Clark has decided to quit chewing tobacco after 51 years of the habit. He was 95 years of age the other day, and to celebrate the event called together his friends with the announcement that he intended to sign a pledge. The pledge proved to be his declaration that he will no longer use tobacco.

Some Queer Family Names.

"CHUMPS," "OGS" AND "CUBBUMS" IN OLD KENTUCKY.

Odd Cognomens of the "Quarter" Heirs—Remarkable Collection Gathered Within a Radius of 20 Miles of Ford.

Ford, Ky.—It is doubtful if any other county in this state or in any other state can show such a remarkable collection of given names and surnames as are to be found within a radius of 20 miles from this town. We have Able Chump, Little Chump, Chumpy Chump and Skittles Chump. To this must be added the family of Chicken, with the eldest son christened Old Chicken and the youngest daughter Pullet Chicken. Then there is the Og family, with Barabbas Og at the head of it. One of his boys is named John L. Sullivan Og, and the youngest girl in the bunch is Snippy Og.

But that is not a circumstance to the way Phyllis Quarter has named her children. He seemed to take a delight in the oddity of his own name and to perpetuate it in the christening of his four boys. The first one, born about 19 years ago, is well known throughout the county as First Quarter.

Almost Swallowed \$1,000.

Utica, N. Y.—Eugene Smaltz, employed at Ilion, went to a clam bake a few days ago and found a rare pearl in a clam which he was about to devour. The pearl is said to be worth about \$1,000. It is different from most pearls, as it is very dark, and shows purple, blue and black. It weighs four and one-eighth carats, and is without a flaw.

Camera Fiend Hold Up Stage Girl and Accomplice Play Bandit to Get Realistic Photo.

San Francisco.—Eighteen passengers on the stage from Harbin Springs to Callatoga were given a bad fright the other day when the stage was held up by masked highwaymen, who commanded them to dismount and line up on the side of the road. One of the passengers named Silverstein was forced to search the victims. After all the money had been secured Silverstein was ordered to return the plunder and saw the robber disappear in the undergrowth. A moment later Miss Hayes, daughter of the proprietor of Harbin Springs, appeared with a camera and explained that the hold-up had been a joke. The passengers were little inclined to regard it as such. Especially angry was Silverstein.

Long Life Due to Lemons.

Philadelphia.—"Uncle" Richard Toomes, who has been a resident of the Odd Fellows' home, Seventeenth and Tioth streets, since July 15, 1898, celebrated his ninety-eighth birthday the other day, and, as has been his custom for several years, he spent most of the day at the home of his nephew, Thomas Toomes, Falls of Schuylkill, where a family reunion was held. In company with William Fryer, a fellow resident of the home, and R. R. Shrook Uncle Richard was given a 50-mile ride by Dr. Sweaney, in his large touring automobile, before being dropped at the home of his nephew. The run was through Fairmont park, West Philadelphia, Delaware and Montgomery counties.

"Uncle" Richard was born in England, August 11, 1807, came to this country in 1822, and followed his trade as a cloth weaver near Darby until 1878, when he retired. Despite his age he is well preserved, and has never used spectacles, being able to read and print without the aid of

glasses. He thinks his long life is due to the fact that lemons have been his chief medicine. On April 14, 1848, he was made a member of Kingsessing lodge, No. 309, I. O. O. F., and is one of the oldest members of the order in Pennsylvania.

Want New Charter.

A supplementary royal charter is being sought by the University of New Zealand to enable it to confer degrees of a novel character. Among them are bachelor, master and doctor of commerce, public health, agriculture, engineering, dental surgery and veterinary science.

The Death Chamber.

By Stephen Crane.

A sergeant, a corporal and 14 men of the Twelfth regiment of the line had been sent out to occupy a house on the main highway. They would be at least a half a mile in advance of any other picket of their own people.

Sergeant Morton was deeply angry at being sent on this duty. He said that he was overworked. There were at least two sergeants, he claimed furiously, whose turn it should have been to go on this arduous mission. He was treated unfairly, he was abused by his superiors; why did any fool ever join the army, as for him he would get out of it as soon as possible; he was sick of it; the life of a dog. All this he said to the corporal, who listened attentively, giving grunts of respectful assent.

On the way to this post, two privates took occasion to drop casually to the rear and pilfer in the orchard of a deserted plantation. When the sergeant discovered this absence, he grew black with a rage which was an accumulation of all his irritations.

"Run, you!" he howled. "Bring them here! I'll show them—" A private ran swiftly to the rear. The remainder of the squad began to shout nervously at the two delinquents, whose figures they could see in the deep shade of the orchard, hurriedly picking fruit from the ground and cramming it within their shirts, next to their skins. The beseeching cries of their comrades stirred the criminals more than did the barking of the sergeant. They ran to rejoin the squad, while holding their loaded bosoms and with their mouths open with aggrieved explanations.

A moment later the squad moved on toward its station. Behind the sergeant's back Jones and Patterson were slyly passing apples and pears to their friends, while the sergeant expounded eloquently to the corporal. "You see what kind of men are in the army now! Why, when I joined the regiment it was a very different thing, I can tell you. Then, a sergeant had some authority, and if a man disobeyed orders he had a very small chance of escaping something extremely serious. But now! Good God! If I report these men, the captain will look over a lot of beastly order sheets and say" (there

Another man yelled: "Keep off my legs! Can't you walk on the floor?"

To the windows there was a kind of mob of slobbering men, who brushed their eyes even as they made ready their rifles. Jones and Patterson came stumbling up the steps, crying dreadful information. Already the enemy's bullets were spilling and singing over the house.

The sergeant suddenly was stiff and cold with a sense of the importance of the thing.

There was a howl. "There they are! There they come!" The rifles crackled. A light smoke drifted idly through the rooms. There was a strong odor as from burnt paper and the powder of freecrackers.

"Now," said the sergeant, ambitiously, "we can beat them off easily if you men are good enough."

There was a fusillade against another side of the house. The sergeant dashed into the room which commanded that situation. He found a dead soldier on the floor.

"Patterson!" cried Sergeant Morton. "Yes," said Patterson, his face set with some deep-rooted quality of determination. Still, he was a mere farm boy.

"Go in to Knowles' window and shoot at those people," said the sergeant, hoarsely. Afterwards he coughed. Some of the fumes of the fight had made way to his lungs.

Patterson looked at the door into this other room. He looked at it as if he suspected it was to be his death-chamber. Then he entered and stood across the body of Knowles and fired vigorously into a group of charming plum trees.

"They can't take this house," declared the sergeant in a contemptuous and argumentative tone. He was apparently replying to somebody. A man who had been shot in the throat looked up at him. Eight men were firing from the windows. The sergeant detected in a corner three wounded men, talking together feebly.

"Don't you think there is anything to do?" he bawled. "Go and get Knowles' cartridges and give them to somebody that can use them! Take Simpson's, too." The man who had been shot in the throat looked at him. Of the three wounded men who had been talking, one said apologetically: "My leg is all doubled up under me."

Meantime the sergeant was reloading his rifle. His foot slipped in the blood of the man who had been shot in the throat.

"Why, we can hold this place!" shouted the sergeant jubilantly.

Corporal Flagler suddenly spun from his window and fell in a heap.

"Sergeant," murmured a man, as he dropped to a seat on the floor out of danger, "I can't stand this. I swear I can't. I think we should run away."

Morton, with the kindly eyes of a good shepherd, looked at the man. "You are afraid, Johnston; you are afraid," he said softly. The man struggled to his feet, cast upon the sergeant a gaze full of admiration, reproach and despair, and returned to his post. A moment later he pitched forward, and thereafter his body hung limply out of the window.

The sergeant laid his rifle against the stonework of the window frame and shot with care until his magazine was empty. Behind him, a man simply grazed on the elbow was wildly sobbing like a girl.

"Shut up," said Morton, without turning his head. Before him was a vista of fields, clumps of trees, woods, populated with little, stealthy, nesting figures.

He grew furious. "Why didn't he send me orders?" he cried aloud. The emphasis on the word "he" was impressive.

The man who had been grazed on the elbow still set up his best. "Morton's fury veered to this soldier. 'Can't you shut up? Can't you shut up? Can't you shut up? Fight! That's the thing to do! Fight!'"

A bullet struck Morton and he fell upon the man who had been shot in the throat. There was a sickening moment. Then the sergeant rolled off to a position upon the bloody floor. He turned himself with a last effort until he could look at the wounded who were able to look at him.

His arms weakened and he dropped on his face.

After an interval, a young subaltern of the enemy's infantry, followed by his eager men, burst into this reeking death chamber. But just over the threshold he halted, and remarked, with a shrug to his sergeant: "I should have estimated them as at least 106 strong." (Copyright, 1906, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

GENTLE REMINDER FOR PAPA.

Robbie Uneasy Over Time It Took to Make Printing Press.

One day papa took Robbie down to see the presses print the books and papers and pictures, and the little boy was much interested.

"Papa," said he, "let me come down every day and run the presses." "O, I couldn't do that," said his papa, "but maybe I'll have a little printing press made for you, just your size."

The weeks and months passed away and papa forgot all about his promise, but Robbie didn't. It was fully a year later that he came home from Sunday school and said: "Papa, teacher said that God made the world in six days. Is that so?"

"I guess it is," said papa. "The water and the dirt and the trees, and the dogs and birds' nests, and everything?"

"Yes." "Gee, whiz!" said Robbie. "That was quick work. Six days to make all the world, and you've been a year and ain't got that printin' press done yet!"

—The American Boy.

Explained.

"Say paw?"

"Well son?"

"What is meant by running gear?"

"A woman's tongue, my son."—Milwaukee Sentinel.

