

# HANDLING WHITE HOUSE VISITORS

by EDWARD B. CLARK

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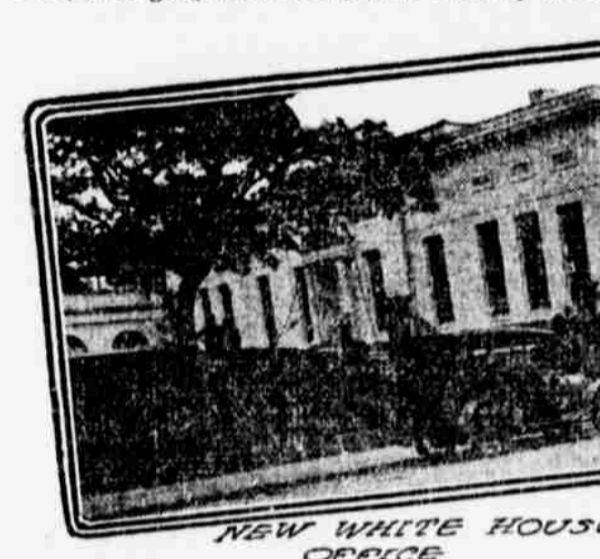
**L**ITTLE BY LITTLE President Taft has come into direct line with one of the Roosevelt policies, and he will follow it in the future as he has been following it for some weeks. It will be the rule at the summer capital at Beverly, Mass., as it is today the fixed rule of procedure in the White House.

The Roosevelt policy which President Taft finally has adopted as his own is the method of receiving visitors which was in force during the colonel's tenure of office. It is possible that President Taft never will be able to adopt the Roosevelt policy of getting rid of his visitors, because the two men are constitutionally different in at least one respect. It must be said, however, that the Roosevelt plan of receiving guests has done a good deal to save the tempers of White House visitors and the time of Mr. Taft.

As everybody knows, an addition was made to the White House offices some time ago. In the Roosevelt days callers went into the cabinet room and from there either were ushered into the adjoining room, where the president sat, or waited while Mr. Roosevelt came out and made a circuit of the cabinet room, speaking to one caller after another and getting through with his work quickly and yet without giving offense.

Now President Taft has a circular room all to himself, and while the visitors are allowed the two big rooms outside, it is from these rooms they had their way to the president's presence, being let in eight or ten at a time, and not one at a time, as was the case when Mr. Taft first took office.

The president has adopted the Roosevelt method of passing from visitor to visitor learning the wants of each and trying as best he can to suit each caller and to get rid of him as quickly as courtesy will permit. President Taft, however, is so good natured and is so humanly inter-



NEW WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

ested in matters not connected with politics or legislation that of his own volition he lingers long frequently with individual visitors, and so while the method of reception hastens things in a measure it cannot offset the delay that comes from the president's apparent desire to have every guest put into good humor and to leave him "with a smile in his heart."

At the outset of the Taft administration visitors saw him one at a time and the one who was talking to him did not feel the spur of haste which is now felt by the presence in the room of half a dozen or a dozen other visitors, all eagerly waiting their turn and occasionally shifting uneasily in their seats because of the time that the one who has the president's ear is taking up.

President Roosevelt, just as President Taft, was humanly interested in a great many things which did not affect public matter. For instance, if a well-known sportsman called Mr. Roosevelt would perhaps talk to him for half an hour about big game shooting or the best way to reach the haunts of some wild creature which the colonel never had had the pleasure of meeting at the end of the gun. One of President Taft's hobbies is baseball, and every league team that visits Washington calls at the White House, where its members talk of curves, inshoots, drop balls and the best way to place hits, to the man who, weary of railroad legislation and tariff talk, is willing in spirit to get on the diamond for a few minutes.

President Taft's good nature is proverbial. During the late spring and early summer in Washington school children literally by the thousands poured into the capital. It seems that in some cities the children of the high schools give entertainments during the winter and charge admission thereto. The money that is thus obtained is used to pay the expenses of the pupils to Washington. In cases where the children's parents are able to bear the expenses of the trip the money is used to pay the expenses of boys and girls who otherwise could not undertake the journey.

One day at the White House there appeared a delegation of 450 school children. The president had a number of appointments with senators and representatives and with prominent men from a distance. Notwithstanding this he told his secretary that the door should be thrown open and that the school children should be admitted. He not only made them a speech, but he shook hands with each one and had a word beyond the perfunctory "Glad to see you," to say to each pupil as he or she went by.

The story of the welcome which the 450 children had went abroad and for days the president's mornings were busy with the work of welcoming the pupils of schools from all the eastern states. The children always are accompanied by several teachers, who chaperon them and make preparations for their sightseeing. As soon as they reach Washington the representative in congress from the district or districts in which the schools are situated are called upon,



WHITE HOUSE

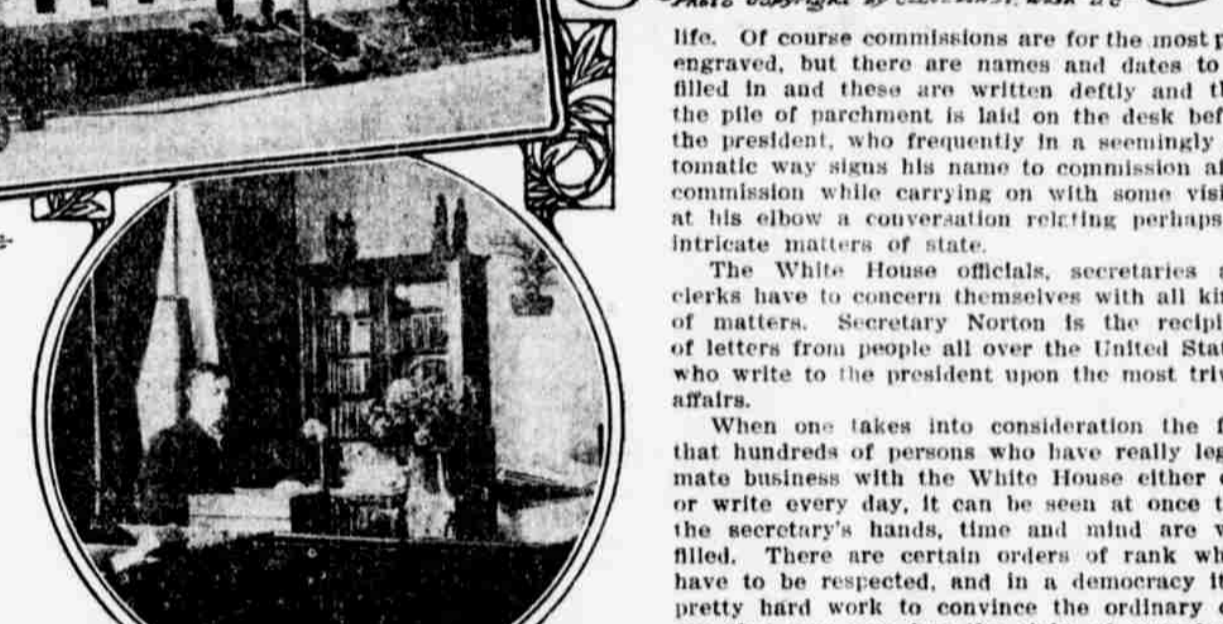
CHARLES D. NORTON, SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT



THE BLUE PARLOR WHERE PRESIDENT AND MRS. TAFT RECEIVE THEIR GUESTS



PRESIDENT TAFT'S NEW PRIVATE OFFICE



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT

and the congressmen in nearly every case lead the way to the presence of the president.

The wonder is if the country knows how much hard work goes on in the White House, not only in the president's office, but in all the adjoining offices. If anyone envies the private secretary his position perhaps he would throw envy to the winds after watching Charles Dyer Norton go through one day's labor. The assistant secretary works just as hard as does the chief secretary and in the office communicating with the room of these two hard-working men is a room filled with stenographers and clerks hard at work.

There is one White House clerk who has a most painstaking job. Invitations to the semi-public White House receptions of course are engraved, but as the name of each person invited must appear on the engraved ticket of admission which accompanies the invitation, one line of the ticket must be left blank because the engraving of 4,000 individual names, one to go on each card, would be an endless task and a tremendous expense. It is the duty of one of the clerks to fill in the names and to do it so that the writing shall look as though it were engraved. This he does in a way that deceives the ordinary eyesight. A card of admission to one of the White House receptions looks as if it were all the work of the engraver, so fine is the handcraft of the man who fills in the vacant line with the tracing of his ordinary pen.

About a year and a half ago the clerk who did this engraving died and it became necessary to find some one to take his place. It was supposed that this would be a hopeless task, or that at the best the services of a man must be obtained who after long practise might be able to accomplish what his predecessor so successfully had done. To the surprise of everybody the first cards of invitation that went out were just as deceptive as far as engraving and handwriting were concerned as were those that had gone from the desk of the man who for years had labored at the task and had arrived at a perfection which it was supposed no one without months of practise could reach.

One of President Taft's daily tasks is to sign the commissions of officers of the army and navy, and of men appointed to various positions in civil

life. Of course commissions are for the most part engraved, but there are names and dates to be filled in and these are written deftly and then the pile of parchment is laid on the desk before the president, who frequently in a seemingly automatic way signs his name to commission after commission while carrying on with some visitor at his elbow a conversation relating perhaps to intricate matters of state.

The White House officials, secretaries and clerks have to concern themselves with all kinds of matters. Secretary Norton is the recipient of letters from people all over the United States, who write to the president upon the most trivial affairs.

When one takes into consideration the fact that hundreds of persons who have really legitimate business with the White House either call or write every day, it can be seen at once that the secretary's hands, time and mind are well filled. There are certain orders of rank which have to be respected, and in a democracy it is pretty hard work to convince the ordinary citizen that any man has the right of precedence. As far as precedent is concerned the president's audiences are governed by the supposed importance of the visitor's official business. For instance, if a senator is waiting to see the president and a cabinet officer happens to come in the member of the president's official family always will see President Taft first unless he says specifically that his business is of little importance and expresses a willingness that the senator shall get to the president ahead of him.

A newspaper man with whom President Taft has had frequently personal relations for some years went to the White House one morning and told Mr. Taft that he would like to see him alone for a minute if he could, and so the president took him into a side room and closed the door. They staid together talking for fifteen minutes and then the newspaper man went out into the president's main office, leaving the president behind him to write a letter in seclusion. On entering the president's office the caller met a senator who had been waiting for fifteen minutes. The senator is a jovial soul and with mock solemnity of spirit he bowed low to the newspaper man. "Would you mind going back to ask the president," said the senator, "if now that he has completed his affairs of state with a newspaper correspondent he will consent to see an humble senator of the United States?"

The ambassadors and ministers representing foreign countries in Washington are great sticklers for precedence and every known means has to be taken to prevent giving them offense. It is almost impossible for any human being except one or two of the state department officials, to keep rigid track of the rank of the diplomats and the attaches at all the foreign legations in Washington. So it occasionally happens that some second assistant secretary of the legation of the king of the cannibal islands is allowed to get into a room ahead of the first assistant secretary of the legation of the king of ballyhoo, and then there are black looks which if they could be put into words would be tantamount to a declaration of war against the United States.

The American officials in Washington life are not above being piqued if a junior gets in ahead of a senior, though troubles of this kind are confined as far as Americans are concerned almost wholly to social offenses, for senators, representatives, supreme court judges and the rest have finally made up their minds that at the White House one must take his chances of precedence.

## ODD LOVE MAKING

Balcony Plays Star Part in Portugal's Wooing.

Girl Lowers Cord and Draws Up Admirer's Note—If Parents Approve He Is Permitted to Call.

Lisbon.—Marriage, as in the lives of many, is certainly the most important event in that of the Portuguese woman, and, what is more, in the early days of courtship it is attended with some romance, for there is less of business and more of romance in the ways of the Portuguese lover. This is how the Portuguese cavalier conducts his affairs de coeur: If he sees a pretty girl in the street with whom he would like to become acquainted, he follows her. He follows her in the face of all difficulties—chaperons and duennas—right to her door, and he notes the address.

Next day he comes again and if the young lady approves of him she will most certainly be on the lookout, but sometimes hard fate, an angry guardian or a stern parent prevents her, and then the gallant youth is kept waiting.

So if during a ramble through Portugal you should notice a young man loitering at the corner of the street or gazing intently at a house, you must not imagine that he is meditating a burglary or anything so desperate, but know that he is merely a harmless and amorous youth gazing at the windows of his lady love.

Be sure if there is a way she will not keep him waiting long, for the Portuguese girl is a past master in the art of intrigue.

Soon she leans over the balcony and smiles at him, and the happy youth, thus encouraged, ties a note, in which



Soon She Leans Over the Balcony and Smiles at Him.

he declares his undying passion, to the cord which the fair lady has dropped from the balcony. The next day the young man, buoyed with hope, comes again, but this time he is bolder, for he rings at the door.

If the inquiries which the lady's parents will doubtless have made prove satisfactory, he is admitted to make the acquaintance of the young lady and her family, and then should he please and the lady's father be prepared to give the necessary dot, wedding bells will end this little romance.

Once married, the death knell of romance and all else is often sounded for the Portuguese bride. Married often when yet a child, she has the cares of wifehood and motherhood thrust upon her.

For, unlike her sisters of France, marriage does not spell her emancipation, her freedom from the chaperon. The bride of today has no more freedom than the maiden of yesterday; without husband or chaperon she may not walk abroad. A jealous husband will often keep her as closely guarded as though she had taken the veil.

The lives, therefore, of the Portuguese women are often as barren and devoid of interest as those of the women in the far east. Certainly among the rising generation there is a growing unrest, a yearning for culture, a vague idea that there is a world somewhere beyond Portugal, but the lives of many are often as hedged in as their own back gardens. In fact, to many their house and family, their kinar or orange grove, represent their whole world—the only world they know. It is no unusual thing to find a Portuguese woman who has been willingly incarcerated for several years. One lady of my acquaintance told me she had not been beyond the garden for four years.

"And you are not bored?" I exclaimed in astonishment. "You do not want to go out?"

"If I should go out," she replied in her pretty broken English, "I rest not till I am returned; for who knows what may happen in my absence?"

"Go out," she continued with a shrug of her plump shoulders, "for what for should I go out? Here I have my children, my husband, my home; what more can I want?"

What indeed?

About the balcony a whole book might be written.

## LEADING MISTAKES IN LIFE

Writer Has Recorded Ten, of Which Most of Us Assuredly Have Our Share.

Some of us may be glad to be told that there are only ten life mistakes, for there seem to be so many more, but a recent writer has catalogued them. Perhaps these are only the ten leading ones from which the smaller errors arise. Let's look over the list and see how many of them are ours: First, to set up our own standard of right and wrong and judge people accordingly; second, to measure the enjoyment of others by our own; third, to expect uniformity of opinion in this world; fourth, to look for judgment and experience in youth; fifth, to endeavor to mold all dispositions alike; sixth, to look for perfection in our own actions; seventh, to worry ourselves and others with what cannot be remedied; eighth, to refuse to yield in immaterial matters; ninth, to refuse to alleviate, so far as it lies in our power, all which needs alleviation; tenth, to refuse to make allowance for the infirmities of others.

## EPIDEMIC OF ITCH IN WELSH VILLAGE

"In Dowlais, South Wales, about fifteen years ago, families were stricken en masse by a disease known as the Itch. Believe me, it is the most terrible disease of its kind that I know of, as it itches all through your body and makes your life an inferno. Sleep is out of the question and you feel as if a million mosquitoes were attacking you at the same time. I knew a dozen families that were so affected.

"The doctors did their best, but their remedies were of no avail whatever. Then the families tried a drug that was noted far and wide for its remarkable cures. People came to him from all parts of the country for treatment, but his medicine made matters still worse, as a last resort they were advised by a friend to use the Cuticura Remedies. I am glad to tell you that after a few days' treatment with Cuticura Soap, Ointment and Resolvent, the effect was wonderful and the result was a perfect cure in all cases.

"I may add that my three brothers, three sisters, myself and all our families have been users of the Cuticura Remedies for fifteen years. Thomas Hugh, 1650 West Huron St., Chicago, Ill., June 29, 1909."

## TOO SHORT A TIME.



Wise—Why did that woman's club disband?

Sharpe—The majority adopted a resolution limiting the time of each member for speaking on any topic to two hours.

## A Dreamer.

"You say your boy Josh is a dreamer?" said the literary lady. "Does he write poetry or romances?"

"Oh," replied Farmer Cornloss, "he don't write anything. But he jes' natcherally refuses to get up till 9 o'clock."

## Why He Believes Her.

Evangeline—Rachel never can tell anything without exaggerating it.

John—That's why I believe her when she tells her age.

Remember, girls, that pinning a \$17 hat on a 17 cent head doesn't increase the value of the head.

The fellow who buries the hatchet may still have a knife up his sleeve.

There's vitality, snap and "go" in a breakfast of

## Grape-Nuts

and cream.

Why? Because nature stores up in wheat and barley The Potassium Phosphate In such form as to Nourish brain and nerves. The food expert who originated

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