

# POLITICS LAWYERS' CREED

Scratch an Attorney and  
You Have an Active  
Participant.

By ERNEST MCGAFFEY

Because He Is Regarded as a  
"Con Man" He Gets the  
People's Business.

**S**CRATCH a lawyer and you will find a politician. It did not need an acquaintance with practical politics to know that the members of my profession were active participants in the game. But as time went on I was surprised to find the vast and far-reaching influence that they wielded. If a man really sets out to make politics his profession, he would better first study law and get admitted to the bar. The average popular impression of a lawyer in the "submerged tenth" atmosphere of political surroundings, is that he is "a confidence man." But in that environment this is considered as a valuable asset. To be "slick," "smooth," to be hailed as a "schemer" by this contingent is to have its most profound homage. In such labyrinths of the political catacombs their idea of a lawyer is a man who can make a good talk and twist the "law" any way to suit the necessities of the occasion. But he is always a man to be looked up to and consulted with.

The result of this outlook on the legal profession is to send various young fellows to the law colleges, and to the private offices of full-fledged attorneys, in their endeavor to get admitted to practice and have the right to "hang out a shingle." If they are of foreign nationality they readily acquire a knowledge of the English language, and can, of course, speak their own native tongue. In this way they used to pick up a little practice hanging around the courtrooms of the justices of the peace, particularly the police magistrates. In those days they did not even need a license to practice before a justice. And all the time they were mixing in the primary fights, getting on the delegate tickets, running for the legislature a little later on, and even making bold "stabs" at getting the nomination for state senators. I ran across them in every direction, and most of them were almost entirely innocent of any legal knowledge. "The rule in Shelley's case" was no different to them from the rule in any fellow's case. No reason why "Shelley" should have "any the best of it!"

But weren't they "hustlers!" A lot of them were "studying law," a few of them were admitted by favor of a certificate from one of the legal "mills," otherwise known as law colleges, and some others were practicing before the justices on the "catch-as-catch-can" plan of professional ethics, and depending on what is popularly known as "pull" or "drag" to get their clients off. Each justice knew about how much influence a petitioner for anyone had who appeared before him. If it was a lawyer who was also an alderman (quite a frequent occurrence), the course of justice was extremely apt to be tempered with "mercy," to say the least. Fines were "suspended" on future good behaviour, men let go on their "personal recognizance," fines were made as low as the law allowed, and other favors bestowed on many of these legal lights. An alderman who was a lawyer was expected to put in his time for nothing, depending on future political favors for his reward. There was very little money in it for him.

In the city, the lawyers had of necessity the choice of all judicial offices. Chief among these were the judgeships, and once a lawyer was elected judge he could usually retain the position for another term, often for several terms. But he would not "play politics" until along about time for an election to take place. It rather amused, and sometimes disgusted, me to see the patent hypocrisy of these members of the judiciary. Before getting the chance to run they cast dignity to the winds and were out after the nomination as hot as Hercules. They would get young fellows to chase around helping them drum up support in the bar primary (a sort of "kissing goes by favor" expression of "the Bar association"), and they were not at all too proud to shake hands with perspiring ward workers and "bosses," and even laugh at stale pleasantries about the outlook. But "Oh! What a difference in the morning"—the morning after election, I mean—if they happened to get elected. After the first flush of joy in victory had passed away, how the dignity of their position would envelop them and enfold them and swathe them with successive layers of self-esteem until they could swell up and out no longer.

How they would resent the idea, the bare idea, mind you, of mixing in anything so derogatory to the Bench, to the sacred Bench, as politics. As for listening to the suggestion of who would be a good man for clerk, or who might be glad to get a job as bailiff for his night and day services for months, tut, tut, think of the "ermine," think of the sanctity that doth surround a judge.

But bless you, when the time began to swing around for another election, how easily and sincerely these good men forgot all about that assumption of aloofness and political chastity. You would meet them in the little petty back halls in the various wards, at the downtown meetings and at the clubs, and they always remembered you (if you were active in the party), and they always had a choice lot of "guff" about the principles of the party, which, translated into the vernacular meant: "I want to hold on to my job." Why, these fellows were occasionally the most ungrateful and palpably hypocritical "skates" I ever met. The most ordinary "ward worker" could see through such a game as this without a second glance.

Of course the corporation counsel's office, with a bunch of assistants, was a fruitful place for a bestowal of legal jobs. It had many a tough legal nut to crack, and was a busy office. Being right in the lime-light, and with so many matters of importance, the head of the office had to be somebody who could do more than "put up a bold front."

The city attorney's office, being an elective one, was a plum eagerly sought by the more active of the purely political attorneys. He had a number of positions under him of assistants in the running of the office, and these places were regularly filled from the legal ranks of the party. Here, then, were more niches to be filled up with legal timber; and if a young politician had "been admitted to the bar" he had a chance of going in and getting a salary from the start and an opportunity for experience which would be invaluable to him. All the city attorneys I ever knew were orators, excepting one: They were all active in party work and party councils, and sometimes graduated from this office either to higher political positions or to positions with big corporations if they chanced to develop unusual capacity as lawyers.

There were other departments, often appointive, where legal talent was required, and there was always some political attorney "ready at the drop" of an interview to shoulder the white man's burden and "take a hack" at the city treasury. It is a noticeable fact that lawyers as a rule (I don't say it because I am one myself) are honest in the practice of their profession. I mean by this that they don't embezzle money and prove unfaithful to the trusts placed in them in as great a proportion as other professional and business men. The statistics show this, strange as it may seem. Some people claim that this is because they know the penalties better. In



He Was Followed by a Hebrew Lawyer of Wit.

reality, it is because the transgressions are fewer. I never saw a lawyer in an appointive or elective position drawing a salary from the party, who was not expected to be a "live proposition" as a worker for the party's good.

You could tell an ex-judge from a full-fledged one just as easily as you can tell among a crowd of fishermen who has caught a string and who has had "fisherman's luck." An ex-judge had a chastened look usually, not at all despondent, but a reminisciential air of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and days of long ago." The present incumbent was sometimes radiant, oftener severe.

"As who should say, I am Sir Oracle, And when I open my lips let no dog bark." At the various banquets with which the political world amused itself, the lawyers were always on hand in large numbers, and were depended on for most of the speech-making. In the

mayorality elections and the ward elections they were also active, and the brunt of the "silver-tongued" oratory was invariably borne by the members of the legal profession. I remember at one club banquet where a certain very eloquent young lawyer arose and began his flowery speech with something like the following: "Sprung from a race whose blood dates back to the dawn of the revolution," and so on. He was followed by a Hebrew lawyer of wit and worth, who did not particularly fancy the first speaker. This gentleman struck an attitude and launched his oration in the following terms: "Sprung from a race whose blood dates back to the dawn of creation," and so on and so forth. It was unanimously voted that the second speaker was entitled to the claim of "first blood."

In the city council you would always find the lawyers to the front;



Even Laugh at Stale Pleasantries About the Outlook.

and on the committee requiring the handling and disbursing of money none was complete without a lawyer on it. The study of their profession, and their opportunities for speaking, developed them in the matter of presenting ideas shorn of surplus words, and while they were not by any means the wittiest of the council orators, they were usually the weightiest.

It is really amazing to look up and ascertain what a remarkable influence the lawyers have had in politics, and to reflect that this influence is steadily held up in present times. New laws are being ground out regularly every session by state legislatures, old laws repealed, and laws rendered null by decisions of the supreme courts are followed by fresh batches of legislation. We have too many laws in this country. Don't you think so? And we don't enforce enough of the good ones!

And yet, and yet, my experience in politics has convinced me that the haven of lawyers in the political strife of the country makes generally for the good. I say this because I have known hundreds of them, and as a class they are honest, and collectively intelligent. As office-holders I have found them capable, including myself. As legislators I have not had much experience with them. But the criticism that I would pass upon them is not that they hold so many of the offices, but that they make too many laws.

One young lawyer of my acquaintance whose ambition once ran to the nomination for sheriff, was shown that resourcefulness is not entirely absorbed by the members of his guild. He was an Irishman, living in a county where the vote was a German one as to majority. He figured over the situation with an Irish friend of his who had been brought up from boyhood in the German settlements, and who spoke German like a native. At last he came to the conclusion that it couldn't be done.

"They've got 112 votes to our 80, the very best way you can figure it," he announced to his faithful lieutenant.

"Do I get the chief deputyship if you win?" was the answer.

"Certainly," was my friend's reply.

"Leave it to me," was the mysterious response.

On convention day the Irishman who spoke German circulated among the Germans who came from his part of the county and who were trying for a candidate of their own. The other German contingent had a candidate also, and the Americans and Irish were secretly and solidly for my friend McHugh. The Germanized Irishman got his German friends to throw "a complimentary vote" to McHugh "just for the first ballot, d'ye see," to the number of enough votes, when the Irish and Americans came in solid, to barely scrape McHugh in on the first ballot, leaving the worthy Germans to "hold the bag." By much "soothing" afterwards a truce was effected, and McHugh triumphantly elected. But he didn't run for sheriff next time.

ERNEST MCGAFFEY.  
(Copyright, 1908, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

Elliot: There are new eras in one's life that are equivalent to youth—are something better than youth.

# ROUND THE CAPITAL

Information and Gossip Picked Up Here  
and There in Washington.

## Potomac Flats Being Transformed to Park



**W**ASHINGTON.—Whatever the capital city of the nation may have lacked in the past in the way of park accommodations for the comfort and enjoyment of the general public, such condition will not exist after this summer, for rapid work is being done upon the flats lying along the Potomac frontage of the city, and the waste land is being transformed into a garden spot that will make it one of the most delightful public parks in the country. Instead of the desolate stretches of swamp and tangled thickets and neglected commons there are now verdant lawns and trees and shrubbery and flowers, and, above all, walks and drives and seats where the public may view the river and the surroundings which have thus been created.

Some persons are rather skeptical when the topic of the pleasures of a

summer spent in Washington is discussed with any enthusiasm. They think of the range of the thermometer and what it means to humanity exposed to such weather conditions, and that consideration is enough in their estimation to put Washington out of the question as a place where anyone would willingly spend the summer.

At the same time it is recognized by thousands that Washington has not only many advantages as a summer living place, but also that it possesses attraction. The temperature is not ignored by such, but they appreciate the fact that not all days are marked by excessive or even uncomfortable summer weather conditions. Even this year, which thus far has been hot and dry, generally speaking, as compared with the weather of last year and the year before, has been marked by periods of cool days and nights, and at times an atmosphere that had a tonic quality, such as one is accustomed to experience in more northern latitudes.

Then there is the charm of the city in its summer garb, the most beautiful to be found in any city in the world, and that beauty not alone in the adornment of one section, but in its general extent throughout the entire area.

## Memorial to Bishop Satterlee Planned



**A**NOTHER interesting thing connected with Washington life is the move which is on foot for an additional memorial to the late Rt. Rev. Henry Yates Satterlee, the bishop of Washington who filled such a large place in the religious and moral life of the capital city. It is now proposed to make into a magnificent church the small chapel founded by the dead prelate at Twilight Park, Haines Falls, in the Catskill mountains.

Although several hundred miles away from Washington, the present All Angels' church at Twilight Park is practically a part of the diocese of Washington. It is inseparably connected with the local diocese through the late Bishop Satterlee. This picturesque little church is perched on the side of one of the beau-

tiful mountains of the wooded Catskills, 1,900 feet above the plain which it overlooks. And one could say that in its present stage it was almost literally built by Bishop Satterlee with his own hands, and its services of prayer, praise and sacrament carried on by him for years.

Now it is proposed to enlarge the structure, make it entirely of stone and beautify it, as a memorial to the man who gave the inspiration for its starting.

The history of the church dates back to 1895, when the mission of All Angels was established at Twilight Park. For several years before that time desultory services had been held in a small building in the settlement. Bishop Satterlee made his summer home there and he became interested in the mission. Its first regular service was held June 16, 1895, in the cottage where Bishop Satterlee and his family lived. At that service there was a celebration of the holy communion, at which the bishop officiated. During the summer services were held in a small building near-by, but in the fall it was decided to build a church.

## Guarding the Precious Declaration



**C**ONSIDERABLE interest was aroused the other day by the report that the president had given a permit to a man who wanted to see with his own eyes the original copy of the Declaration of Independence, or rather to see what is left of that precious and venerated document.

However, the permit must have died a-borning, for it did not materialize, but if such permit had been issued and had been presented at the department of state it would have enabled its holder to have the first view of the Declaration of Independence that has been had since the spring of 1903.

Even before 1903 it had been kept in the safe.

There had been too much light of day before that. In fact, there had been too much of a good many things; too much folding, too much rolling, too much handling, and, alas! too much stealing of its immortal language by a wet press copying operation resorted to in 1820.

So it went into retirement in the safe, being brought out only upon special requests.

In 1903 the late John Hay, then secretary of state, appointed a committee to examine the condition of the declaration and to recommend what should be done to preserve it. The committee found it creased and bereft of its ink, but they were "pleased to find no evidence of mold or other disintegrating agents." They recommended that the document be kept dark and dry, and their recommendation has been religiously followed.

## New Plan Helps Aliens to Get Work



**S**TRANGERS in a strange land have every reason to feel that Uncle Sam is doing his best to get them located in places where they will find the greatest benefits. This is clearly shown by the facts and figures which set forth the work of the division of information of the bureau of immigration and naturalization. This bureau is succeeding in a remarkable way in diverting hundreds of poor aliens from crowded centers of the country to fertile farms and other places where there is a big demand for that class of laborers. This bureau is charged by an act of congress with the great undertaking of promoting a beneficial distribution of admitted aliens and others seeking employment, but the

actual work of distribution is conducted by the information branch of the immigration service in New York city.

The method employed is to send out cards to all persons unable to secure necessary help, including farm laborers, common laborers and mechanics. Whatever kind of help is needed is indicated by the replies on the return postal cards. About 900,000 cards have been scattered broadcast over the country.

The following shows the various states to which aliens and others have been distributed and the number to each state: Alabama, 3; Connecticut, 7; Delaware, 1; Georgia, 23; Illinois, 23; Indiana, 1; Iowa, 31; Kansas, 5; Kentucky, 18; Maryland, 10; Massachusetts, 2; Michigan, 18; Minnesota, 29; Mississippi, 10; Missouri, 9; Montana, 2; Nebraska, 9; New Jersey, 71; New York, 181; North Carolina, 2; North Dakota, 8; Ohio, 13; Oklahoma, 35; Pennsylvania, 55; South Carolina, 22; South Dakota, 1; Texas, 4; Vermont, 227; Virginia, 7; West Virginia, 1; Wisconsin, 9.