

# SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL By Carter Field FAMOUS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

Washington. — More pure hokum is being dispensed in the fight on President Roosevelt's proposal to enlarge the Supreme court, and more is expected as the debate grows hotter, than is usual even in a senate debate.

The principal cry against it is that it is a long step toward a dictatorship; that Mr. Roosevelt is grasping for "more power than a good man should want, or a bad man should have."

Some of the very men making this charge are supporting a constitutional amendment — to permit congress to override Supreme court decisions by a two-thirds vote of both houses—which would lend itself much more effectively to the use of a dictator.

Advocates of the plan make much of the point that it is necessary to keep the high court in touch with the times—that the "nine old men" are living in the past. But those making this point do not mention that the "new blood" they scream for would be only temporary; that the Roosevelt plan, if successful, might easily lead to a court of 15 justices, at some future day, all of whom might be 85 years old and utterly out of sympathy with whatever administration might then be in power.

Opponents of the President say that this action would destroy public confidence in the Supreme court. But it is rather interesting that the net effect of the proposal has been to bring forth a tremendous demonstration of popular approval for the high nine—certainly amazing in view of the election results of last November. Nor do they talk much, in making this point, about the many instances in the past where the number of justices has been changed.

Friends of the President insist that the step is absolutely necessary in carrying out the "mandate" of the people in the 46 to 2 victory of the President last year. But they do not mention that there was no reference to any tinkering with the court in the campaign—that on the contrary both sides talked about clarifying amendments.

## Blames High Court

The President in his victory dinner speech would have the people believe that the high court stands in the way of flood prevention and dust bowl remedying. Which surprised even government lawyers, who had been priding themselves on their "victory" in the T. V. A. decision, which permitted building dams for flood and navigation purposes, and even permitted sale of "incidentally produced" electricity.

Friends of the plan talk of the difficulty—almost impossibility—of getting through an amendment to the Constitution. Whereas the old document has been amended beyond recognition in the lifetime of those speaking—amendments permitting income taxes, direct election of senators, compelling woman suffrage, imposing prohibition and then repealing it, all despite highly militant minorities in opposition.

Much of the difficulty of the child labor amendment, incidentally, on which friends of the proposal lay such stress, has been due to two things — a religious angle, which seemed to some to open the door to federal interference with religious schools — and a sectional unwillingness to surrender what was regarded as an economic advantage.

But senator after senator, who is desperately opposed to the very things that Mr. Roosevelt wants to open the door for by his court change, has suddenly become loud in his insistence that it is a constitutional amendment giving the federal government power to regulate wages and hours and working conditions, rather than a "packing" of the Supreme court, which is desirable.

All this is a natural and logical political sequence, of course, for these same senators, and those who agree with them, are much more confident of beating the President in a fight for a constitutional amendment than by a majority vote in either house or senate.

It has been a long time since any President has turned on so much heat in a fight. Every ounce of pressure Mr. Roosevelt can bring to bear is turned on.

## Causes Surprise

There is much surprise in Washington that the country should have so completely accepted, at full face value, President Roosevelt's decision to retire from the White House in January, 1941. It was first printed in the authorized and Roosevelt edited article of Arthur Krock, in the New York Times, which roused so many heartburnings among the White House correspondents. It was repeated in a speech a few days later.

What causes the surprise here is that neither the authorized story nor the speech, nor some interviews with groups of senators carried any conviction whatever to Capitol Hill. They say that the whole idea carries with it too many qualifications—to many "ifs" and too many "hopes" and "ambitions."

The highly interested politicians read into the President's words much more of a threat than a promise. They regard it as almost an ultimatum—the President gets what he wants in the way of Supreme court enlargement, regulation of wages and hours in industry, salvation for the farmers, etc., or else!

The "else," of course, means to their minds that he will go to the country again in 1940, demanding an endorsement of his policies and a mandate to carry on—not because he wants to do that, but because that may be the only way in which he can be sure that his ideals for this country are made to come true.

Many are pointing out that the public reception of Calvin Coolidge's intimation that he would not run again was far different. Perhaps because of the peculiar New England phraseology—the words "I do not choose." It is astonishing to look with hindsight on the reactions to that statement, made in the early summer of 1927—practically a year before the convention would meet which would nominate his successor.

## Yet He Might Run

Politicians and editors alike construed that phrase to mean that Mr. Coolidge did not want to run, but that if there were enough clamor for it, or enough demonstrated need for it, or something else which might appeal to his mind, he would make the sacrifice.

The truth is that a great many people believe to this day that precisely that construction was in Mr. Coolidge's mind. Lots of leaders tell strange stories, and some of them have told them publicly, of Mr. Coolidge's irritation at the "Boy Wonder" after Herbert Hoover was nominated. The then head usher of the White House, Ike Hoover, told in his memoirs of the bad humor Coolidge was in up in Wisconsin, right after the move to stamper the Kansas city convention for drafting him, failed to materialize.

But be that as it may, very few politically astute persons in Washington attach much importance to what Mr. Roosevelt has said about January, 1941.

## Baffling Question

San Francisco's congressmen, and the Roosevelt administration as well as baffled as to what is to be done about the electric power situation in the Golden Gate city. In the recent municipal election, despite every possible effort by the national administration, and despite the requirements of law and various complications, the voters again refused to approve a bond issue for the purpose of the city taking over the local electric system.

The trouble is that the law under which San Francisco obtains the power from the Hetch Hetchy project requires that the power must never be sold to any private utility, but must be distributed solely by governmentally owned agencies. San Francisco has ignored this law, passed back in the early days of the Wilson administration. It has never provided its own distribution system, and has repeatedly voted down every proposal made with a view to complying with the law.

Just before the election on March 9 the Pacific Gas and Electric company, which now buys the Hetch Hetchy power and sells it to San Franciscans, reduced its rates to customers ten per cent.

One apparently simple answer to the dilemma would be for congress to pass a bill repealing the restriction in the original Hetch Hetchy bill. The San Francisco members of the house, however, feel that this is impossible.

## Comes an Impasse

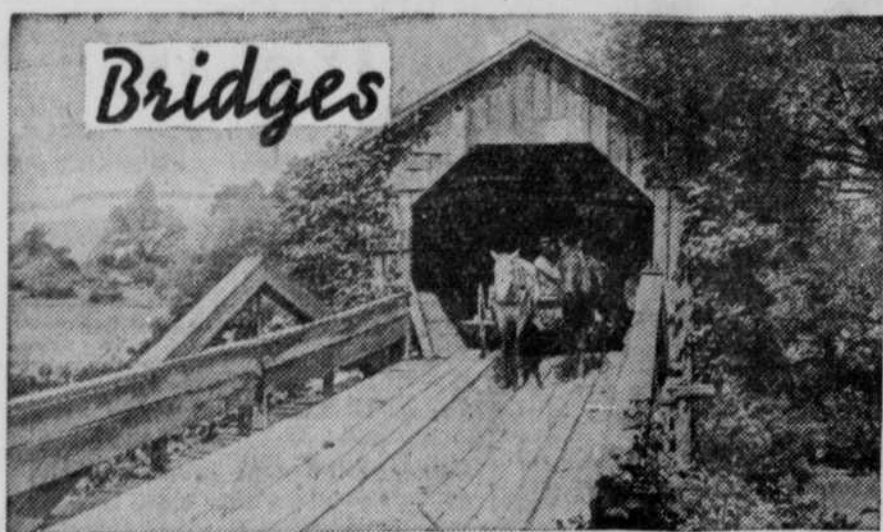
So the situation becomes something of an irresistible force and an immovable body. The San Francisco voters simply will not agree to spend their money—or approve bonds which will saddle the cost on them for the future—and the government will not agree to remove now a prohibition which San Francisco itself asked for nearly a quarter of a century ago.

It is expected that Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, under whose jurisdiction the situation is, and who is himself a strongly pro-government ownership man as far as the electric field is concerned, will consult Attorney General Homer S. Cummings about the next step, with the possibility that the government will bring suit to compel San Francisco to comply with the law, and stop selling Hetch Hetchy produced power to a privately owned utility.

Which may mean, of course, that the electric company in San Francisco would merely install a steam plant and go ahead, while Hetch Hetchy power would have to be auctioned around to other California towns willing to comply with the conditions by establishing government owned distribution systems.

San Francisco will still have the water supply, which is what it really wanted most at the time of the original legislation.

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Colonial Covered Bridge in Virginia.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

FEW works of man more profoundly affect his destiny than does the bridge.

An empire was at stake when Xerxes threw his pontoons across the Hellespont, and Rome's long arm stretched over Europe when Caesar's army bridged the Rhine. Lack of pontoons on which to cross the Seine, Napoleon complained, kept him from ending a war. Our own Gen. Zachary Taylor reminded the War department that its failure to send bridge materials had prevented him from "destroying the Mexican army."

Yet history, being so largely the annals of wars, fails to emphasize the importance of bridges in everyday life. When you reflect how bridges now make travel easy and swift between towns, cities, states—even between nations where rivers form frontiers—you feel that few other devices conceived by man serve more to promote understanding and mutual progress.

Ride the air across America and see how bridges dot the map. If the day be clear half a dozen may be in sight at once. From culverts over backwoods creeks to steel giants that span broad rivers, you see a bridge of some kind wherever rails or highways cross a water-course. How many bridges of all kinds America has, nobody knows. No official count exists. United States army engineers, concerned only with bridges that span navigable rivers of the United States, have more than 6,000 on their list.

Look down on any river city, such as Pittsburgh; see the steady two-way traffic that flows over its bridges, like lines of ants marching. Think of the jams, the chaos in traffic, should all bridges suddenly fail!

Trace the bridge through history and you see how its development is an index to man's social and mechanical advance.

## The Urge Is to Get Across.

Fallen trees, chance stepping stones, or swinging vines formed his first bridges. He used them in flight from enemies, to hunt, fight, or steal a wife on his own predatory quest. Fantastic old woodcuts even show us living chains of monkeys swinging from tree to tree across jungle creeks! To get across, even as when the waters parted and Israel's Children walked dry-shod over the Red sea floor, was the primary urge.

To this day, as in parts of Tibet, Africa and Peru, men still cross dizzy canyons on bridges of twisted grass and wild vines. Yet the function of these primitive structures is the same as that of the new Golden Gate bridge or the new giant at Sydney, Australia. They carry man across.

We do not know who built the first bridge. At the end of the reign of Queen Semiramis, about 800 B. C., an arched bridge spanned the Euphrates at Babylon. The legendary "Hanging Gardens," some say, consisted of trees and plants set along the roadway of this wide bridge. Explorers at Nebuchadnezzar's palace at Babylon found no traces of any bridge. Yet the use of the arch is very old thereabouts; you see proof of this in the amazing ruins of Ctesiphon palace, east of Babylon, where the vaulted ceiling of the grand banquet hall, still standing, is 85 feet high.

Romans left us fine examples of the ancient arch bridge. To this day their masonry work is unsurpassed for strength and beauty; some of their early stone bridges are still in use. Only in recent times came cast iron, steel, and cables. In our own country it was the advent first of railways and then of improved highways for motor cars and trucks which was to strew bridges from coast to coast.

In the pioneer's bold trek to our Middle West and beyond, they forded streams or used crude ferryboats drawn by cables. Often the forerunners swam their horses and oxen, and floated their heavy wagons by lashing logs on either side of the wagon boxes. Covered wagons bound for the "Indian Territory" camped at fords to rest, wash clothes, swap horses and shoe them, and to soak their tires. Today steel bridges span many such creeks; across them whiz motor cars, so fast that passengers barely catch even a glimpse of the streams that once seemed so wide.

## Built for Railroads.

Train riders, asleep or busy with books and cards, are rushed for 20 miles over the famous Salt Lake cut-off of the pioneer Union Pacific railway. The "world's longest bridge structure," it is called. Stand this trestle on end and it would reach so high, that men on the ground could not even see the top of it! Most new bridges we now build are, for highways. But when you

recall that after 1850 we laid more than 200,000 miles of rails, you can see how the railroad, first with its crude wooden trestles, scattered bridges across America. As westward migration rose to millions, the use of fords and ferries dwindled and bridges multiplied, sometimes not without local disputes.

When the first railroad bridge was started over the Mississippi at Davenport, Iowa, steamboat men enjoined its building as a "nuisance" to navigation! Abraham Lincoln, lawyer, argued the case for the railway—and the bridge was built.

"He is crazy!" men said of James B. Eads when he sought to build the largest steel-arch bridge of its time over the Mississippi at St. Louis. Doubters sniffed at Eads' use of pneumatic caissons for bridge pier foundations. "I told you so," they said, when the first two half-arches approached their junction at mid-span and failed by a few inches to fit. "Pack the arch in ice," ordered Eads. The metal shrank and the ends dropped into place.

The same taunts of ignorance were flung at John A. Roebling and his Brooklyn bridge. "Men cannot work like spiders," these critics said. "They cannot spin giant cables from fine wires high in air." Roebling died before the task was done, but his monument is the bridge that spans East river. In the half century since its completion, amazing advance has been made in the design, materials, foundations, and erection methods of bridge engineering.

And there is speed! It took more than ten years to build the Brooklyn bridge. Greater structures are built now in one-third the time. When opened in 1883, Roebling's Brooklyn bridge was called one of the "Wonders of the World." Now the George Washington bridge over the Hudson at New York has a span of 3,500 feet—more than twice that of the Brooklyn bridge. And the new Golden Gate bridge spans 4,200 feet.

## Lore of Ancient Bridges.

Our American bridges were all built yesterday, as the Old World counts time. Except that American Indians laid flimsy bridges of poles over narrow streams and sometimes sent a crowd of squaws to test a new bridge to see if it would sustain the tribe's horses, we have little of the lore, the traditions, and superstitions which cling to ancient bridges of Europe and the East.

It is even hard for us to imagine that the Caravan bridge in Smyrna may be 3,000 years old; that Homer wrote verse in nearby caves, or that St. Paul passed over this bridge on his way to preach. Or that Xerxes, the Persian king, bridged the Greek straits more than 400 years before Christ. Then, tasting grief even as Eads and Roebling, he saw a storm destroy it, so that he had to order the rough waters to be lashed and cursed by his official cursers, while he executed his first bridge crew and set another gang at the task.

Reading the papers, it was easy for us to learn all about the International bridge over the Rio Grande between El Paso and Juarez, when President Taft walked out on it to shake hands with President Diaz of Mexico. Later, by radio, we heard the Prince of Wales, now Duke of Windsor, and the diplomats speak when the Niagara Peace bridge opened to let Americans and Canadians mingle in friendly commerce.

## Myths and Folklore.

Myths and superstitions linger about many bridges. Since people often die in floods, the Romans looked on a bridge as an infringement on the rights of the river gods to take their toll. Hence, human beings first, then effigies, were thrown into the flooded Tiber by priests, while vestals sang to appease the river gods. In parts of China today a live pig or other animal is so sacrificed when rising floods threaten a bridge.

Turkish folklore reveals this same idea. In his book, "Dar Ul Islam," Sir Mark Sykes records this legend of a bridge under construction which had fallen three times. "This bridge needs a life," said the workmen. "And the master saw a beautiful girl, accompanied by a bitch and her puppies, and he said, 'We will give the first life that comes by.' But the dog and her little ones hung back, so the girl was built alive into the bridge, and only her hand with a gold bracelet upon it was left outside."

It was Peter of Colechurch, a monk in charge of the "Brothers of the Bridge," who built the Old London bridge. It was a queer structure, with rows of high wooden houses flanking each side, overhanging the Thames. Soon after its completion the houses at one end caught fire. Crowds rushed out on the bridge and hosts of people died either in the blaze or from jumping into the stream.

# UNCOMMON AMERICANS

By Elmo Scott Watson  
© Western Newspaper Union

## Schoolmaster of a Nation

HE WAS "the most popular American of the Nineteenth century, the man who had the largest influence in determining the thoughts and ideals of the American people during that period and the man to whose work many great Americans of the present day pay tribute as being the fountain of their inspiration to aspire and to achieve." He was William Holmes McGuffey, the "Schoolmaster of a Nation."

Born in Pennsylvania in 1800, McGuffey became a pioneer teacher in Kentucky after his graduation from a little college in his native state and later was offered a position on the faculty of Miami university in Ohio. Recognizing the lack of good reading material in the common schools of those days, McGuffey resolved to do something about it.

The result was the publication in 1836 of the first and in 1837 the second of a graded set of readers. The next year he published a third and a fourth reader. Then, with the help of his brother, Alexander McGuffey, who aided in the revision of the earlier works and collected much of the material for the next two, he issued his fifth and sixth Eclectic Readers.

McGuffey not only had a keen literary sense but he was also able to select from the world's best literature selections that appealed to children. That fact, combined with the high moral tone of the selections, which recommended them to parents trying to bring their children up in the way they should go, gave his readers great popularity. They sold by the millions in this country and were translated into many foreign languages so that the McGuffey influence was extended into other lands.

How great that influence was—especially in this country—it is impossible to estimate. But there is no doubt that the serious purpose of the McGuffey Eclectic Readers, their kindly spirit and their teachings of the essential virtues made children of an earlier generation better men and women today. At least, that is the unanimous testimony of many American notables—authors, educators, industrialists, statesmen—not to mention thousands of "just plain folks" who belong to the numerous "McGuffey Societies" scattered all over the United States. At regular intervals they gather together to read again their favorite selections from the Eclectic Readers and to the end of their days they cherish in their hearts the lessons they once learned from this "Schoolmaster of a Nation."

## He Saved an Empress

IF IT had not been for the resourcefulness and courage of an American dentist, the last empress of the French might have met death at the hands of an infuriated mob of revolutionists and another tragic chapter might have been written in the history of deposed royalty in that country. The empress was Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III, and the man who saved her was a Dr. Thomas W. Evans.

Not long after Louis Napoleon became emperor, Dr. Evans was made court dentist of the second empire. At that time dentistry was not the respected profession that it is today. But such was the genius of this former Philadelphian that he was held in equal esteem with all o' Napoleon's ministers.

So on September 2, 1870, when news of the disaster at Sedan reached Paris and a bloodthirsty populace began clamoring at the gates of the Tuilleries and threatening the life of the empress, she said to the officers of the palace guard "I will go to Dr. Evans. He is an American. I am sure he will render us every assistance we require." With only a veil as a disguise and accompanied by one of her servants, the empress fled by a secret passage, to where a carriage was waiting for her. Then she was driven in safety to Dr. Evans' home, only to find him absent.

When he returned, he realized that it would be dangerous for the empress to try to escape then, so she and her servant spent the night there. Meanwhile Dr. Evans had engaged private carriage and the next morning he started out with the royal fugitive on a perilous journey.

Everywhere soldiers were on the look-out for the empress but the quick-witted action and ingenious ruses of the American, more than once prevented their capture. By spending his own money freely he brought Eugenie in safety to the coast and there he persuaded the owner of an English yacht to take her to England.

Dr. Evans continued his practice in both France and America, and his inventions in his profession made him world famous. He later became one of the founders of the Red Cross society, and upon his death in 1896 he bequeathed his entire fortune of some twelve millions to American institutions.

# Harmonizing With Spring



THIS week's crop of fashions seem fully as sweet and gay and long-awaited as lovely Spring—with which they're meant to harmonize. Mary, Sue and Emily, three charming standees, know how to have day in day out chic without forfeiting that pretty silver lining in their new Spring purses.

## Hints From Mary's Boudoir.

"I'm especially fussy about the slip I wear, perhaps that's why I always sew-my-own! I never miss the few hours it takes, and I can spend the difference for a finer, better-wearing fabric. A slip that's well-behaved is a joy to yourself—others as well—and just as easy to have. So take a tip from one who knows: choose this model and a good fabric and you'll have no further slip troubles."

## A Lift for M'Lady.

"A new frock means more to me than a new fabric and a change of color—it means a lift, a new lease on life!" So says Miss Sue, a snappy sophomore who sews. "I decided 1252 had the kind of newness I want: the clever cut of the waistcoat bodice first caught my fancy, and the saucy swing skirt made me sign on the dotted line. I go for simple necklines, and I like lots of buttons too. You should see my version in royal blue silk crepe—really, it's something to be proud of."

## Designers Win Praise.

"Smart Matron your granny," retorts Emily to an intended bit of flattery regarding her new welcome-to-spring frock. "If I look as young as I feel I'll be mistaken for a Laf-a-Lot! But honestly, this new dress gives me a more dressed-up feeling than any I can remember in Springs gone by. I think Sew-Your-Own designers are smart to give us '40's' some of that swing the youngsters rave about. Do you suppose they sympathize with the poor young men

who are urged nowadays to 'Swing, Swing, dear Mother-in-law'?"

## The Patterns.

Pattern 1909 is for sizes 14 to 20 (32 to 46 bust). Size 16 requires 2 3/4 yards of 39 inch material. Pattern 1252 is for sizes 12 to 20 (32 to 38 bust). Size 14 requires 3 3/4 yards of 39 inch material plus 1/2 yard contrasting.

Pattern 1233 is for sizes 34 to 52. Size 36 requires 5 1/2 yards of 39 inch material plus 3/4 yard contrasting.

## New Pattern Book.

Send for the Barbara Bell Spring and Summer Pattern Book. Make yourself attractive, practical and becoming clothes, selecting designs from the Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns. Interesting and exclusive fashions for little children and the difficult junior age; slenderizing, well-cut patterns for the mature figure; afternoon dresses for the most particular young women and matrons and other patterns for special occasions are all to be found in the Barbara Bell Pattern Book. Send 15 cents today for your copy.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., Room 1026, 211 W. Wacker Dr., Chicago, Ill. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

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2 FULL DOZEN  
DEMAND AND GET  
GENUINE  
BAYER ASPIRIN

## LIFE'S LIKE THAT

By Fred Neher



"Next pay day you guys are gonna buy your own umbrellas!!!"