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A LETTER ABOUT EXES.

WASHINGTON HAS CHARMS THAT HOLD THEM FAST.

It is Especially Fascinating to the Ladies and to Men Who Like Society—Information Regarding Men Who Were Formerly High in Public Life.

[Special Correspondence.]
 WASHINGTON, May 1.—On the floor of the senate the other day I saw no fewer than six ex-senators, hats in hand, chatting with friends and viewing the scenes of their former triumphs or disappointments. These were Warner Miller, of New York; Thomas J. Clingman, of South Carolina; Joseph E. McDonald, of Indiana; Blanche K. Bruce, of Mississippi; Omar D. Conger, of Michigan, and Augustus H. Garland, of Arkansas. The presence of such a large number of former senators reminded me that one of the odd phases of life in Washington is the plentifulness of "exes." We see "exes" riding by in their carriages, or bogging dimes on the street corner. They sit opposite us at dinner, or hang about the barrooms waiting for an invitation to step up and take something.

The "exes" are everywhere, of all ages and colors and previous conditions of official servitude—all excepting the presidency. We have no ex-presidents resident here, though we have any number of men who escaped that great office by the skin of their teeth, and not of their own desire, but owing to circumstances over which they had no control. No former presidents are here, but there are ex-cabinet officers, ex-senators, ex-congressmen, ex-commissioners and ex-governors galore; and as for former wearers of the judicial ermine and those who once issued martial commands—the "judges" and "generals" and "colonels" and "majors"—their name is simply legion.

Men who live in the national capital for a time as servants of the people do not like to go away. They are fascinated by the lazy luxuriousness of the life, the beauty of the city and the social opportunities here presented. That form of society which is expressed chiefly in good dinners and large, fertile punch bowls most enthralls the men, while the showy afternoon and evening receptions, the teas and the endless round of dress parades known as calling bind the women fast in their toils. "What! Leave Washington and go again to the frontier?" exclaimed the pretty wife of an army officer at one of Mrs. Oates' famous receptions last week. "Why, if that is to be my fate I declare I shall commit suicide. Rather than go to the frontier and leave dear, dear Washington I will cut my throat." The pretty woman meant every word of it, too, and she made shivers run round the room by drawing a fruit knife suggestively close to the white skin of her neck. Then she seized a glass of punch, quaffed it with a laugh, and what had passed for a bit of comedy in the minds of the spectators came to an end. But it was not all comedy with the dashing woman, and her poor husband, the army officer, is out hustling night and day for the influence which may enable him to secure that boon of boons in the service—waiting orders at Washington.

"A curious commentary on this fascination of Washington life," said Representative Hitt, who is one of the brilliant conversationalists of the capital, "was afforded by the surrender of Gen. Lee at Appomattox. I was then living in the National hotel, which at the close of the war was the fashionable hotel of the city. The house was filled with army officers and their wives, and when the news came from Appomattox and the people in the streets began to shout and cheer and flaunt their flags with joy I stepped up to the parlors to see how happy the ladies were. Imagine my surprise to find three or four of them in tears, and the others looking very sad and solemn. 'What is the matter?' I asked one of them. 'Have you not heard that Gen. Lee has surrendered to Gen. Grant?' 'Yes,' she replied, half crying, 'and that is just the trouble. We know this means the end of the war, and that we must leave Washington and go away to the country to live again,' and then this woman, like several of her sisters, burst into tears. I actually believe," concluded Mr. Hitt, "that half of these gray devotees of society would have been glad to have the war continued a couple of years longer that they might have remained in the whirl of Washington society."

With both men and women fond of Washington life it is not surprising that this is the place in which the "exes" most do congregate. A man once famous and powerful, whom many people thought might himself become president of the United States, now walks or drives the streets of Washington unknown to nearly all who see him. He is a handsome man, with iron gray hair, a fine profile, an intellectual face. His name is Boutwell—"Lawyer Boutwell" he is called by the few who know him—and he was secretary of the treasury under President Grant. He was then a social as well as a political leader, and was seen almost daily at receptions and teas. Now he eschews all such frivolities, and like the average man of experience and sense, confines his social exploits to the stretching of his legs under the mahogany where there is plenty of good wine and good company.

Plenty of other "exes" of the cabinet may be seen on the streets of Washington. William A. Richardson, who succeeded Mr. Boutwell in the treasury, lives in one of the handsomest houses in Washington, where he is chief justice of the court of claims. Ex-Secretary of War Belknap is one of the best known men in the city of Washington. He grows rounder and jollier and more red in the face as the years go by, and the circle of his friends appears to be continually widening. He is a gastronome, a wit and a story teller. He makes ten or fifteen thousand dollars a year as a claim agent and spends it all. He has a lovely family and a luxurious home. The oldest ex-cabinet officer in the city

is the Hon. George Bancroft, who was secretary of the navy about forty years ago. He has lived to see the navy go through four or five distinct periods, beginning with the good old days when our ships sailed the seas as proudly and saucily as those of any nation, and embracing the glorious time of war in which we gave to the world the iron clad, the corrupt era following in which many millions were squandered in useless wooden hulks, and the renaissance now here with the steel ships and high free boards taking the place of wooden hulks and the sluggish monitors. Mr. Bancroft's claim to fame rests less upon his direction of the navy department than upon his diplomatic and literary services, and yet I have heard old naval officers say that he did much toward organizing and perfecting the navy, particularly with reference to the laws and regulations governing it. For instance, it was through his instrumentality that the old law making promotions on age alone was changed so that efficiency became a factor in winning the prizes of the service. Mr. Bancroft rarely leaves his house now, and then only to walk through the pretty garden of his H street homestead on the arm of his faithful German attendant.

John A. J. Creswell, who was postmaster general under Grant, is a prominent banker of Washington, and the occupant of a house which has in its day sheltered the families of six or eight members of the cabinet. A young and active man, who may be seen any day on the streets or in the halls of congress, as full of energy as of good humor, is ex-Postmaster General Hatton. He looks like a boy, but is a successful editor and an influential man. Another ex-postmaster general who lives in Washington is Horatio King. He was in Buchanan's cabinet, and though not then a young man, is still active and busy, taking as keen interest in public affairs as he ever did. One of his little hobbies is the writing of cards to the newspapers, but as he writes wit and sense it is not by any means an objectionable fad. The Kings live in an old fashioned house, where is held every Saturday night a sort of literary social. Here may be found nearly all of the people in Washington whose achievements in the literary field have made them old time.

A famous old man, still hale and hearty, is ex-Secretary of the Treasury McCulloch, who has just gone to his country home, not far from Washington, for the summer. Like Mr. King, he delights in newspaper writing, and like many old men is as fond of controversy as of his pipe. One of the joys of his life consists of inviting to his table the apostles of protection, such as McKinley, Sherman or Allison, and talking tariff to them till the lamp flickers. The late Judge Kelley, of Pennsylvania, was often a guest in the McCulloch house, and it is said the pair have discussed the tariff question six or eight hours at a sitting.

Ex-Secretary and Senator Bayard is still associated with the capital, though chiefly in a social way. Ex-Attorney General Garland is making a fortune here in the practice of law. Ex-Senator Conger, of Michigan, is also a lawyer, and a successful one, though his attention is given chiefly to practice before congress. He is the very efficient and vigilant representative in Washington of the Lake Vessel Men's association, an association which embraces a merchant marine interest larger than that of the entire American merchant marine on the ocean.

Scores of other ex-senators and ex-representatives are Washington lawyers or claim agents. Ex-Senator McDonald has made a great deal of money representing certain interests before congress. Gen. B. F. Butler is a large property owner here, and generally has enough litigation of his own to keep him busy during the part of each year which he spends in Washington. Ex-Governor William Pitt Kellogg, of Louisiana, lives at Vice President Morton's hotel, and is said to make a small fortune each year by his speculations in Washington real estate. Ex-Congressman Eppa Hunton, of Virginia, whose fame as a great constitutional lawyer still continues, is a practicing attorney in Washington.

John R. Thomas, who was for ten years a member of congress from the Egypt region of Illinois, and who designed a war vessel which the navy department is now building, failed to get an office under the present administration, and is making money as a lawyer, with navy department work a specialty. One of the most prominent and prosperous lawyers at the national capital, a man who can command fees which are small fortunes in themselves, is Judge Shellabarger, an ex-member of congress from Ohio. Gen. George B. Williams, Phil Thompson, of Kentucky, and J. Hale Sypher are other ex-statesmen who are earning their bread as lawyers within the shadow of the great dome.

Ex-Pension Commissioners W. W. Dudley and James Tanner are both getting rich as pension attorneys. Dudley employs fifteen men in his office, and his clientele is rapidly extending. Whatever may be said of his political methods, Dudley is one of the most popular men in Washington, and his professional and private reputation is above reproach. An ex-senator who never cared to go into law or claims, but who is content to earn his bread as a modest, second class clerk in the war department, is Mr. Sawyer, who sat in the senate from Alabama about twenty years ago. Ex-Senator Bruce, the colored man, is a wealthy real estate owner here, and has lately been appointed to a lucrative office in the government of the District of Columbia. Among many other prominent "exes" is Dr. William A. Hammond, who was for many years surgeon general of the army. He has just built, near the residence of Mrs. Gen. Logan, a home which is a veritable palace. WALTER WELLMAN.

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THE "DOLL WOMAN."

A Cheery Little Personage Who Caters to the Children.

In a ditty little store on a back street of Brooklyn lives a smiling old woman, named Margaret Ball, who works from daylight until dark, and sings as she works. If the seventy years which she has seen have put a crack in her voice, they have not robbed it of all its sweetness, by any means. A glance in at the door of the little store makes one think of the shop of Dickens' Jenny Wren, whose back was bad and whose legs were queer. And, moreover, there is a striking resemblance between the two, in that the little Brooklyn store is used for the same purpose as was the little London room—doll's dressmaking.

The "Cheery Little Doll Woman," as the Brooklyn dolls' dressmaker is known, has a pathetic history, but no one would ever know of it if they waited for her to tell it. She is not one of the gentlemen who constantly talk of the good times that are gone, but she is none the less a gentlewoman, and she has seen much better times. When she was a dainty little girl instead of the dainty little old woman that she is now her parents were rich and lived in a big mansion in New York not far from where the Lorillard palace now stands. She was graduated from Rutgers college and was a reigning belle.

But her parents died, and the fortune, left entirely in the inexperienced girl's hands, dwindled rapidly until, presently, it was all gone, and instead of being the mistress of a big house, always open to her friends, she became the mistress of the little shop over in Brooklyn. For a few years she struggled bravely to make a living by selling her simple wares, and succeeded fairly well. But after a time the great dry goods stores became so attractive that Brooklyn women stopped buying their trifles of her, and starvation seemed to be not very far away. But it chanced that when she first opened her store some kind friend had made for its window a big rag doll with little eyes crimped about it, which was labeled "The old woman in the shoe." This attracted the attention of a little girl at about the time when the "doll woman's" prospects seemed darkest. The girl bought the rag doll. More were made, which sold readily, and now Margaret Ball makes a comfortable living from the traffic. A kind Brooklyn society girl takes time to paint the faces of the dolls, and they are regularly on sale at the exchange of the Young Women's Christian association in New York and at the various other women's exchanges in the same city.

The Federation of Women's Clubs. Representatives of sixty-four women's clubs met recently in New York city for the purpose of perfecting an organization intended to better the condition of women at large as well as the members of the clubs comprising it. Delegates were present from as far west as San Francisco and as far south as New Orleans. The title finally chosen was "The General Federation of Women's Clubs." Among the bright things said in the course of debate was this by Mrs. Jenny June Croly: "To an earnest woman co-operation is as large a thing as the universal world; to many, however, it only means to start a grocery." This meeting, coming as it did directly after the convention of the working girls' societies, indicates an interesting agitation along what are practically new lines of thought. That the tendency is to grade women more according to their ability than their pocket-books is shown by a remark made by Miss Grace H. Dodge, president of the Association of Working Girls' societies, in an address which she delivered before the federation. She told of a member of a working girls' society who sent her cook to the convention, knowing that she had the more brains of the two and would make the better delegate. "The cook," added Miss Dodge, "read a paper which was one of the best heard at the congress."

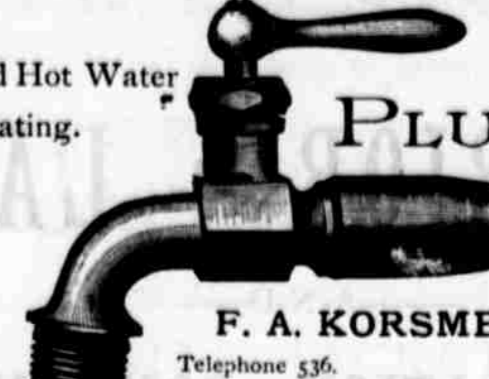
Bound to Pick a Quarrel. A gentleman was known by his acquaintances to have certain infirmities of temper which had to be endured by his family. On one occasion a friend chanced to be present at breakfast at the house. It was in August, Mr. X had not slept well and all his British blood was aroused. He found fault with everything and declared that there was nothing on the table fit to eat. After one thing and another had been sent away Mrs. X had some eggs, freshly laid the day previous and boiled to suit her husband, put before him. He looked at them crossly a moment, then took one up and broke it.

"How often have I told you, my dear," he said in a tone anything but endearing, "that I did not want eggs in August? Do you see how light the color of that is?" "Well," his wife asked, "what if it is light colored? It is perfectly fresh."

"Fresh" her husband retorted angrily; "that's nothing. Its light color shows that there's no gas in it. It is perfectly fresh, that in such warm weather hens get debilitated and lay debilitated eggs. If you really cared what I have to eat you would have thought of that."

The Work of the Missionaries. Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, the novelist, gave expression at Samoa the other day to his views regarding missionaries. They are interesting. Among other things he said: "Our religion and our morals are perhaps only tentatively Christian, but our civilization is essentially and truly Roman. At being Christians, the Polynesians make a good shot as we do. They have besides never enjoyed the advantages we possess of the civilizing and energizing power of the great Roman empire. The missionaries who came to the South Seas came exercising three distinct functions. They were, first, representatives from Christ, bringing the gospel for men; they were legates from Rome, representing those who were the inheritors of Roman civilization, and they were travelers for Birmingham. One of the most surprising things to note was the ingratitude of the trader and the merchant to the missionary. True, we might have found a position by means of money and guns, but at what a cost! We owe more to the missionaries who pacified, reassured and partly Christianized the natives."

Women Who Are Fierce Fighters. The French find that in warring with the amazons of Dahomey they must lay aside all vestiges of courtesy to the "weaker sex." The amazons have taken the field to kill or be killed. When victorious they mutilate their victims. It was in retaliation for a barbarity of this sort that a French officer recently caused a half dozen of the black female warriors to be decapitated. The fight still goes on, and at last reports the Africans seemed to have the better of the contest.

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