

GRESHAM'S CALLERS.

THE SECRETARY BESIEGED BY AN OFFICE SEEKING ARMY.

Receptions at the State Department—General Grant's Advice to Hayes—Some Trying Scenes—Running the Gantlet—Official Perplexities.

WASHINGTON, March 23.—There is something very ludicrous about this office seeking business. For two or three weeks the capital has been the theater of many little comedies, and I fear not a few tragedies, among the men who are ambitious to serve their country in one capacity or another.

It is 9 o'clock, and the throngs of government employees scurrying through the streets to their work seem unusually large, and so they are, for among them are the office seekers on their way to the various departments, each to the great public office which contains his hopes, his fears.

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I wish I could vividly describe the scene for you. Men are sitting about on sofas, chairs, even tables. Many are compelled to stand. An usher informs them that seats may be had in another ante-room, and he beckons the way, but none follows.

These candidates for the minor appointments, as ministers abroad and consuls, are a well appearing lot of men. They have good manners, good clothes, good faces. Many of them are known to be prosperous in their business or profession, and it is not dire distress but fell ambition which has driven them to this extremity.

There is something ludicrously pathetic about this great and general effort to appear at one's best—this sprucing up, this petty self denial, this careful study of words and deportment as if they were juveniles awaiting catechization and inspection by the merchant who is about to hire an office boy.

An incident which is almost tragic now occurs, and this colored man is a central figure in it. He chances to sit at the end of a desk, and his hat is not in view. Somewhat naturally, therefore, a Georgia man mistakes him for a servant and then commands, as a white man in Georgia unthinkingly commands almost any negro:

Some of these callers have been here every day for a week and haven't seen the secretary yet. There are senators here, too, and they fret and fume because the doors do not open before them. Senators are so unreasonable! During Mr. Cleveland's first term as president Mr. Vilas was for a time postmaster general. He made senators and representatives wait in his anteroom just like other people. He believed in fair play and first come first served. The congressman



DR. TALMAGE'S APPEAL. HE HELPED OTHERS—NOW HE NEEDS HELP.

were very indignant, and one day Senator Voorhees, I think it was, kicked in the door which a messenger had closed in his face. Mr. Vilas is now a senator, and though one of the most courteous and considerate men in public life finds a large number of his colleagues still cold and unmoving because he didn't throw wide open his doors for them eight years ago!

As I heard a bright woman say in the senate gallery a few days ago as she looked down upon the floor: "You men are only big boys."

Already stories are whispered round to the effect that there is trouble between the new president and the senate. They are not going to confirm some of his nominations. There is to be a big row. We always hear these stories when a new president comes in, and they remind me of the advice which General Grant gave to General Hayes when the latter came down to Washington to be president.

General Hayes asked General Grant for some hints about the work, and the old soldier replied: "You will get along all right with the people, General Hayes. They are reasonable and not difficult to please. You may even satisfy the house of representatives, but the man was never born of woman that could win the approval of the United States senate."

But I am wandering away from Secretary Gresham's anteroom. The candidates wait and wait, twirl their hats in their hands, wonder what their neighbors are after and if they are going to get it, say to themselves they'd give it up and go home if it wasn't for being laughed at by the people who know they are in Washington and for what purpose, and suddenly all in the room spring to their feet.

The secretary has entered. He has on his overcoat and carries his hat in his hand. Forty pairs of feet edge in his direction. Forty hands have an itching to grasp his. There is no stampede, no rush, no crowding. The aspirants are too well bred for that. As one of their number reaches the secretary's side the others fall back a little to give him a chance, but shuffle eagerly forward when Mr. Gresham disengages his hand and politely removes his ear from proximity to the tongue of the foremost.

It is a trying scene for all concerned—trying to the aspirants, for each of them instinctively feels he has not helped his cause a whit; trying to the secretary, because he would if he could give every one of these men a fair chance to state his case, and because he knows that not one in a dozen of them will carry home with him anything but disappointment.

And this he presses his way to the hall and is off. His bearing is admirable. He is simply trying to do the best he can to be courteous, gentle and considerate under trying circumstances. Day after day he is fatigued by ordeals like this. Yet he works on, and the aspirants hang on, and here we have a glimpse of the office seeking scenes of the day.

What I have told you of one morning in the rooms of the secretary of state is true of every morning of every cabinet minister's office, of the White House it-

self. On the part of the representatives of the government there is patience, and also keen appreciation of the fact that these men who seek official appointment have their rights and that they are worthy of respect and consideration. It is not disgraceful, though decidedly uncomfortable, to seek office amid this scramble. But how wearisome must be the grind, how sad and useless must all the pushing and pulling seem to the cabinet ministers, who know that 15 out of every 16 of this long procession must have only bitter disappointment for their pains!

THEY LIKE THE PLAY.

How Great Sovereigns of Europe View Theatrical Performances.

LONDON, March 15.—Nothing is more remarkable than the pronounced fondness of the crowned heads of Europe for the drama. Even Queen Victoria who, up to a year or two ago was believed to regard theater going in the light of a sin and the drama as a device of the devil, has now blossomed forth into an enthusiastic patron of the stage.

One of the London companies after the other has been called upon to transport itself bag and baggage to Windsor for the purpose of giving performances in the presence of the queen and her court on a temporary but yet elaborate stage erected for the occasion in the superb hall known as the Waterloo Gallery. The queen has even gone so far as to order one of the metropolitan troops up to Balmoral at an enormous expense for a single performance, and since she has been at Osborne this winter tableaux vivants, charades and amateur theatricals have been following one another in quick succession in the great Indian durbar, or ballroom, one of the most notable events of the kind being the recent representation of "The Straps to Conquer" by a company composed of Princess Louise and her husband, Lord Lorne, Princess Beatrice and Prince Henry of Battenberg and of several members of the household.

In the early days of her married life the queen was quite a familiar figure at the various leading theaters and was especially fond of the opera, which she would attend with a considerable amount of state, yeomen of the guard, or "beef eaters," arrayed in their picturesque mediæval costume, being stationed not only at the entrance of the royal box, but also on the stage in front of the latter. The lords and gentlemen in waiting in attendance on the queen and her husband on such occasions as these were arrayed in uniform and were required to remain standing in the rear of the royal box throughout the entire performance.



EMPEROR WILLIAM AT THE PLAY.

able crimson velvet and gilt armchair slightly in advance of the remainder of the audience, with a small table by her side, on which are placed her pink satin and gold lettered programme, her fan, her handkerchief, etc. The orchestra is almost concealed by a bank of flowers and foliage. Flowers indeed abound everywhere. No applause is permitted save when initiated and led by the queen, who is, however, very liberal in her manifestations of appreciation, as well as generous in her gifts of jewelry to the artists who have especially pleased her.

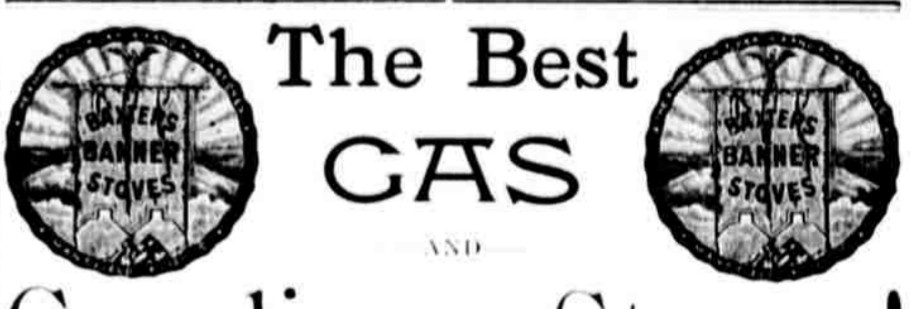
Queen Victoria is the only European sovereign now living except the sultan of Turkey who adopts this method of having the theater brought to her at a comparatively large expense instead of going to it. The Turkish monarch maintains as part of his enormous household an entire troupe of French and Belgian actors, whose principal duty is to perform the farces and dramas composed by himself. He does not write them himself, but contents himself with communicating his ideas of the projected piece and the character of the plot—if there is one—to the chief of the troupe, who thereupon writes the play in accordance with his imperial master's instructions. It is on the strength of this that the present commander of the "faithful" lays claim to be considered as a quite remarkable playwright.

Emperor William of Germany, on the other hand, who is quite as passionately fond of the drama as his fellow monarchs, is a frequent visitor to the various theaters of his capital. The manager usually only receives notice of his coming a few hours before-hand. The emperor is very demonstrative in his manifestations of applause, as well as of dissatisfaction, and makes a practice of summoning the actors to the royal box between the acts for the purpose of communicating to them his criticism of the performance and his instructions as to how they should act their parts. Another feature of Emperor William's visits to the theater is the supper which he invariably partakes of during the wait previous to the last act.

The emperor of Austria is likewise a constant attendant at the Viennese theaters and rarely makes use of the royal box, preferring in lieu thereof one of the lower stage boxes. King Humbert of Italy is seldom seen at the theater, his wife, Queen Margherita, however, attends dramatic performances at least two or three times a week during the Roman season. The emperor is exceedingly fond of French comedies. He, too, prefers going to the theater instead of having the latter brought to him in the shape of dramatic performances at the palace.



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