

TALKING SHOP

WITH A

WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

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HON. CHARLES E. TOWNSEND



WASHINGTON.—Talking shop is said to be one of the unpardonable sins. Possibly writing shop may be forgiven; but whether or no the chance is to be taken. Readers of newspapers complain occasionally about the indefiniteness of the sources of Washington correspondents' information.

Readers of newspapers do not know, possibly, that the law of official Washington is against quotation marks coupled with the name of the one who talks, unless specific permission for name and quotations be given.

Ninety-nine times out of 100 when a newspaper having a Washington correspondent publishes, under a capital city date line, that on high authority in a certain department "it may be said," etc., the correspondent has been talking with the chief of the department or with one so close to him officially that the voice of the one is as the voice of the other.

The president of the United States is never to be quoted, but it is probable that things the president has said directly have gone to the public some thousands of times through the newspapers of the country, although it is extremely likely that many of the readers, in view of the fact that direct words to the effect that the president has spoken and quotation marks were absent, hesitated to believe that what they read came warm from the White House.

It has been said that the president of the United States is never to be quoted. That is the rule. Once in a great while presidents take the ban off and say: "You may say that I said so." Ordinarily when Mr. Taft or any of his predecessors in office have had occasion to put forth a pronouncement it has been prepared with forethought and has been given out in printed form to be put upon the wires for general consumption.

The president talks to the Washington correspondents perhaps more than semi-occasionally and unless inhibited they may charge their own words with the spirit of what he has said and then give it to the readers of what they write. The first lesson that a newly appointed correspondent has to learn is that no matter how sharp and direct a statement is given to him by any official it is not to be used with a name unless permission is given.

Permission generally is given, save in the cases of the president and the cabinet officers, and even in these cases there is the general understanding that the statements may be put before the public in such form that it may be known definitely that either executive or cabinet authority has spoken.

The White House is the source of the greater part of the vitally interesting news that goes out of Washington and by the White House one does not necessarily mean the president. More legislative news is to be had in the outer offices of the executive mansion than is to be had in the capitol itself. Of course this statement has no reference to the actual passing of legislation.

No bill of great importance having a Republican origin ever goes into the hopper of congress unless its merits or demerits have been pretty well discussed in the office of the president. The Republican member who has a measure of national moment to introduce into congress naturally goes to the president to get from him his opinion.

Frequently, more than frequently, the senator or representative who has conferred with the president is willing to tell the world through the newspapers how the chief executive looks upon the legislation which he has in hand. This holds of course only when the measure has been met with presidential favor and not with presidential frowning.

Senators and members and callers from a distance get access to the president's room through an outer office, where during the morning hours newspaper correspondents assemble. From this little office there is a daily shadowing forth of future events.

It may not be wide of the mark to tell how once on a time a Washington correspondent, who, with 20 of his fellows, was in the outer White House office, secured what is known to the daily writing fraternity as a "scoop" and secured it under the very noses of his fellows. This thing hardly can happen more than once in a newspaper man's lifetime under similar circumstances.

It was in the early days of railroad rate agitation. The whole country was anxious to know what the president intended to do, what bill for rate regulation he intended to indorse and what member of congress was to be the lucky father of the measure which was to hold the country's interest certainly for an entire session.

While the correspondents were in the White House office a man came out from the president's room, passed unchallenged by the newspaper men, for apparently none of them knew him, and walked rapidly away from the entrance in the direction of Pennsylvania avenue. One correspondent did know this man by sight, but he held his peace and his own counsel.

Before the president's visitor had vanished from sight, however, the correspondent who knew who he was started after him and over-

took him. The correspondent was taking the one chance in 500 that he could "land" a story. He happened to know that the president's visitor was an absolutely new member of congress from Michigan and a man who had made a considerable study in his home state of railroad problems.

The one chance in 500 won out. The visitor who had been at the White house was Representative Charles E. Townsend and he had with him on



that morning the assurance of Theodore Roosevelt that there was presidential approval of every line of a railroad rate bill which Mr. Townsend had in his pocket and which he was going to introduce into congress.

Mr. Townsend told the correspondent all that he asked about and furthermore he volunteered the information that the bill which he had in his pocket would be the railroad rate bill which would pass the house of representatives at the session which was yet young. Mr. Townsend never would have made this statement unless he had the firm assurance of Mr. Roosevelt that the bill had his sanction and would have back of it all the influence which the White House properly could use.

The correspondent secured an exclusive piece of news for his paper and felt justified apparently in saying that the Townsend measure would be the railroad rate measure which the house would do its part in enacting into law. Subsequent events proved that when the Michigan representative said that his bill would be the bill to be sanctioned by the house of representatives he knew what he was talking about. The bill did pass the house and it failed to become a law only because the senate wanted time to consider the legislation.

When the summer comes and congress is not in session and the president is on his travels or at his warm weather quarters at the seashore, the correspondents get many of their writing texts from the departments.

Three years ago there was fear that congress might fail to pass the appropriation necessary for continuing the usefulness of the biological survey. The members of congress were in dense ignorance about the things that the naturalists of the survey were doing for the good of the country. These field workers save the country millions of dollars annually and yet at times in the past they have had a hard time to get the paltry \$52,000 appropriation needed to keep the survey alive. This year the scientists were given about \$17,000 additional to carry on their work. The money was secured after Dr. Merriam, the survey's chief, had made a strong appeal.

When it was feared that no appropriation at all was to be made for the survey three years ago by the members of the Fifty-ninth congress, news of the fact that the department might pass from its sphere of usefulness was sent through the country by the Washington correspondents. The response was instant. The mails were loaded with letters of protest from every state and territory. The chief of the survey had letters of support and the members of congress heard in protest from hundreds of people who no one supposed from their vocations in life would take any interest in natural history research.

There were letters by the hundreds also from the farmers and the stock raisers and from the students of ornithology and mammalogy who had benefited by the painstaking work of the naturalists whose headquarters was in Washington, but whose homes, when it



is possible, are in the fields and the woods. The weight of public opinion was felt by congress and an interest was aroused among members who barely knew that there was such an institution as the biological survey.

It might be asked what the biological survey does to benefit the country. Instances of its service are not difficult to find. The stock-raising interests of the western states suffer losses—or rather have suffered until recently—to the amount of about \$12,000,000 yearly through the depredations of wild animals—wolves, coyotes and cougars.

Poison was the instrument employed to kill the predatory animals. Strychnine was the means of death and while it cost thousands of dollars a year it was by no means efficacious. The stockmen complained that the wolves bred in the forest reserves were in a large measure responsible for the increase in the numbers of the ravaging packs.

This argument is used to combat the forest reserve plan of the government. Vernon W. Bailey, of the biological survey, went west and studied the wolf question. He found that the wolves did not breed in the forest reserves in any numbers. He located their breeding places and in his report told the stockmen how to rid themselves of the pests without the necessity of resorting to the costly strychnine poisoning process. The reports show that the wolf work of the survey already has saved the stockmen many times the amount of money that the government supplies yearly for the support of the survey.

In the Humboldt valley of Nevada there was a plague of field mice. An expert of the biological survey was sent to the scene of trouble. He found that in some sections of the valley the mice averaged 8,000 to the acre, a number that seems almost impossible, but the truth of the report is verified.

The mice were destroying the alfalfa which is grown in the valley at a rate which made it certain that within a short time the industry of alfalfa raising must disappear. The crop of the year was cut short one-third by the ravages of the mice and a loss of \$50,000 was entailed.

When absolute ruin of the industry was confronting the alfalfa ranch owners the work of the naturalists of the survey was begun and it is now practically certain that the plague of mice will disappear as did the plague of Egypt at the word of Moses.

The survey was appealed to by the bureau

of irrigation for help in checking the damage done to ditches by burrowing animals. One gopher hole in an embankment caused a loss of \$2,500 and in many places irrigation was almost impossible because of the undermining work done by small animals. The work of the burrowers made way for the water which by the erosion process did the rest. The scientists of the biological survey, after experimenting, taught the men interested in irrigation how to protect themselves against the inroads of the small beasts "that work in darkness."

The scientists recently were engaged in the work of checking the depredations of the ground squirrels of the far west and northwest. The annual damage that these animals inflicted on growing crops was enormous. The biological survey worked out a plan for the extermination of the squirrels, a plan that brought success.

One of the labors of the scientists of the survey has been to show the different states how the full benefits of game protection may be obtained and how the game in each state may be made to yield an important annual revenue. Illinois alone, as a direct result of information received from the biological survey, has added to its income annually \$125,000. The state of Missouri has benefited to the extent of \$50,000 and more money will come to it if it follows more closely the directions which it can get gratis from the government officials.

Not one-tenth part of the good that the biological survey has done and is doing has been set down here. The survey needs more money to carry on its field work. Every dollar spent means dollars returned to the people and yet it was hard work to induce congress to grant the additional sum of \$17,000 which the scientists asked that they might enlarge the field of their good work.

Women Becoming Flat-Footed

Are the women of the American nation becoming "flat-footed?"

This is a question which has been propounded and which is answered by a man who has spent the last 15 years in the study of the subject and who unhesitatingly claims such a fate is awaiting many young women, who are careless of their feet.

The tendency of women to high-heeled shoes and pumps is working disaster to their feet and the ailments of the feet are in turn working disaster to their nervous systems.

A shoe with the original shape well preserved indicates the woman with an even temperament, well-poised mind, careful in the details of her existence and lacking of a frivolous nature.

A shoe with the sole upturned in front and the top wrinkled indicates the woman who walks maul, is either a hard-working salesgirl or a belle in society. She is of the happy-go-lucky sort, in either case, and with proper training may be brought to a reasonable appreciation of the stern realities of life. Not that she is frivolous, but she is just a good sort of a woman whom anyone can love.

A shoe with the top stretched, showing that the foot within is spread out, indicates the student woman, the kind who are society reporters on newspapers or who write thrilling love tales with a trend toward socialism.

A shoe with the sides of the sole turned up indicates the woman whose mind turns to amusement and who is frivolous to a degree. She is the sort of a woman who loves flirtations and who is fickle.

A shoe with the heel run down on either side is indicative of a woman whom all should look out for. She is negligent in her habits and inclined to slovenliness—the kind who will let the dinner dishes go unwashed until morning if she chances to be your wife. Beware of her, because she has an ungovernable temper.

A shoe with the heel shoved forward indicates the woman of extreme nervous temperament. If you have ever observed you have found that in nine out of ten cases the hysterical woman, with nerves unstrung, wears out her shoes in this fashion.

These are a few of the most important rules in determining the character of women, but the phase upon which the foot authority places the greatest emphasis is the tendency toward flat-footedness. Nearly everyone is troubled in this respect and the affliction does not bespeak any special trait of character. But the subjection of one's health and happiness to the dictates of style is so common in America that unless something is done to check it, only a few years will elapse before women, and men too, will be as flat-footed as the mongrel natives of the African forests.

DISCOURAGED WOMEN.

A Word of Hope for Despairing Ones.

Kidney trouble makes weak, weary, worn women. Backache, hip pains, dizziness, headaches, nervousness, languor, urinary troubles make women suffer untold misery. Ailing kidneys are the cause. Cure them. Mrs. S. D. Ellison, N. Broadway, Lamar, Mo., says: "Kidney trouble wore me down till I had to take to bed. I had terrible pains in my body and limbs and the urine was annoying and full of sediment. I got worse and doctors failed to help. I was discouraged. Doan's Kidney Pills brought quick relief and a final cure and now I am in the best of health."



Remember the name—Doan's. Sold by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

GOT HIM!



Gertrude—The man I marry must be a genius.
Bertie—Thank heaven we have met!

A Realist.

"I am a great believer in realism," remarked the poet.

"Yes?" we queried with a rising inflection, thereby giving him the desired opening.

"I sometimes carry my ideas of realism to a ridiculous extreme," continued the poet.

"Indeed!" we exclaimed inaudibly, somewhat impatient to reach the point of his witticism.

"Yes," continued the poet, "the other day I wrote a sonnet to the gas company and purposely made the meter defective."

At this point we fainted.

The Newer Way.

Many ideas in regard to women have entirely changed, and among the better and wiser changes is that old thought that the women who were given to good works must needs be dowdy. It is undeniable that "good" women used to wear dowdiness as a sort of hall mark of virtue. As a matter of fact, dowdiness is merely a mark of bad taste and a sign of some lack in the mind. Women are no longer lacking in the wisdom that chooses pretty rather than ugly clothing, and those who do not make the best of their appearance are losing a golden opportunity of giving pleasure.

Look at the Names.

In 4 A. D. Fearaidhach-Fionashtna was an Irish king, a "most just and good prince," who was slain by his successor, Finchadh-Fion, who was treated to a similar fate by Finchadh-Fionashtna, "the prince with the white cows," who died at the hands of "the Irish plebeians of Connaught." Eochair-Moidneodhain was one of the half dozen who died of natural causes, and Flathheartagh was one of the two to resign the monarch's scepter for the monk's cowl.—New York Press.

Could She?

"When women get to voting," said the man, "they will have a great many more calls than they now have to put their hands in their pockets and give money to further important causes."

"The woman looked thoughtful. 'I'm always willing, of course,' she said, 'to give money for a good cause, but as for putting my hand in my pocket—'

BAD DREAMS

Caused by Coffee.

"I have been a coffee drinker, more or less, ever since I can remember, until a few months ago I became more and more nervous and irritable, and finally I could not sleep at night for I was horribly disturbed by dreams of all sorts and a species of distressing nightmare.

"Finally, after hearing the experience of numbers of friends who had quit coffee and were drinking Postum, and learning of the great benefits they had derived, I concluded coffee must be the cause of my trouble, so I got some Postum and had it made strictly according to directions.

"I was astonished at the flavour and taste. It entirely took the place of coffee, and to my very great satisfaction, I began to sleep peacefully and sweetly. My nerves improved, and I wish I could wean every man, woman and child from the unwholesome drug—ordinary coffee.

"People really do not appreciate or realize what a powerful drug it is and what terrible effect it has on the human system. If they did, hardly a pound of it would be sold. I would never think of going back to coffee again. I would almost as soon think of putting my hand in a fire after I had once been burned.

"A young lady friend of ours had stomach trouble for a long time, and could not get well as long as she used coffee. She finally quit coffee and began the use of Postum and is now perfectly well. Yours for health."

Read "The Road to Wellville," in pgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.