

CHAMP CLARK'S LETTER

One Term Enough For the Chief Executive.

THEREAFTER INELIGIBLE.

Period of Office to Be Lengthened to Six Years.

SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Former Should Be Elected by Direct Vote and Latter Have a Three Year Term—Bad Features of Present System—Some Peculiar Features of the Recent Campaign—Roosevelt's Sound and Fury—Campaigns Contrasted—John Sherman's Career, William L. Wilson's Fame.

(Special Washington Letter.)

It seems to me that this is a fitting occasion to suggest certain changes or reforms in our political system. A president ought to be elected for six years and made forever ineligible for re-election, representatives in congress ought to be elected for a term of three years, senators of the United States ought to be elected by direct vote of the people, the election ought to be held the 1st of October, and representatives should begin their service on the 1st of November, congress convening on that day. In this way we would have a general election once in three years, as there is no doubt that the states would soon remodel their constitutions and electoral system so as to fit in with the general plan. A president should have a six year term and made forever ineligible, because, as Mark Twain says, "human nature is very strong, and we have a great deal of it in us." Presidents, being only human, are no exception to the rule. The love of power is the master passion of the human mind. Every president except Washington and Hayes has spent a large portion of his first term striving to secure a second. Washington, I think, did desire a second term, and Hayes knew he couldn't get a second term. All the rest bent their energies to so arrange matters as to be re-elected. Just why a rational creature is not satisfied with one election to the highest office in the world does not appear, but the fact remains as stated above. I would take away from presidents the temptation to play politics for their own aggrandizement and thus guarantee to the people that to which they are entitled—the best and most exclusive efforts of their chief magistrates to serve them for the public good.

As to the election of senators of the United States by popular vote, the benefits of that plan over the present system are so apparent that it is a waste of time to even state them.

Present System Poor.
The most ridiculous feature of our present system is that representatives are elected 13 months before they really begin their services unless there is an extra session of congress. In this electric age issues may change and really sometimes do change radically in 13 months. That happened only recently. The congressional and presidential elections of 1892 hinged entirely on the tariff question. That was the only issue discussed that year. Nevertheless long before the congress elected in 1892 began its labors the issue shifted to finance, and the great Democratic majority was divided into two warring factions even before the representatives were sworn in. Representatives should begin their service within 30 days of their election. The most damaging part of our present plan is that a house of representatives utterly repudiated by the people in November has till the succeeding March in which to legislate, and a vast deal of bad legislation may be and frequently is fastened upon the country by a repudiated congress in that length of time.

A Peculiar Campaign.
The recent campaign was peculiar in several respects:

First.—In the sedateness of mind manifested by the voters. It really took on the character of listlessness or apathetic indifference to such an extent that it caused the leaders of both parties to get up a lusty and warning shout of "apathy," which in the end had much to do with getting out the vote.

Second.—Another unusual feature of the campaign was the fact that very few men of national proportions materially increased their reputations either as statesmen or orators. The number who achieved added distinction was unusually small. Of course it was impossible utterly so for either Mr. McKinley or Mr. Bryan to gain much new fame, for their names were familiar as household words before the campaign began. Henry Ward Beecher represented one of his characters as never looking older for the all sufficient reason that she had always looked as old as she could look. By something of the same logic Bryan can never increase his reputation as an orator, for since his astonishing performance in that line in nominating himself at Chicago in 1896 he has been recognized as the greatest living orator, perhaps the greatest that ever lived. Even The Globe-Democrat, which under its present management has degenerated into a mere organ grinder, not long ago conceded to Bryan the first place among the campaign orators this year.

From a critic's standpoint Mr. McKinley has never been regarded as an orator. He is a strong, clear and inter-

esting speaker. No amount of speech-making this year would have placed him in the rank of great orators, no matter what sycophantic editors and inspired reporters might have said about it, but he preserved the traditions of his high office by remaining off the stump. I don't see why an occupant of the White House who is a candidate for re-election should be compelled to remain silent, but those who are up in presidential etiquette have decided that a president shall remain dumb as an oyster while seeking a second term. I am sure that Mr. McKinley would have received a hearty welcome, even from Democrats, in any portion of the republic, for there is no rancor against him personally anywhere.

Hanna, the Ridiculous.
Bourke Cockran added absolutely nothing to his fame either in 1896 or 1900. Unless all signs are deceptive he reached his high water mark as an orator and in popularity in 1892 at Chicago when in the wee sma' hours of the morning he extolled Grover Cleveland.

Mark Hanna's egotistical effort to break into the ranks of the spellbinders excited only ridicule from Maine to Texas and from Martha Vineyard to the Golden Gate. I suppose it gratified his vanity to see his words in print. That was the net result of his oratorical caper except that he caused a good many Republican statesmen to take to heart-cursing and furnished considerable ammunition for Democrats.

Carl Schurz, Senator Wellington.
Governor Boutwell, General John B. Henderson, Henry M. Johnson of Indiana, ex-Senator Peffer, Colonel Campbell of Illinois, Senator Stewart, Webster Davis and other conspicuous men who changed parties in the contest secured new audiences, but it may be seriously doubted whether they in any way enhanced their reputation or influence by their radical change of base.

Roosevelt's Fury.
Perhaps the Republican who reaped the most notoriety if not fame during the campaign is Governor Theodore Roosevelt, who was constantly on the go. He talked a great deal. Most of what he said was well said. A great deal of it was arrant nonsense—mere sound and fury, signifying nothing. Some of it was an insult to and libel upon millions of his fellow citizens, but as a rule from a rhetorical and grammatical point of view his jabber was all right. Nevertheless, with all his going to and fro, wandering up and down and jawing, when he comes to take stock of himself and his doings he will be seriously puzzled to determine whether he was a greater public figure the day of the election than he was the day of his nomination. The chances are that his ranting and raving and bumptiousness have caused many of his more sensible admirers to cease to regard him as a presidential possibility, but if he did not make a substantial growth in reputation no Republican in this campaign did.

Among Democrats Hon. James D. Richardson of Tennessee played in great luck from the beginning and came out of the campaign a much greater figure than when he went in. Richardson is tact personified, which Henry Ward Beecher ranked above talents. The slim Tennesseean is the most amiable of mortals, and very few people will envy him his new laurels. He takes things by the smooth handle and makes no enemies. He got off on the right foot every time during the entire campaign. Either a great many opportunities came to him or he made a good many for himself. I don't know which.

Campaigns Contrasted.
Third.—The most talked of feature of the campaign was its utter unlikeliness to the campaign of 1896. The enthusiasm, wild and universal, of that phenomenal year was not observable anywhere. In a general sense it may be stated that in 1896 everybody argued politics vehemently and in a most unseemly manner and that in 1900 nobody argued politics at all except candidates in ease or in posse. Indeed the enthusiasm of 1896 took on largely the character of hysteria on both sides. It was a supreme effort of both Republicans and Democrats—in fact, of the whole American people. When the contest was over, interest in politics for the average citizen was completely exhausted. He had not recuperated in 1900. He may never entirely recuperate, though the chances are that he will, but my prediction is that for many years to come all campaigns when compared with that of 1896 will appear flat and stale, if not unprofitable. We will jog along more leisurely if not more comfortably.

The difference between the campaigns of 1896 and 1900 is worthy of the profound consideration of the statesmen, politicians and philosophers, for campaigns in a constitutional government are matters of highest moment, of most serious import to all classes and conditions of people. In my judgment the principal reason for the comparative tameness of the campaign this year lies in the fact that it was recognized as merely the sequence to and continuation of the great campaign of 1896. From the close of that campaign it was clearly understood that if Messrs. McKinley and Bryan lived they would be pitted against each other in 1900. Of course Mr. McKinley has been constantly in the public eye ever since by reason of the high position which he holds, and Mr. Bryan has kept himself constantly in the public eye by reason of his splendid genius, unequalled oratorical ability and constant speaking and traveling over the country. People were used to McKinley and Bryan. They made up their minds how they were going to vote, and they did not care very much about talk, brass bands and parades.

Fourth.—An important lesson of this campaign is to demonstrate over again how few, comparatively speaking, of

the rank and file follow prominent political leaders when they flop. It has always been true, but the fact was never so patent as it was this year, because the conspicuous floggers were never so numerous before. A lightning calculator in good running order has been needed since the Porto Rican debate began in the house to keep tab on statesmen and statesmen by brevet who flopped from McKinley to Bryan or from Bryan to McKinley. In no case did any one of them carry any great multitude of voters with him, which indicates that the American sovereign does a good deal of independent thinking, wears no man's collar, plus his faith entirely to no leader, does as he pleases and chooses his own party affiliations as fate or fancy carries, which on the whole, while not flattering to the leaders, is a healthy indication for the republic.

John Sherman.
After an unusually long and successful career in his latter days John Sherman became a pathetic figure. He may not inaptly be denominated the Republican Lear. The old king lost his crown through ingratitude. Sherman was kept out of the presidency, for which he panted even as the hart panteth for the water brook, by ingratitude. We weep over the sorrows of Lear; it is difficult to shed tears over the disappointments of Sherman, but nevertheless he was better equipped for the presidency than any Republican since Lincoln. The trouble with him was his coldness. Republicans freely admitted his fitness for the chief magistracy of the republic, but they threw up their hats for Blaine and bestowed their love and their votes upon "the man from Maine." In a burst of affection, eloquence and enthusiasm Bob Ingersoll dubbed Blaine "the Plumed Knight," and wherever he led millions of Republicans were glad to follow. They admired Sherman in a chilly sort of way. They needed him in their business and were willing for him to have any office short of the presidency, but that they bestowed on men much inferior to him in brains and public service.

The greatest Republican that Ohio ever produced, he was doomed to see three other Ohioans seize the coveted prize—Hayes, Garfield and McKinley. He always had the respect of Ohio Republicans, but their hearts never. Perhaps in his long candidacy for the presidency there never was a day when he could have secured a delegation from Ohio which was really for him. The Buckeye delegation betrayed him in favor of Garfield. Its lukewarm support caused him to lose to Harrison. He was set aside almost contemptuously for McKinley, who was a schoolboy when he was a national character.

As a secretary of the treasury he will rank with Hamilton, Gallatin and Chase. He belongs to the very small group of American statesmen who never became president, but who will never be forgotten. His fame will rest upon his successful execution of the re-emption act. His part—an evil part—in surreptitiously demonetizing silver in 1873 will also keep him in human memory. In the days to come he will be lauded by some as a great statesman and an enlightened patriot. By others he will be denounced till the end of time as the betrayer of his country and the enemy of the American people, but his will never be a name to conjure with. Posterity will judge him as did his contemporaries, as a man of large capacity for public affairs and of lowering ambitions—cold, crafty, calculating, resolute, covetous of money and of power and wanting in the qualities which win the human heart. He was not a popular favorite in life; he will not be a popular favorite in history.

William L. Wilson.
William L. Wilson was the well beloved—indeed the best beloved—man in the Fifty-third congress. If he had an enemy on the whole face of the earth, I have never heard of it. I don't see how he could have. Brave as a lion, he was gentle as a woman. In his youth a gallant soldier of the Confederacy, he never alluded to that bloody and unhappy chapter in our annals. He was a knight sans peur et sans reproche, and he quit fighting at Appomattox. Most emphatically he did not belong to that large aggregation of men invisible in war and invincible in peace.

With fame worldwide, he was as unassuming as the plainest citizen of the remotest backwoods. With opportunities for growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice by prostituting his high position to personal gain, he died poor. As an orator he had few equals. His closing speech on the Wilson tariff bill was a marvel of eloquence and aroused his Democratic associates to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. One of the most dramatic scenes ever witnessed in the house was at its close, when Harry St. George Tucker, the young Virginia Hotspur, and William J. Bryan, the great Nebraskan, placed the brilliant West Virginian upon their shoulders, much against his will, and carried him in triumph to the cloakroom amid the shouts of members and the wild applause of the galleries.

Considering the fact that a large portion of his life was devoted to law and politics, Mr. Wilson had a remarkable career in the scholastic world. He enjoyed the unusual distinction of having been a graduate from the University of Virginia, a professor in Columbia college, president of the University of West Virginia, president of Washington-Lee university and of having declined the presidency of the University of Missouri. To few men who devoted their whole lives to letters have so many collegiate honors come, and fewer still have deserved such high and multifarious honors.

Champ Clark

The Study of English.

P. H. FRYE.

The editors of the Scarlet and Cream have asked me to contribute a few observations on the value of the study of English. At the time I was not quite sure whether the gentlemen who proposed the question, did so as one asks a riddle, which is expected to please by the ingenuity of the answer, or whether they were curious to see what kind of a case might be made out for the subject. For I confess that I have always, perhaps too partially, taken the benefits of the study for granted, like those of sunlight; and it is only in coming to consider the matter that I find it one thing to believe in sunlight and quite another to explain its advantages, particularly to such as have never known it.

Aside from the very evident and immediate advantage of helping one to handle one's own language dexterously as a means of communication, the study of English is valuable, I think, for the power it gives one over life. In life the main thing naturally is to live as largely as possible. Everything else is impertinent or secondary. Success should be measured, not by irrelevant standards such as the possession of wealth, but by the experience acquired—that is, the amount of living actually done, including quality much more than quantity. This truth is recognized in the training of school and college, where are only grades in life educational system, as extensive as life itself, and every study contributes in one way or another to that to point out the particular value of any one study, is merely to point out the particular power that it gives the student over life.

Now what kind of power that formal education, the education, I mean, of school and college, aims to give, is that of knowledge, knowledge more especially of the factors which compose life. To every youth, I fancy, life is at first little better than a gigantic phantasmagoria, as various and delightful to the careless as an imaginative reveal, but often to the more responsible bewildering and even hopeless. It is only when he begins to learn—to distinguish and separate and order—that the confusion begins to clear up; though it is only by the knowledge that confusion ever clears up completely. We are most of us content to perforce to study and know only that much of life which immediately concerns us. I often think that the desperation with which the serious and sensitive young person is apt to look upon life at a certain age, is due to nothing else than this; and that such an one would be saved an immense amount of care and anxiety, were he made early to understand that confusion and helplessness are the results of ignorance or half-knowledge, while power and serenity come naturally with the increase of knowledge and experience.

As the factors of life are two, so the knowledge that deals with them, is of two kinds. The one, the more important from the Greek point of view, the point of view of culture, perhaps, is the knowledge of oneself; the other, the more important from the modern point of view, is the knowledge of the outward world. But it is evident that both sorts are necessary for full and complete living; since life consists mainly, as Matthew Arnold says, in conduct; that is, the relation of the individual to the outside world. The studies that aim to put us in possession of the latter kind of knowledge, are the scientific; they present us with the facts of the world, so systematized that we can handle them for our own purposes. The studies, on the other hand, which aim to put us in possession of the former kind of knowledge, are the linguistic; they bring us into direct connection with the human spirit in all ages, of which universal spirit each of our spirits is a part—and particularly among these studies that of our own language, which enables us to interpret all for our own each of us for himself and so lets us into communication with our own spirits.

The power over life, then, which the study of English should give us, lies in the ability to translate the data of life into terms of our own consciousness.

The very simplest exercise in writing requires two things; first, that the writer have made an observation, and second, that he have digested this observation sufficiently to formulate it. In the process he has related it to himself; it is no longer a bare fact, some one's else opinion, a fragment of stereotyped information; but his own, a portion of his own personality. In this manner we are constantly working out in expression our personal equations, not in a technical way at all, but in the simple, direct and sincere way in which we are required to live.

It has been said that if one knows a matter he will have no difficulty in expressing it. But the remark is only half true. Before one can express a matter, either in speaking or writing, he must know not only the matter itself, but himself too as far as he is concerned in it; he must understand his attitude toward it, what he thinks about it, as we say. Then and only then can he express it, because only then does he really understand it. We have all felt in reading or listening to some statement of truth that we thoroughly understood it at the time, to find later, when we were asked to give

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an account of it, that we knew it after all in but a vague intangible sort of way, and that we came to comprehend it completely only in trying to express it for others.

There is a much truer bit of commonplace philosophy than this just quoted; that one learns a subject thoroughly only in teaching it to others. It is a remark true in itself and one which in this connection is very suggestive of the real value and mission of all expression, whether in speaking or writing; for expression at its best is nothing more than an attempt to teach others what we have first learned ourselves. And the gift that we make of ourselves in expression is, like all other giving, as a wise man said long ago, only another and higher form of acquisition.

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