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COST OF CONGRESSMEN

What does a congressman cost? Until this year a congressman cost \$5,000 a year, with a bit thrown in for mileage and a few small perquisites which the congressmen say amounts to only a trifle. Beginning with the new congress \$2,500 is to be added in extra salary, and the cost of living no doubt justifies the increase. Some facts gleaned from the reports of the treasury department reveal some other charges which upon investigation must be placed to the account of the congressmen, however. The government has 158 custom houses, which last year collected all told \$305,000,000 at a cost for collection of about \$9,000,000. Fortunately for our enlightenment, the department has figured out the per cent of receipts at each of these 158 custom houses which the operation of that particular port of entry entailed. Thus the New York custom house cost one and eight-tenths cents for every dollar taken in. Springfield, Mass., made the best record, which was one and four-tenths cents for running the custom house for every dollar of customs receipts. But not all custom houses did nearly so well. At Tuckerton, New Jersey, the revenue receipts for the last year amounted to forty cents. The expense of the office was \$505.31. At Paducah, Kentucky, the receipts of the office were \$1.70, whereas the two employes drew something more than \$400. At the Annapolis custom house it cost \$246.64 to collect \$4.50, decidedly a losing game. Other places where it cost more than a dollar to collect a dollar were: Alexandria, Virginia, \$1.01; Barnstable, Massachusetts, \$4.55; Beaufort, South Carolina, \$2.55; Bridgeton, New Jersey, \$2.50; Burlington, New Jersey, \$16.97; Castine, Maine, \$1.95; Crisfield, Maryland, \$42.11; Ellsworth, Maine, \$8.58; La Crosse, Wisconsin, \$2.72; Grand Haven, Michigan, \$1.47; Newbern, North Carolina, \$1.97; Rock Island, Illinois, \$26.08; Sag Harbor, New York, \$3.41; Salem, Massachusetts, \$1.99; Coos Bay, Oregon, \$30.47; Waldoboro, Maine, \$1.20; York, Maine, \$28.27; Apalachicola, Florida, \$2.73; Beaufort, North Carolina, \$1.38; Brownsville, Texas, \$7.17; Burlington, Iowa, \$4.89; Cairo, Illinois, \$6.88; Chattanooga, Tennessee, \$16.18; Edgartown, Massachusetts, \$5.77; Georgetown, South Carolina, \$21.01; Humboldt, California, \$1.76; Machias, Maine, \$4.21; New London, Connecticut, \$1.33; Portsmouth, New Hampshire, \$2.65; Saco, Maine, \$4.95; St. Mary's, Georgia, \$30.34; Sandusky, Ohio, \$1.12; Brashear, Indiana, \$2.49; Wheeling, West Virginia, \$8.31; and Wiscasset, Maine, \$5.37.

Why not these treasury draining offices abandoned? Congress has been asked to do it time without number, but the congressmen of the districts where the offices are located always combine and defeat the plan. To take away one office with its one appointment would mean one less official to look after the congressman's political fences. That, seemingly is the only explanation, and that is where comes in an extra item in the cost of a congressman.

COFFEE MILL REFORM.

For several years the coffee bean has remained silent under a bombardment of criticism involving some rather ugly charges. Competitors for breakfast favor have been instant in season to demonstrate the existence of a vague

monster known as the coffee heart. Grain extracts, chicory, the root of the dandelion and carrot, the seeds of the iris and sweet potato, each has claimed to be just as good and not nearly so conducive to insomnia as coffee. Moreover they are cheaper. That these efforts have resulted in increased use of coffee substitutes we are permitted to assume from the fact that the campaign has continued with no sign of exhaustion now for several years. That it has done as advertising usually does, created business rather than transferred it, we can safely guess from the fact that the coffee bean was never so popular in America as it is now. In 1900 this country consumed about 734,000,000 pounds of coffee. Three years ago the importations were 960,879,000 pounds, not less than two-fifths of the world's total production. The per capita consumption has in fact increased in the United States from nine and one-fourth pounds in 1884 to twelve pounds now. Nevertheless, the coffee bean after hearing for a decade without re-termination the attacks of its competitors admits that the charges were not altogether baseless. Notwithstanding its power to allay hunger and weariness, to refresh and conserve the physical forces, there is, it is admitted, a bit of tartaric acid in the chaff that lies around the inner coating of the coffee bean, and this ingredient may perhaps account for some of the unpleasant results attributed to coffee by its enemies. Perhaps this honest confession would not be made but for the fact that a process has been discovered for grinding coffee by which this part of the bean is eliminated.

THE RACE ISSUE.

A discouraging form of the race wrangle, with possibilities of results out of all proportion to its importance, is thrust upon us by the injection of the race question into the civil service. It is not among railway mail clerks running out of Lincoln alone, or even among railway mail clerks alone, that the discontent is visible. The draughtsmen in the office of the supervising architect of the treasury department at Washington protested to Secretary Cortelyou the other day because they were compelled to work in a room with a negro who had qualified for a draughtman's place. One southern man resigned upon hearing the president's decision to the effect that people who did not like their surroundings were free to look for others more to their taste. The south is complaining of an alleged disposition of the government to fill the railway mail service with colored clerks, and that no pains are taken to assort the crews sent out with respect to color. Negroes are segregated in the army and nothing thought of it, but any suggestion of manning mail cars with reference to the color of the clerks would be deeply resented by the negroes and their white sympathizers. It is for none of us to lecture the white men who object to the close association with a negro involved in joint occupancy with him of a mail car, sleeping away his hours off duty in the bunk just vacated by his co-laborer. He would not object seriously, we surmise, were it not for the fact that his standing among us suffers somewhat from his association, forced or free, with a member of this other race.

A hysterical woman is like a loaded gun. Mighty dangerous to handle.

ROOSEVELT-HARRIMAN

There were six blind men of Indostan to learning much inclined, who went to see the elephant to satisfy their minds as to what he was like. The result is a matter of classic knowledge. The blind man who felt of the elephant's ear declared he was very like a fan, the man who happened to grasp his tail thought a rope expressed the right resemblance, and so on past the others who thought he was like a snake, a spear, a tree, according to the part each one happened to grasp. The investigation broke up in a row.

The differences on points of fact which have arisen between Mr. Harriman and the president are such differences as needs must arise between men who for several years have been opposed in bloodless but not bootless warfare. Mention railroads to Mr. Harriman, and he sees a fat melon to be bawled about in Wall street with every once in a while a generous slice for Harriman. Railroads to the president, we are safe in concluding from his words and conduct, represent a vital necessity of commerce to be run with just regard to the needs of commerce. When words have such different meanings to two men, and the differences are not confined to the word railroads, their respective ideas as to the meaning of what passes between them cannot possibly agree. As to the questions raised of Mr. Roosevelt's relations to Harriman and campaign funds, the president's public acts are proof enough that there was nothing discreditable to the president in it.

The lesson of the incident is incidental. When the priests fall out we come at the truth. The president was given an enjoyable chance to lay bare a few details of inside politics. The planning and plotting of the New York masters of finance to control political appointments, and Mr. Harriman's cool assurance of his power to purchase anything he wants in politics are calculated to educate the public mind in an important subject. Mr. Harriman's letter to his friend Webster conveys further conviction on this point. Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars turned fifty thousand votes in New York City alone, said Mr. Harriman in claiming credit for the result. Among ourselves we disagree as to whether an election can be bought. Some significance must be attached to the fact that Mr. Harriman thinks it can.

THE NEW POLITICAL ERA.

University bred men have for some time found openings in the government service where special scientific training fitted them for positions under the civil service. No doubt this has something to do with the drift toward the so-called practical studies in the universities. Should President Roosevelt and his successors succeed finally in putting the foreign service entirely under the merit system, at least insofar as it applies to consuls and legation officials, the university departments of political science, economics, history, and modern languages will no doubt notice the effect upon the size of their classes. In the meantime a political change has come in Nebraska that should stimulate proficiency in the art exemplified in the debate of last Friday night. Under the system of direct nominations political influence and honors will depend on one's ability to appeal to the people, where before these things had

usually to be earned by service to some invisible political interest, service such as self-respecting young men hesitated to enter. The art of sincere public speaking and particularly of debate, an art almost lost wherever boss rule prevails, should now once more play an important part in political affairs. Needless to say, this does not call for a return of the old time bombastic flight of eloquent emptiness. It should mean the logical, thorough, matter of fact presentation of a case such as the modern lawyer and university debater have been taught forms the effective appeal to intelligent people.

PROSECUTE.

The purity of the primary is now as necessary to good government as the purity of the ballot box at a regular election. The people of Lincoln have reason to believe that gross frauds were perpetrated at the primary on Tuesday last. Of the scores of men who appeared at the clerk's office to take oath that they were republicans and had not registered last October for various reasons, more than one-half seemed to have no idea of the seriousness of their act or the fact that a jail sentence could be made to descend upon them if they were swearing to a falsehood.

Even more reprehensible was the conduct of certain "free holders." More than once these men were seen to sign their names to the certificates of men they did not know, and swear to facts that were admittedly outside of their range of knowledge. It was not uncommon for one of these professional free holders to ask one of his fellow workers concerning an applicant: "Is he all right?" Upon being assured in the affirmative the free holder would sign his name to the following:

State of Nebraska, Lancaster county, ss. We, the undersigned, do solemnly swear that we are severally free holders, and have been residents of precinct, in ward, for at least one year immediately preceding March 26, 1907, and that we know the elector signing the foregoing affidavit, to which this affidavit is attached, to be an inhabitant and qualified voter of said precinct, and that he has affiliated with said political party, and that the facts given in the excuse for not registering are true.

After affixing the signature the free holder would then lift his hand and swear that he had told the truth and the whole truth, "so help me God." It was evident on the face of things that in a large percentage of the cases the men taking this oath knew nothing directly about the men they were vouching for, yet the farce went on hour after hour to the end that the "saloon-keepers' friend" received in the First ward more than twice as many votes as were cast by the republicans of that ward at the last general election.

There is general agreement among the law abiding citizens of Lincoln that it is time to put an end to the assault that is committed upon the primary ballot box at every city election by the wholesale use of certificates. The way to stop it is for the county attorney to make a demonstration in the next month of the criminality of the act of casting an unauthorized vote, and of signing a certificate without knowing the facts sworn to be true.

Some men imagine they are natural leaders because they always want to boss the job.