

THE SOUTH WANTS IT.

The Chairmanship of the House Committee on Elections.

OFFICE-SEEKING COSTS MONEY.

What a Western Republican Senator Has to Say About It.—Fair Treatment of Applicants. Col. Wilson's Cigars.

Their Eyes on the Chairmanship.

WASHINGTON, June 8.—Special to THE BEE.—There is going to be a great deal of contention when the Fifty-first congress convenes over the organization of the house committee on elections.

It is already been announced that the south intends to combine and demand the chairmanship of this committee. A majority has undoubtedly selected Colonel Houk, of Knoxville, Tenn., who has been a member of the house for five or six terms and during most of that period one of the committee on elections.

The south will furnish more contested elections than any other section of country, and each contest has his friends in the house. There is one peculiarity in the southern contestants over those from the north: they would like to know in advance how the jury is made up which will hear their cases.

Before the speaker is elected, some of the southern members will not only demand the chairmanship of the house, but also insist for their favorite, but they will demand that favorite an expression as to what he thinks of certain contests. Judge Houk is a man of good judicial mind and eminent fairness, and it is probable that he will refuse to say what his opinion of a case is before he has made a judicial examination of it.

It is very likely to result in the south dividing on the subject of recommending a chairman, and in this event the south may get left. Already there is a good deal of talk on the subject and considerable feeling is being shown. It is claimed that more than anything else decisions in favor of certain contestants in the south will be secured by the solidly of democratic majorities which have been secured by fraud. They want some example, and are determined to begin at this time.

"Office seeking costs lots of money," said a western republican senator this morning. "Hundreds of men have been hanging around Washington ever since the 4th of March, seeking places either for themselves or somebody else. I presume there has been an average of 1,000 men here daily from various parts of the country during the past few weeks, and they are either at their own expense or that of some other person."

About half of the men who come here seeking places for others have their expenses paid by the applicants. These men will average a cost of at least \$100 each, and will not less than \$5,000 daily for office seeking. You can see that already a half million dollars have been expended. I doubt very much if all the office seekers pay salaries worth \$500,000 for four years.

"I have encountered a good many monstrosities and a great many peculiar situations in connection with office seeking. I know a father and son who are both seeking positions in the same branch of the government service. The success of one means the defeat of the other. There are two brothers here seeking a place in the treasury department. Each knows full well, and acknowledges it, that if the other is given a place he will be left out. Neither the father nor son, neither of the brothers, will be given a place. I advised them repeatedly to get together, and one of the ways was for the other, but they were unwilling to do this."

There is a good deal of superstition in connection with office seeking. One of the most energetic and strongly endorsed office seekers carries a real rabbit foot in his pocket. He calls it "a grayhound's foot, of light gray color, and around it is tied a pretty little pink ribbon. This man is strong of mind, and young of years, and he is determined to lose this rabbit foot he would not achieve success in his ambition."

It is refreshing to know that those who are contented to meet their fate against the character, intended to defeat applications for pensions and claims for money, are given a fair showing now. The administration of President Cleveland inaugurated a system of secrecy which was very reprehensible, in that while a man could ascertain that charges had been preferred against him, he was not permitted to defend his application, he was not permitted to see them, and could not, therefore, meet them.

Strange as it may appear, such information as the names of bondsmen for federal officers was refused everybody who applied at the department. The duty of the commission was kept as secret as frequently as possible. The time when a change was to be made in an office was a profound secret, and the change was made in the most guarded manner. The greatest harm and the most flagrant injustices were perpetrated in the pension office by this system of secrecy. Finally, it was learned that a pension, or if the widow or orphan of a soldier should make application, anyone could file charges, defeat the application, and the applicant would never know why he failed of success. It was like a man being tried for his life having an opportunity to present his side of the case, and then the jury knowing what he was rebutting. It was hearing one side openly for the purpose of meeting the side which was secret.

There is only one case on record where an applicant for favor at the hands of the government defeated this outrageous scheme. The man in question applied for a pension. He lived in Indiana. He was married, and he was for many months unable to ascertain what was the reason of the delay. Finally, he learned that charges had been preferred against him, and he was smart enough to get the address of those who had testified in opposition to his claim. He learned that much in Washington, and immediately put out to his home with the determination to out-Herod Herod. When he arrived at home he immediately prepared and had printed a fac-simile circular representing himself to be a special agent of the pension office. He addressed one of these to each man who had testified against him, and over an assumed name asked those witnesses to repeat to him the testimony given in the case. Every witness fell into the trap, and the man who was enabled to get a duplication of the testimony filed at the pension office against himself. That man is now pushing his claim for a pension before the Commission, and the fact that this secret evidence weighed heavily against him, and operated unfairly under the last administration, is regarded as a strong element in his favor. It is not on record, in written or unwritten annals, that a person or administration gained anything by dealing unfairly, or that there was ever any gain by secretiveness when justice was at stake.

Assistant Attorney General Wilson, of West Virginia, is an inveterate smoker. Going up to his floor in the department of justice the other morning he was accompanied by an old friend, Colonel Wilson, who carried a cigar, and he wanted one very much. "What kind of cigars are you carrying this morning?" inquired Colonel Wilson, seriously.

"I haven't got any to-day, colonel," was the reply; "but if I had one I should be very glad to give it to you."

"Oh," stammered the colonel, "I was not asking for a cigar. I merely had a curiosity to know what brand you were carrying to-day."

shores of Florida. The instructions were issued for a revenue cutter, and the expedition started and reached its destination owing to the carelessness of officers on board the government vessel. Somebody had to be sacrificed, however. It would not do to dismiss the commander of the revenue cutter, and so a lesser officer was selected for official decapitation. Secretary Folger subsequently acknowledged the wrong worked upon Colonel Wicker, and afterwards offered to appoint him as a special agent of the treasury department, stating, as he did so, that it would be an offense against the Spanish government under the circumstances, to restore Wicker to his old position at Key West. The expedition, it will be remembered, consisted of a little sailing yacht with fourteen cigar-makers on board. They perpetrated no wrong against the Spanish government, and the alleged infractions of the revenue laws were not affected one way or another by them.

THE GHOST'S WAY.

I am leader of the orchestra in the Bijou theater at Pittsburg, says a writer in the New York Herald. I am nothing but a plain musician, yet I was once considered a great one. That was when I lived on Third street, in a suite of rooms so small that my piano and bird cages left hardly room for me to turn around. They called my rooms "The Aviary" then. Now I am well-to-do in fact, for a bachelor—and I owe my riches to the strangest circumstances that ever befel a man of my prosaic nature.

I am a diffident, shy man—have very few friends. Ivans, the drummer in the orchestra (Tommy, as he is usually called), and Skab, the manager of the theater, are my only intimate friends. How they came to be this little story will tell you.

I had been leading the orchestra for two years, and it was on the night of October 21, 188—, that I experienced a sensation which gives existence to this narrative. I did not often use the open piano before me, but this particular night we were one or two men short and needed the noise. The piano and I supplied the lack in that particular. We were playing a waltz in the interval between the fourth and fifth acts of a lurid melodrama, and I was banging away in tempo di valse steadily as you please, playing almost mechanically as you are apt to play fashionable waltz music.

All of a sudden something—it was something, and yet I cannot say what it was—took hold of my hands and dashed them violently down on the keys. It was just as if some one had reached long arms around me, and seized my hands and banged them on the keyboard. My hands felt numb and chill, and I verily believe I should have thought myself paralyzed but for the actual sense of strong hands grasping my own, and covering them and holding them with a great crash of sound upon the piano.

Amid the profoundest silence, my hands, guided by this unseen agency, played this waltz with a perfection of time, an exquisiteness of touch, a thorough appreciation of its beauty, and brought out in the most subtle way meanings I never dreamed lay hidden in the score. It was as beautiful as it was awful, and even in my terror—which was something to feel, not to describe—I felt that the music was rendered by something which had once been a master's soul.

The bell tinkled for the customary six minutes for the waltz, but the curtain was up and the villain of the piece on the stage ere my hands ceased playing. The last two bars were indeed soft and sweet and low, dying away like the ghost of music, and as the last note ceased I fell from the stool and in a cold, clammy sweat, too insensible to heed the loud and tumultuous applause that came from pit, boxes and gallery, the loud shouts of encore and the sharp clapping of the hands of my own musicians.

I never closed my eyes during the entire night. That week was the most feverish of my existence. Skab's willingness to risk money on me, and my desire to prevent him loss at the department, were the only things that kept me from anything else to do. I had to undergo, but I suffered tortures in the intervals between the day I signed the contract and the night of the 12th of November.

I will not attempt to describe that night. My success was phenomenal. Encore after encore, wild applause and unbounded enthusiasm greeted the performance, and I woke up next morning to find myself famous and the possessor of \$500 net proceeds of my ghost's handiwork.

Just here I will explain a want the papers complained of—namely, that I gave out no programme of my performance and the audience had to guess at what I played. Leaving out of view the fact that the vast majority of audiences do not know any more about what they play with a programme than they do without it, I will say that I could not help it.

I am not going to attempt to describe my six months' tour or my wonderful success. If I mentioned the name under which I played you could yourself write out the history of my engagement. Suffice it to say that the morning after my first concert in New York Richard Grant White pronounced me the finest pianist America had ever heard, and I do believe he was right, only he ought to have written "my hands" instead of my name.

I played steadily on—starting, as they call it, through half a dozen states, and by the end of next May had invested \$10,000 more in the bank. Tommy Ivans was a vigorous man, a salary of \$100 a week and a splendid cigar, never drinking any other triple less expensive than Hoadner's.

At a little city in Massachusetts the first incident of any note occurred, and it was the beginning of the end. About midway in the concert, a very excellent performance of one of Spohr's symphonies was encored and I attempted to repeat it. Of course I failed, and my hands glided into an arrangement which I thought at first was the adagio in A flat in Beethoven's symphony. But ere I had played two bars I found I was mistaken and that it was one of my "unknowns."

What possessed me to do so I cannot tell, but I whispered to Tommy, "Original arrangement! Love's Question," and he shouted it out.

The piece was listened to in the profoundest silence and well did it merit attention. As I say, it commenced like the adagio in A flat, then it danced off into a kind of scherzo and then glided the most pathetic music I have ever heard. My name was an inspiration. The whole arrangement was one grand question, and the anxious, timid, hopeful, half despairing way in which the chords groped about in the doubt, now feeling their way, now rejoicing at the little light, now beseeching an answer, now putting it off as if afraid of what it might be, has never, to my knowledge, been equalled in music. It was the cry of a soul to a soul. "Do you love me? do you love me? I am not worthy even a thought, but Oh! think of me tenderly."

It said, in music, what Shelley only could say in words. "The desire of the soul for the star" was the undertone of every note, and so strangely did it affect me that tears trickled down my cheeks as I played.

All of a sudden I was conscious of a human eye staring me through a gap in the floor. I looked down and on the front row of seats a dark eyed, gray bearded man was contemplating me with a look in which wonder and fear were so blended that I caught something of each. In the midst of the most delicate and tender movement of the piece my hands were violently lifted up at my throat and then dashed down so violently on the keys that I heard the strings of the piano snap, and heard and saw nothing more until I awoke in consciousness in the green room on Ivans' name. Skab standing over me wringing his hands and swearing like a trooper.

Flinding that I had only been out a moment I insisted on going back, for to tell the truth I was in an agony, fearing that my power had left me.

Such, however, was not the case. The ghostly hands still exercised their way and I finished the concert. Once I lifted my eyes to the dress circle, but the man I had seen had left his seat.

It appeared to me—it may have been fancy, but it certainly seemed to me—that the cold fingers on mine trembled, and that the execution was not as vigorous as usual.

Next morning, about 10, a visitor to see me was announced. I told the bell boy to usher him into my apartment, and so fully convinced was I of who the visitor was that my pulse did not beat one whit the faster, and I was cool and collected when the man whose glance had terrified me so the night before came into my room.

After the usual civilities, a kind inquiry after my health and a few compliments on my matchless playing, as he styled it, the stranger, begging my pardon for what might seem an impertinent query, asked me if I had ever taken lessons from your pupil, Rudolph Aronsonheim. I answered promptly and truthfully that not only had I never known him, but that I then for the first time heard the name.

"Strange, sir," said my visitor, half musingly, "strange. Your touch, your execution, everything about your playing, even down to your rather peculiar fingering, is Aronsonheim's in every respect. And stranger still, that beautiful concert piece you played was written by him. I never knew that anyone but myself had ever seen the score. I have it with me. It is unfinished and ends in a confused scratching of pencil marks just where you were so unfortunate as to faint last night."

As he spoke he drew several stained pieces of music paper from his pocket and extended his hand, holding them toward me.

"You must excuse the dirty appearance of the sheets," said he in the same musing tone. "The poor fellow cut his throat before he had finished the score, and that is his life blood on the paper."

"Gracious God!" I exclaimed, starting from my seat and waving back the accursed music. "I tell you I never heard of him before. Where did you find that horrible music I do not know. I said it was original only because I could not locate it. Take it away from me."

"Pardon me," said the stranger, rising, "but I fear I have been impertinent," and he started as if to go.

I interrupted him. "Pardon me," I replied, "or rather my vehemence, I shall not, I cannot, permit you to leave without giving me at least some information as to this unfortunate man, whose music I seem unworthily to have appropriated."

"With pleasure," he replied, "if it can be a pleasure to rehearse even in a few words so melancholy a history."

Seating himself he went on:—"Aronsonheim was born in Bavaria, educated in Munich. Before he was sixteen he was considered one of our finest pianists in Germany. Allured by flattering hopes held out to him by relatives in this country, he came to New York and gave a few concerts. He was unfortunate in his choice of friends, for he had an insane admiration for early Italian and German masters and would play their compositions. Grand as they are to the true musician they were caviare to the general.

"Aronsonheim earned applause and admiration from the public, but he could only come to hear him once or twice. Chagrined and heartsick he came to my native town with letters to me and boarded in my house. In a month's time he was desperately in love with the most beautiful girl in the town in our village, the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer there. An honest, open-hearted gentleman, he declared to tell his love to the girl until he had the parent's permission, and at least recognition he went to her father asking leave to address the daughter, who he believed was not indifferent to him.

"The usual result followed. Cursed as a beggarly Dutchman," he was ordered out of her abode, but he could not speak to the woman he loved, and insulted as only a snob can insult a sensitive soul.

"I met him at the door. His face was so pale it frightened me. He rushed by me into his room, and locked himself up there for a day and then came out a broken man.

"He tried for a week to get a single word with his love. He was denied admittance. The letters he wrote were returned unopened. He believed, and I know not why, that the young woman loved him and would leap all barriers and fly with him, could he only tell her of his love; but no opportunity was afforded him to see her.

"At last he confided to me his scheme:—'I will give a concert. I know she will come. I will play her Gluck's "Orfeo." I will play her some of Playford's music, and then I will ask her in music to be mine. Ah, Gott! I know she will come.'

"Nothing could dissuade him from his scheme. His concert was advertised far and wide for the 22d day of October, two years gone. He sat up from half-past ten the night before, and gave a convulsive start as the stranger said:—'to-daybreak the next morning. Just before breakfast I entered his room and found him wild-eyed and haggard, wringing the score I now hold in my hand.'

"He would not come to breakfast nor dinner despite my entreaties. I went up to his room about four in the evening, and just as I put my hand on the door knob I heard him give a desperate cry. 'I cannot do it. It will not come to me.' I threw the door open, but too late. He had cut his throat from ear to ear, and his life blood ran out on this score, which I have kept by me ever since, and never heard rendered, until you played it last night. May I beg you to accept it?"

I sent for him and ordered him to call in my advance agent, and cancel every future engagement. My contract with the theater had expired about a month before, but I had gone on with my performances on the same terms.

The reader can imagine the scene that followed. I do not care to dwell on it.

I walked to the ball that night with a feeling of relief so great that it almost overcame the usual feeling of horror and reluctance with which I approached a performance.

I found the hall packed and jammed, and the applause that greeted my appearance was, I think, the heartiest I ever received.

The usual cold chill took hold of me as I seated myself at the instrument; the phantom fingers grasped my own and I played a few bars of the ill-fated score. I had executed over two-thirds of the number of pieces I usually gave and retired for a rest behind the wings when Skab came around and spoke to me.

"You are not playing in your usual style," he said. "What is the matter?" I told him that I was unaware of any difference. I was conscious I was not exactly candid in the statement, for there was a nervousness apparent to myself and a strange promiscuousness in the fingers that grasped my own.

I returned on the stage and took my seat. Just before I stretched my arms out to the keyboard I happened to raise my eyes and saw in the box just in front of me the most gloriously beautiful girl I ever looked upon. She was not exactly a blonde, yet not a brunette, with rich chestnut hair, an exquisite complexion, and eyes, the like of which, no Italian sky ever equalled; blue they might have been, for black they were not, but if blue it was like the azure of the illimitable sky reflected in the blue depths of the unfathomable ocean. You lost yourself looking in them.

I saw that this beautiful creature was watching me intently. Her rich red lips were parted, so that a gleam of her snow white teeth could be seen between them. She was leaning slightly forward, and before I touched a key I felt that I could not withdraw my eyes from the strange light that gleamed in hers.

And yet I was conscious that she, while watching me, was looking beyond me, over my shoulder, and if I could have done so I would have turned my head. But before I could stir a muscle the hands seized me with a grip—this time I fear I gave an involuntary cry—and I heard, as if in a dream, the opening strains of Schubert's serenade.

Never have I heard anything play this waltz music as I then heard it. But for once my sense of hearing was so acute that I was in possession of the music, so entirely was I lost in the gaze of the magnificent eyes that looked through and beyond me, that I only knew when the music ended by the applause of the audience.

The waltz was over, and still I was watching the beautiful girl, who seemed now for the first time to be aware of my gaze, my hands touched the keys, and ere a single note was sounded I knew what she was coming. "Love's Question," he sang her leit, and saw the beautiful face above me redden and then grow as white as sea foam.

Oh! how that music sounded. My flesh grew cold, my eyes were flooded with tears, and I felt against my bosom that it would burst in involuntary flesh. On and on, in a strain whose ravishing sweetness no earthly melody ever equalled, I heard Aronsonheim at last tell to the bride of his soul the love which he had never dared to speak.

"She heard it, and she flew from her seat, pushed back with a magnificent gesture the hair that rippled over her forehead and leant across the brass rod that encircled her box. Her bosom was heaving like a tempest tossed billow; her hands were cool and white, coming fast and short. Her lips were wider apart and her eyes looked as the half opened gates of paradise must look to a condemned soul.

I partook of her agitation. Swaying from side to side, and with the climax was approaching. The discord at the awful ending of the written score was coming. I, too, breathed sharp and hard, but clenched my teeth in terrible fear.

"Would those hands clutch my throat? The cold, clammy fingers ten me as the despairing soul felt that music could not tell its anguish? The last bar was reached, but instead of the crash of discordant notes, pure and sweet as an angel's song a sublime symphony crept from her heart, and I saw the blood leap in my heart. It was no questioning music any longer; it was a joyous knowledge that filled the soul and overran the senses with a silvery flood of harmony.

"Thou art mine!" it said; "mine forever and ever! No more despair, no more doubt, no more fear! Joy, joy, joy even as the angels feel in the presence of God. Mine! mine! mine!"

My hand he confided to me his scheme:—'I will give a concert. I know she will come. I will play her Gluck's "Orfeo." I will play her some of Playford's music, and then I will ask her in music to be mine. Ah, Gott! I know she will come.'

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As the stranger left me he made one request.

"I beg of you, sir, to visit my town (here he gave me the name, which I do not repeat here), and if you do please play this score."

purple pansy so large that it attracted the attention of the young minister. While he was still looking at it the train rushed into a tunnel.

The black-eyed young woman grabbed the pansy in the darkness from her companion, and leaning over, dropped it into the lap of the godly man.

When the train reached daylight again the young minister had turned, and with the pansy in his hand, was gazing reprovingly at the nun-like girl between whose fingers he had seen the flower. Her face was blazing and her downcast eyes seemed to confess her guilt. The whole car snickered, and the malicious black-eyed girl read the book unconsciously.

This is why the young minister preached on the iniquity of flirting yesterday.

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