

FLASHES OF A MIGHTY MIND

Anecdotal Reminiscences of the Life of Thomas Brackett Reed.

SARCASM AND HUMOR CLEVERLY HANDLED

Thrasts of His Mental Rapier at Parties, Polities and Political Opponents—Activities of an Intellectual Giant.

The long and masterful career of the late Thomas B. Reed affords an abundance of anecdotes illustrating his activities in public and private life and the forceful brilliancy of an intellectual giant.

When the house voted on the Teller resolution Representative Hicks of Pennsylvania was absent. The morning after, while Speaker Reed was riding in a street car toward the capitol, Mr. Hicks stepped aboard.

A Louisiana member at the beginning of one congress went to him and frankly said that he would like to be placed on the committee on rivers and harbors.

Representative William Astor Chanler met the ex-speaker one day in New York, and said to him: "Mr. Reed, I have read and heard a great deal about trusts during this fight for the presidency, and I have seen various definitions of a trust.

Calm Amid the Tumult.

"Old Howdy," as Mr. Martin, an uncouth and picturesque Texan, was called because of his usual mode of greeting his friends, declared with sulphurous language that he would never permit himself to be counted in one of Reed's quorums.

"The gentleman from Texas will be kind enough to take his seat." "Old Howdy" was paralyzed. He could not conceive that any man would submit to the epithets that he had uttered without drawing a knife or a revolver.

On one occasion news came that the state of Colorado was likely to be represented in part in the house by a woman. An enterprising publisher saw in this circumstance a topic for an article from Mr. Reed and duly instructed his representative in Washington to see the gentleman from Maine and persuade him to agree to write on the possibilities opened up by the entrance of a woman in the lower house of congress.

"Please say," said Mr. Reed, "just this: 'Excuse me,' and get the telegraph operator to send the last word in capitals."

"That was as near as any one ever got Reed to delivering himself on woman's suffrage.

A Spouter Silenced.

One of Mr. Reed's earliest encounters in the house was with Singleton of Mississippi, a red-hot southern democrat. The bill under discussion was one to reduce the salary of the United States minister to Great Britain from \$17,000 to \$15,000 a year.

"As to the idea that upon the salaries here proposed poor men cannot afford to hold government positions," answered Singleton, "I will say that I can furnish from my own state men of the highest character who would be glad to take any of these positions."

"Mr. Chairman," replied Reed, "I should judge, from the supply of office seekers who have been crowding around our doorkeeper, that gentlemen on the other side could supply enough to fill all the offices of the country, at any price."

"Yes," answered Singleton, excitedly, "and I do not wonder at it, because the demoralization which has grown up under the republican party has extended all over the land. The republican party, having control of the government, has inaugurated the idea that these people have a right to live off the country."

"Mr. Chairman," drawled Reed, in his most irritating way, "it is too bad to charge us with corrupting the democratic party. And thereafter honorable members were



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careful how they stirred up the big man from Maine.

A Bit of Prophecy.

One of Mr. Reed's visits to Washington was made just after the withdrawal of his successor, Speaker Henderson, from the congressional race in Iowa. A newspaper correspondent espied Mr. Reed standing on the opposite side of the street, contemplating the sky.

Reed seemed moved. Instead of abruptly refusing to talk, as had at first been his evident intention, he looked up at the sky and began to think.

"That cloud," said he, "indicates that we are going to have rain."

Brilliant Flashes.

"One evening a newspaper correspondent sent his card in to Mr. Reed, who was seated in a dark corner of a Washington restaurant. Reed came out and the correspondent said: 'Pardon me, Mr. Reed, I mistook you for Mr. Cleveland.'"

gins interrupted Reed in the midst of a speech with some foolish query.

"Yesterday," said Reed in reply, "I had a discussion with Mr. Wilson, the head of the West Virginia delegation, and today, however unpleasant it may be, I suppose I shall be compelled to have a discussion with the tail of the West Virginia delegation."

"For the last four years," began Mr. Reed, "this district has been represented in congress by chaos."

taken of the democracy," began Reed, "at any time and at any place, it would reveal them in the act of doing some mean, low-lived, contemptible thing."

"There," said Reed blandly, "I told you so."

"Well," said Reed, with a sly twinkle in his eyes, "why don't you say it? 'Chaos did.'"

known today, who after a few steps asked cheerfully:

"Mr. Reed, how much do you weigh?" "One hundred and ninety pounds," was the prompt answer.

"Well," replied Mr. Reed, glancing down at his big frame with a touch of pride, "may be I have, but it has not lessened the matchless symmetry of my form."

Mr. Reed's last visit to Washington, which terminated in so sorrowful a way, was made just after the army and navy foot ball game, which he attended.

"I thought when you bumped into me that you were as big as ever, but you have fallen off. I think you weigh thirty pounds less than you used to."

His Earnings.

Philadelphia Press: Clark—See here! You told me if I took a course of instruction from you it wouldn't be long before I'd be earning \$100 a week.