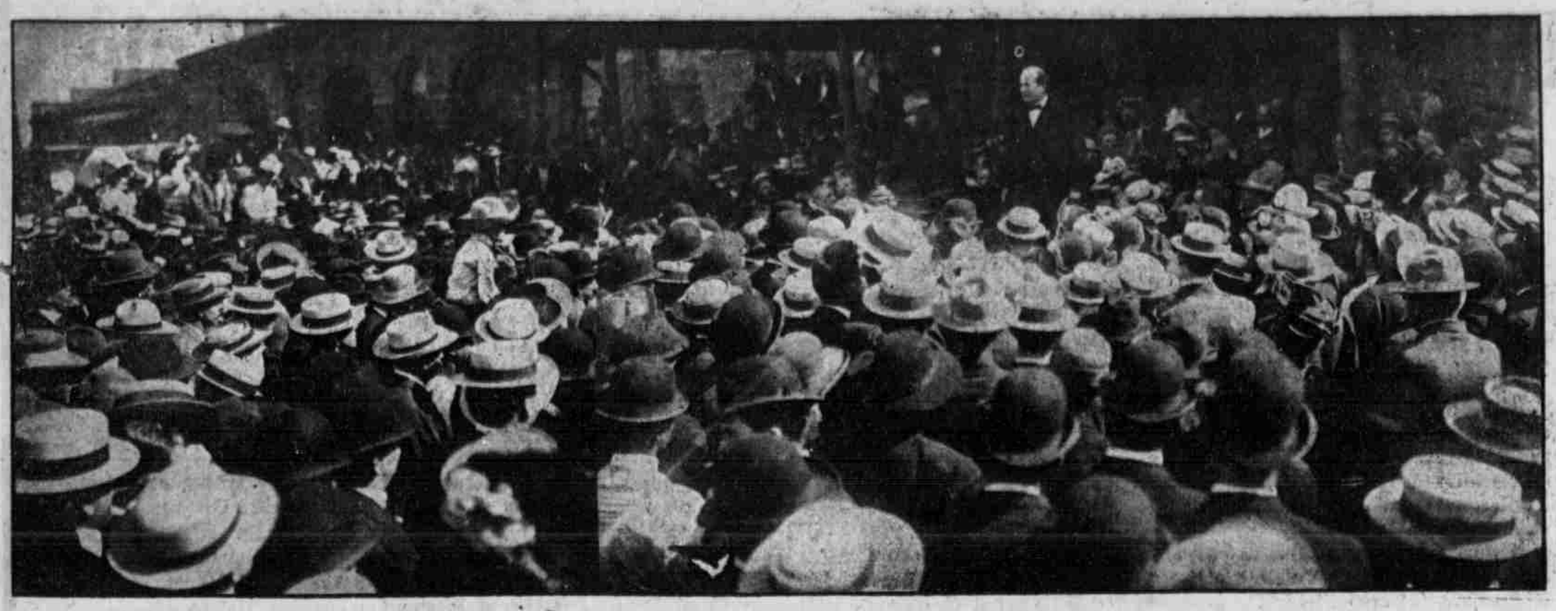
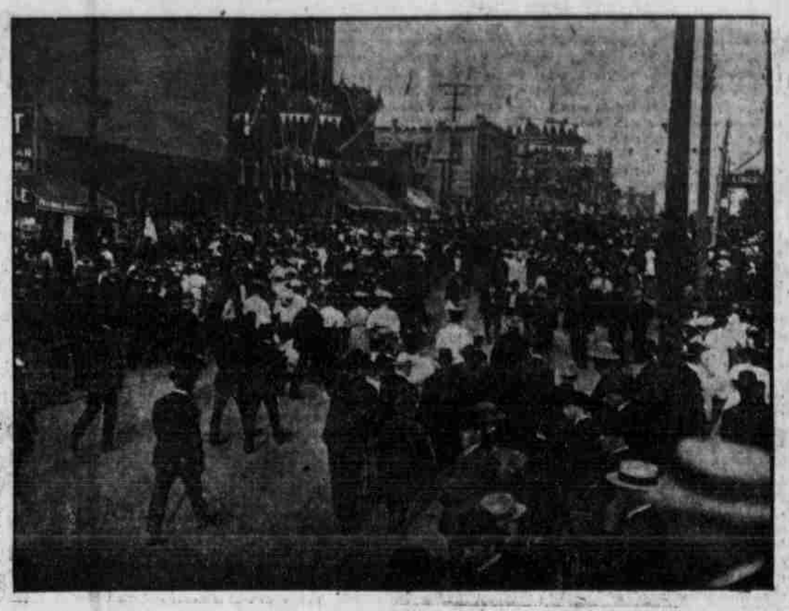
William Jennings Bryan Given Joyous Welcome by the Home Folks



MR. BRYAN SPEAKING TO THE CROWD THAT MET HIM AT THE UNION STATION, OMAHA.



MR. BRYAN'S CARRIAGE PASSING UP P STREET FROM THE DEPOT AT LINCOLN.

OMAHA'S title, the Gate City, never seemed more fitting than when the train bearing Mr. Bryan and his Nebraska home folks came steaming over the Missouri river from Iowa Wednesday afternoon. Figuratively, at least, the portals of Omaha, of Nebraska, of the great wide west—that splendid section characterized the world over by this distinguished tourist—swung back as far on their hinges as they could and gave welcome passageway to Mr. Bryan. The train pulled into Union station in the presence of a tremendous throng, and for once the lines of politics were utterly obliterated, effaced from the minds of the thousands who had gathered, eager to receive back to their state this, their fellow citizen, who had been honored in almost every nation of the globe.

It was also fitting that Mr. Bryan's reception at home, here in Omaha, should be informal and spontaneous. New York, the east, had done the formal honors; that was all right for strangers, but here were home folks and neighbors, and there was no temper for formalities. It was a right royal welcome, whole-souled, western, and you could see Mr. Bryan enjoyed it to the very full. He said so. He told some of his intimate friends privately that it was worth all the formal greetings he had received. In the presence of such an ovation even the Biblical tradition that "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," lost its prestige.

Welcome at Lincoln.

Just how many people assembled in Lincoln last Wednesday to greet William J. Bryan upon his return from a year's trip around the world and to extend a welcome to Mrs. Bryan and their daughter, Miss Grace Bryan, will never be known, but the crowd in Lincoln on that occasion was by many thousands the largest ever congregated in the state capital. The cordial reception given to Mr. Bryan was a fitting close to a long line of ovations which he received throughout his journey and since his return to American shores.

Many sections of the state contributed to make up the multitude, so it was a state extending a welcome to a distinguished son rather than a strictly Lincoln affair.

The capital city had on its gala attire for the first time in its history. The principal streets of the town were long corridors of fire, beautiful and resplendent with hundreds and thousands of electric bulbs, while every store and every public building was graced with flags and bunting of red, white and blue, and suspended across the streets at frequent intervals were banners bearing the word "Welcome." One patriotic merchant had erected in front of his place of business an arbor of green leaves and branches, among which was a large picture of democracy's leader, encircled with electric lights. It was purely and solely Bryan day and every man, woman and child within the corporate limits of the city was for Bryan for the time being. Each person contributed something to the rousing welcome tendered the traveler.

Enthusiasm Breaks Into Noise.

When the train pulled into the Burlington station a perfect bedlam of noise was started. The people did not depend upon their own voices to create the disturbance; voices were inadequate to the occasion, but whistles, siren whistles, anvils and giant dynamite crackers were turned loose. A big threshing machine engine was anchored across from the station and its whistle never stopped as long as there was any solid atmosphere for it to pierce.

Of course, with such a demonstrative crowd and with Mr. Bryan so glad to get back, he wanted to shake hands with everybody at the station, things could not be pulled off in apple pie order. In fact, Mr. Bryan was taken from the depot, as Mr. Hitchcock remarked of the arrangements, by "brute strength and awkwardness."

Lincoln's best looking policemen, with Sergeant McCorkle in the van, were on hand to clear the way and make it easy sailing for the Bryan party and the "distinguished citizens" who were to be in the parade. The policemen, however, were fairly eaten up. When they found themselves they were trailing along behind the hindmost part of the parade. They stuck together, though, and made a very creditable finish to an inspiring spectacle.

Honored by the Throng.

Mr. Bryan reached Lincoln about 5 o'clock, just as the 43,000 persons at the state fair grounds were coming into town. These lined up on either side of the street through which the parade passed almost to the car tracks from the station to the residence of Charles W. Bryan, where the great commoner and his family ate dinner. Barely enough space was left on O street for the parade to pass through.

Except right at the station, however, the crowd was not a noisy collection of people. They semed content to raise their hats and look at the man they honored, cheering only spasmodically.

The joy of the Nebraskans at once more having their distinguished citizen with them was no more intense than was the pleasure Mr. Bryan experienced at being with his people on his own grounds, in his own home. Mr. Bryan expressed his pleasure in his every look and in his every utterance. He became "fidgety" before his train reached Lincoln and nervously hustled his baggage together.

"I'll get your baggage together, Mr. Bryan," said some one in the car; "you go ahead and sit down and rest."

"I don't think I will," answered the home-comer. "I just paid myself a quarter to do this, and I want to earn the money before I get to Lincoln."

And he earned the quarter unaided and alone, even though he did have to hustle Ole Palm's trunk out of his way to get his own chattels.

Son Greets His Father.

Mr. Bryan was happy to get back home, and it was fitting that the first person to greet him at Lincoln was his own son, William J. Bryan, Jr., who leaped upon the platform of the car before it fairly stopped and kissed his father, mother and sister. The young man was so jubilant at the return of his people that he didn't wait for the parade or anything else. He hustled his sister into a buggy and trotted off ahead of everybody.

An interesting feature of Mr. Bryan's home-coming was the fact that Normal, his "real, genuine, blown-in-the-bottle home," laid aside politics for the afternoon and evening and consented to unite with Lincoln in the reception. It is said every one of the eighty voters of this precinct was at the station, cheering for his neighbor.

As Normal goes, it is claimed, so goes the state and nation, and for that reason Mr. Bryan's hardest political battles occur among the eighty voters of his home precinct. Last year the eighty votes were equally divided between republicans and democrats, so a Lincoln statistician figured. The fact that Normal was out in force added much to the pleasure of Mr. Bryan, because it had been published extensively that Normal was very much put out because Mr. Bryan had consented to stop for a short spell in that little old Omaha and Lincoln. But Normal rose to the occasion nobly and its people seemed satisfied that it were better to have the big love feast in Lincoln.

Bryan Buttons and Badges.

An amusing incident occurred in Omaha just before the train pulled out for Lincoln. An Omaha concern had made a few thousand buttons bearing the picture of Bryan. These were boxed up nicely and sent to the Burlington station through a representative of the firm. The man gave the box over to the keeping of one of the attaches of the station while he attended to other duties. Some one asked for a Bryan button and the depot official promptly complied with the request. Then others asked and more buttons were given away. The crowd became so thick around the depot man that he dumped the buttons out on a window ledge and told the crowd to help itself. When the owner came back his buttons were gone. He had brought them to the depot to sell and they represented $25 to his firm.

And in the meantime, down at that dear old Lincoln, where they do things, parties were selling "official" Bryan badges at $1 each, and nearly every other person had one on.

Seems in Splendid Health.

Though he had been gone from Lincoln almost a year, Mr. Bryan appeared as he had always appeared, strong and well, a magnificent specimen of physical manhood. He showed not the least trace of his long travels, and, for that matter, neither did the members of his family. He was generous with his smiles and his handshakes, and from Omaha to Lincoln spoke many times of the beauty of the state and of his great pleasure at being at home.

"The trip has been of vast benefit to us," he said, "and though we kept the children out of school for a year, I am glad we did, for I believe they have learned more than if they had been in school."

The democratic mayors with Mr. Bryan were glad to accept the reflected honor confered upon them.

"This is the closest I have been to Mr. Bryan since Jim Dahlman lasooed him," said Fred Hunker, mayor of West Point. "We just got his word that he would come home on our train, and then we left the easterners have him, and they certainly took him." And at that time Hunker was in one end of the car and Bryan in the other.

"Home Folks'" Night.

There were no democrats and no republicans in the crowd which heard Mr. Bryan at the state house Wednesday night. The crowd consisted of Bryan's friends and "home folks." This was very aptly demonstrated when Governor Mickey prolonged his address of welcome into a discussion of the great work of the last congress. The crowd knew all about that, but it didn't know what Mr. Bryan was going to say. The crowd was anxious to know what Mr. Bryan had to say, and it didn't care to hear what Mr. Mickey had to say after he had welcomed the distinguished Nebraskan. Therefore the crowd had to let Governor Mickey know what it wanted by yelling, and it did. The governor bravely held on and told the people to listen to him. But they couldn't and they didn't. The cries for Bryan drowned the shouts of Mr. Mickey.

Ovation at the State House.

The demonstration at Lincoln reached its height at the state house in the evening. People covered at least one-fourth of the grounds, reaching from the building to K street, and extending down Fifteenth street. Either the crowd was so extensive that Mr. Bryan's voice was not equal to the occasion, or he was not at his best, for he could not be heard at the outskirts of the crowd.

When the home-comer walked out on the balcony which extends from the supreme court room, those in front began to cheer; the cries were taken up by those in the rear, and then for several minutes a joyous multitude let loose all the pent up enthusiasm it had restrained especially for this occasion. Mr. Bryan stood silent; at first he smiled, and then as it seemed to dawn upon him this was a tribute to him; a tribute from his neighbors; from those who live with him and know him best; an expression of Nebraska's opinion of him; the face of the great commoner became serious; and then when he attempted to speak he was unable to conceal his emotion; the tremor of his voice showed his deep feeling.

When the announcement was made that Mr. Bryan would shake hands with the people after his speech the audience let out a yell that shamed the siren whistles. The people didn't wait to hear from any one else when the home-comer concluded his remarks. Everyone made a break for the state house to be the first to touch his hands, even as they touch the hand of the datto in his own country.

The World's Furniture City and Its Annual Fairs

(Copyright, 1906, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Sept. 6.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Grand Rapids is the furniture center of the world. It picks its lumber from every forest and sends it out all over the United States and to Europe, South America, Africa and Australia in the shape of beds, tables, chairs and office furniture. There are, at this writing, lumber camps in Mexico and Central America chopping out mahogany for these factories, agents are stationed at Liverpool to buy up the best timber brought in from South America and Africa for Grand Rapids, and there is scarcely a hardwood section noted for its fine lumber which is not tributary to this point. During my stay at Panama last year I found that Grand Rapids men had taken out concessions for the best mahogany on the isthmus. I saw other Grand Rapids buyers in Cuba snapping up the best timbers as they were brought out to the railroads and the sea, and during a recent foreign tour I discovered an agency for Grand Rapids office furniture in every European capital.

Great Furniture Fair.

Indeed this is one of the queer commercial centers of the globe and is different from any other in that it seems to have monopolized its specialty. It is more like one of the great fair cities of medieval times, at which the merchants and buyers from all over Europe went to make their annual purchases. The most of such centers have long since disappeared, although in one or two of them fairs are still held. Leipsig has a fur market to which fur buyers from all parts of the world annually come, and also a book fair, which is largely attended. In the middle ages nearly all the trading of England was done at fairs, and the same was true of France, Germany and Italy. The largest commercial fair of the world today is at Nijni Novgorod, in Russia. It lasts for about a month or six weeks and brings together buyers from western Asia and Europe.

The daily attendance at that fair numbers 200,000, and it is estimated that $200,000,000 changes hands at each of its annual sessions. Everything is at wholesale and the single purchases are large.

The furniture fairs at Grand Rapids are held twice a year, and the sales then run up into the millions. Exposition buildings have been constructed for them, and one of these is so large that its floors cover fifteen acres. Practically all the goods sold are from orders given at the fairs, and the factories spend large sums in preparing their exhibits. A single firm may spend $50,000 upon its samples, and all goods will be sold from the sample thus shown.

Buyers from Everywhere.

The furniture sold here is not confined to Grand Rapids. The factories in other parts of the country rent space and send in samples so that the buyer has the furniture of the United States to choose from.

The buyers come from everywhere, and they number hundreds. Many are representatives of wholesale houses, many purchase for department stores and some represent big retail dealers.

Not a few bring their families with them, making this the vacation tour of the year and at such times the Grand Rapids hotels are full even to the cots in their hallways. The city then puts on its gayest clothing. There are dinners and receptions night after night. The furniture makers suscribe to an entertainment fund and they give their customers automobile rides, parties at the country clubs and everything to keep them in a good humor. The time for these fairs is midwinter and midsummer, the summer sales being devoted to furniture for the market for the following winter and the winter sales to the summer demand.

Why Grand Rapids Is.

I have often wondered why Grand Rapids should monopolize, as it were, the furniture business of our country. Here, in the heart of the United States, with a business with all the world. The materials is uses in manufacture are heavy and the greater part of them are carried many thousand miles. The city has some water power, but there is no coal nearby to give it cheap steam. It was once close to a hardwood region, but the greater part of the hardwood has been long since cut away, and nevertheless the city grows and increases in its specialty year by year. In 1890 Grand Rapids had just about 60,000 inhabitants. It has today more than 100,000, and its houses and factories are scattered over seventeen square miles. It has sixteen steam railroads, and its tramways, operated by electricity, have fifty miles of track. The public parks of Grand Rapids are worth almost $2,000,000, and its clearing house business is more than $100,000,000 per annum.

Grand Rapids has 532 factories, employing over 20,000 hands, with a daily pay roll of over $50,000. The most of the factories are devoted to furniture, and some of them are enormous.

In a Big Furniture Factory.

During my stay I have gone through one of the largest, which makes the finest of beds, china closets, dining tables and sideboards. The factory turns out chamber suites which cost as much as $2,500, and it has made dining tables worth close to $1,000. The most of the furniture is, of course, much cheaper, but all is of the highest grade, and such as you will find in our better class homes throughout the country.

A large part of the work of this establishment was done in mahogany. The wood is brought here in logs and sawed into boards. The boards are put away in kilns and roasted until every bit of moisture has gone out of them. They are then left under cover for a time to absorb enough moisture to be easily worked, and are then run through machine after machine to be trimmed and polished for furniture making. A great deal of the manufacture is by hand and many of the laborers receive high wages.

Without attempting to give the process in detail, I will mention one or two odd things I saw as I went through the works.

All Fine Furniture Veneered.

One was that the finest furniture of today is veneered. We like to think that our mahogany is solid and we often talk of our solid mahogany dining tables, sideboards and bed room sets. The truth is there is mighty little such stuff in the markets and the veneered furniture is far more beautiful than any solid article could be. The reason is that in veneering a section of wood which has a beautiful grain can be so cut up into sheets that it will cover a large space. The sheets are just about as thick as one's big toe nail, but one log may make several hundred of them and when they are properly glued to cheaper woods the two are as solid as though they had grown together. The machinery here is such that skins of this fine wood can be fitted to furniture of every shape. It can be pasted around a column or follow the curves of an arm chair or the scroll-like roll of a bedstead. The mahogany is put on rough and is carved, smoothed and polished in such a way that one could not but imagine that every piece is solid.

I found a great deal of original work going on in the factory. One room was devoted to designers who were planning new furniture and in another skilled carvers were working the wood out according to designs piece by piece. There was also a large photographic room where the finished furniture is photographed to show the trade the coming styles.

Senator in Prospective.

During my stay here I have seen something of William Alden Smith, who for the last dozen years or so has been one of the most prominent of our republican members of congress and who promises to be the next United States senator from long railroad haul to each coast, and far away from the south is a city that does business with all the world. The materials is uses in manufacture are heavy and the greater part of them are carried many thousand miles. The city has some water power, but there is no coal nearby to give it cheap steam. It was once close to a hardwood region, but the greater part of the hardwood has been long since cut away, and nevertheless the city grows and increases in its specialty year by year. In 1890 Grand Rapids had just about 60,000 inhabitants. It has today more than 100,000, and its houses and factories are scattered over seventeen square miles. It has sixteen steam railroads, and its tramways, operated by electricity, have fifty miles of track. The public parks of Grand Rapids are worth almost $2,000,000, and its clearing house business is more than $100,000,000 per annum.

Grand Rapids has 532 factories, employing over 20,000 hands, with a daily pay roll of over $50,000. The most of the factories are devoted to furniture, and some of them are enormous.

In a Big Furniture Factory.

During my stay I have gone through one of the largest, which makes the finest of beds, china closets, dining tables and sideboards. The factory turns out chamber suites which cost as much as $2,500, and it has made dining tables worth close to $1,000. The most of the furniture is, of course, much cheaper, but all is of the highest grade, and such as you will find in our better class homes throughout the country.

A large part of the work of this establishment was done in mahogany. The wood is brought here in logs and sawed into boards. The boards are put away in kilns and roasted until every bit of moisture has gone out of them. They are then left under cover for a time to absorb enough moisture to be easily worked, and are then run through machine after machine to be trimmed and polished for furniture making. A great deal of the manufacture is by hand and many of the laborers receive high wages.

Without attempting to give the process in detail, I will mention one or two odd things I saw as I went through the works.

All Fine Furniture Veneered.

One was that the finest furniture of today is veneered. We like to think that our mahogany is solid and we often talk of our solid mahogany dining tables, sideboards and bed room sets. The truth is there is mighty little such stuff in the markets and the veneered furniture is far more beautiful than any solid article could be. The reason is that in veneering a section of wood which has a beautiful grain can be so cut up into sheets that it will cover a large space. The sheets are just about as thick as one's big toe nail, but one log may make several hundred of them and when they are properly glued to cheaper woods the two are as solid as though they had grown together. The machinery here is such that skins of this fine wood can be fitted to furniture of every shape. It can be pasted around a column or follow the curves of an arm chair or the scroll-like roll of a bedstead. The mahogany is put on rough and is carved, smoothed and polished in such a way that one could not but imagine that every piece is solid.

I found a great deal of original work going on in the factory. One room was devoted to designers who were planning new furniture and in another skilled carvers were working the wood out according to designs piece by piece. There was also a large photographic room where the finished furniture is photographed to show the trade the coming styles.

Senator in Prospective.

During my stay here I have seen something of William Alden Smith, who for the last dozen years or so has been one of the most prominent of our republican members of congress and who promises to be the next United States senator from Michigan. William Alden is enthusiastic over the future of Grand Rapids. He has been one of the factors of its growth and, in addition to his prominence in political life, he is the proprietor of the leading newspaper, the Grand Rapids Herald. Mr. Smith is now wealthy, but his first money was made as a newsboy, by selling the journal which he now owns, and I think there was some sentiment connected with his purchase, although the Herald is fast becoming a valuable property. Indeed, William Alden Smith has had a remarkable career. He was born just about forty-five years ago at the euphonious town of Ouwagiac, in southwestern Michigan, not far from the lake and a little above the Indiana line. Shortly after he came with his parents, as a boy of thirteen, to Grand Rapids, his father died, and from then on he made his own way. For a time he acted as a telegraph messenger and later was appointed page in the Michigan house of representatives, where he got his first taste of politics. After this he studied law and was admitted to the bar, and he has since practiced in the intervals of his political career.

William Alden is a self-educated man, but he bears the marks of one who is college bred. The other day he and a congressional graduate of Yale were dining at the capital with Jeter C. Pritchard, who was in the senate from North Carolina and is now one of the judges of the United States circuit court. Pritchard is an intelligent man, but he has not had a college education. After he left the Yale representative said to William Alden Smith: "That man Pritchard has ability, and I venture he would have made much more of himself if he had had the educational advantages that you and I have had." I understand that William Alden smiled in his soul, but that he did not tell the Yale graduate that his only schools were those of experience and self-help.

In my talk with Mr. Smith I referred to his self-education, whereupon he remarked:

"It is not right to say that I have not been to college. During the last dozen years or so I have been going to school in the university of the house of representatives, and there is none better than that. The demands of congress are a continual spur toward bettering one's self. One must be careful of his language and be continually studying English. He has to practice how to think and speak quickly and precisely; and the man who tries to do his duty must read and study along educational lines quite as hard as any student of our best colleges. Indeed, I doubt whether there is any place where the active thinking student can improve more rapidly than in our national house of representatives in Washington."

William Alden and the Kaiser.

As we chatted together the subject of Mr. Smith's tour of Europe last year came up, and I asked him as to his audience with the emperor of Germany, saying that it was a strange thing for an ex-newsboy to be talking familiarly with one of the chief rulers of the world. I mentioned an interview which I once had with the late John Sherman in which he told me that when he was presented to the French emperor, Louis Napoleon, he wore a pair of velvet knee breeches, and I asked William Alden how he was dressed.

"I wore the plain black of an American citizen," was the reply, "and my dress was conspicuous only by its simplicity. My audience took place at the palace, and I was the only one of the party present who was not in uniform. All the others were diplomats or army officers and they wore gold braid and epaulettes. I had no idea that I should be presented, and I suppose I was indebted to Baron Sternberg, whom I knew as German ambassador at Washington, for my audience. I only know that when I arrived in Berlin I received an invitation that the kaiser would be glad to see me."

"Did you have any conversation with his majesty?" I asked.

"Yes. He talked with me for about twenty minutes. In meeting his own people he had used more or less ceremony and he seemed to me rather stiff than otherwise. When my turn came to be presented, however, he greeted me just as any gentleman would have greeted another in our country. He thrust out his hand. I took it and we shook, and his majesty seemed to put himself on the same level with me. In the talk which followed he was animated and interesting. We each said nice things to the other, and his majesty propcsed a number of subjects common to the two nations. One of these was the tariff. He referred to our protective duties and said that he did not like them on the ground that they prevented the increase of German trade. I replied that the Americans did not like the German regulations for the same reason. Thereupon his majesty laughed. I wish to say that I was impressed with the force of character which shines out in every act of the kaiser, and also by his evident friendship for the United States."

Stories of Senator Alger.

If William Alden Smith is elected he will have General Alger's seat in the United States senate, a place which has long been held by noted men. Zach Chandler kept it in the limelight of publicity for many years. Thomas M. Palmer did likewise and both McMillan and Alger were senators of national influence.

I understand that General Alger is by no means well and that he is anxious to rest. He is now over 70 and his work has been continuous for almost sixty years.

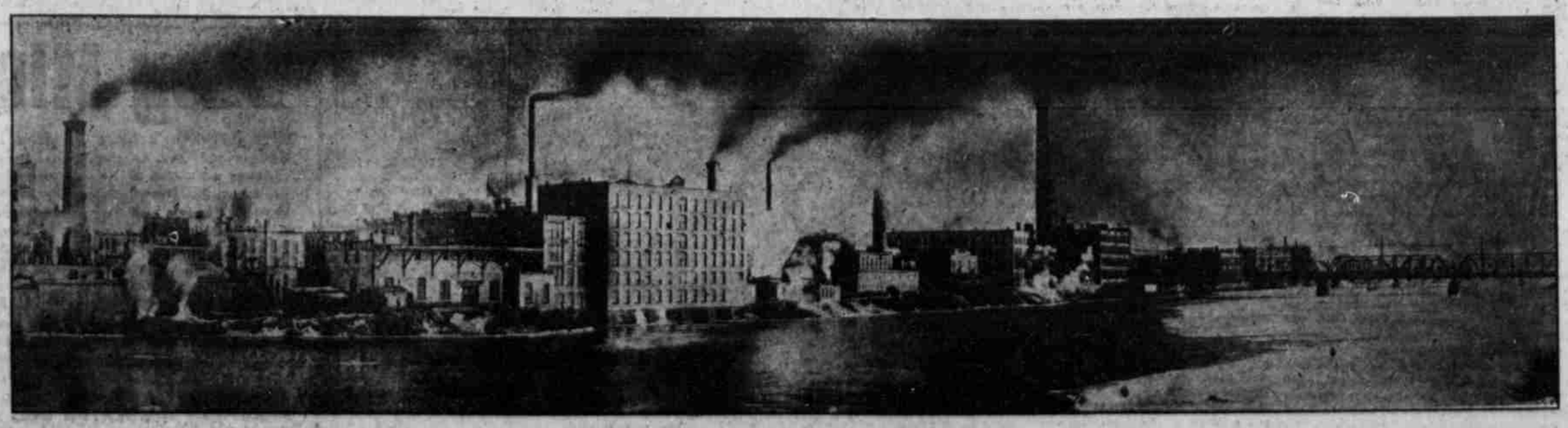
From Log Cabin to the Senate.

Indeed, I doubt whether there is a man in public life who had as hard a boyhood as that of the senior senator from Michigan. Alger's father was singularly unlucky. He tried a half dozen different businesses and failed in all. He was a pioneer farmer in Ohio at the time Alger was born and this millionaire senator, who is now three score and ten, first looked out upon the world through the door of a log cabin. When he was about 11 years of age his father died, and prior to that both father and mother lay sick in the same bed in the log hut, with four little children about and but little to eat. They both died within a short time of each other, and at the age of 12 the future senator was the main prop against the cabin door which kept the wolf of hunger out. He once told me of his struggles at that time. He worked for a neighbor, receiving as wages three teacups of flour a day, and this, mixed with the milk from the family cow, formed the food of himself and sisters. There was a little corn in the house, and one day young Russell shelled a bag of this and carried it on his back to a mill nine miles away and traded it for meal. He walked eighteen miles for that meal and says he cannot remember that he felt especially tired upon his return.

It was shortly after that that young Alger got homes for his younger brother and sisters in neighboring families and then went out to work as a farmer's hand, taking three months off for schooling each winter. His wages during the first two years ranged from $4 to $6 per month, and after he had worked six years he received $15 a month, which he says, was big wages for farmers in those days. All this time the senator went to school a part of the year and studied in the meanwhile. Later on he taught school and then read law, and later still went to Michigan and got into the lumber business, in which, after some financial disasters, he finally became established and gradually amassed a fortune. He is largely interested in lumber today, and has, in addition, other investments which make him one of the wealthiest men of his state.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

WILLIAM ALDEN SMITH.



PART OF GRAND RAPIDS, "THE "FURNITURE CITY."

Dyspeptic Philosophy

An affinity is generally a person with money.

Too many cosy corners will drive a man to his club.

Even the office that seeks the man must first see the boss.

Sweet are the uses of adversity, but like olives it's a cultivated taste.

The greatness that is thrust upon a man generally goes to his head.

A true friend is one who won't hold you responsible tomororw for what you say today.

The romantic boy who wants to grow up and marry his school teacher doesn't exist in real life.

In spite of the fact that man is made of dust, he isn't satisfied. He always wants more.

Magnetism is largely the secret of a clergyman's success, and it's much the same with the bunko steerer.—New York Times.