

Growth of the Automobile in Popularity and General Utility in Omaha



H. E. FREDRICKSON AND H. K. BURKETT SITTING OUT FOR A RECORD RUN TO BLAIR. THE FIRST NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS AUTOMOBILE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.—Reproduced From a Cut Printed at the Time in the Illustrated Bee.

FID on the cry of hard times. The third annual automobile show, which closed last night at the Auditorium, has put that cry to the four winds, for, although the automobile is still looked upon as something of a luxury and something the people could get along without, the dealers of the west never had such a successful meet. More dealers showed more machines, the building was better decorated, more people attended and more machines were sold than at any previous show ever held in Omaha or the west. The doors of the Auditorium had not been open half an hour Thursday afternoon before Drummond received a check for a steamer and thus recorded the first sale of the show.

The advantages of the big Auditorium were never more apparent than at the show, closed, for with all its space it could hardly care for the crowds of people who wished to see the big cars and look over the show. Each year more and more people have been coming from the surrounding towns, but this year capped the climax, for they came from all sections of Nebraska and beyond. They came to look over the machines, and some came just to see the show. Enough of interest was to be seen to attract even a man who was not an owner or even a prospective buyer.

A new feature of the show was the advent of several of the large implement firms into the automobile show. Some had become the demand for automobiles in country towns that the larger implement firms were practically forced to add a line of automobiles to their stock. In choosing this line the implement men sought out lines which they considered especially adapted to the country trade. Some had high wheel, heavy duty, but like burghies, which were especially suited for the country roads which are not suited for most low-bulk cars.

At the first show the dealers were satisfied to hang a few flags around the big building, but this year they decided to go into the subject of decorations right. They hired a decorator and he, by the use of an endless amount of purple and white bunting, transformed the bare walls into bowers of beauty. Palms were strewn around and the lighting scheme was the best ever seen in the Auditorium. While pillars were all that decorated the bays, and these went into the decoration scheme. Last year the show had half a dozen exhibitors and the problem was how to scatter the machines around to fill the space. This year the problem was to find room for all who wished to show.

The exhibitors at the show and the cars they displayed were: F. Woodward of Kansas City, with his Pilon and Delahaye, runabout and touring car; Guy Smith, Franklin; John Deere, Moline and Columbus; Bergers, Buick; Van Brunt of Council Bluffs, Geo; Brick Kuhn, Armarmotocycles and Holman; Angus Auto-

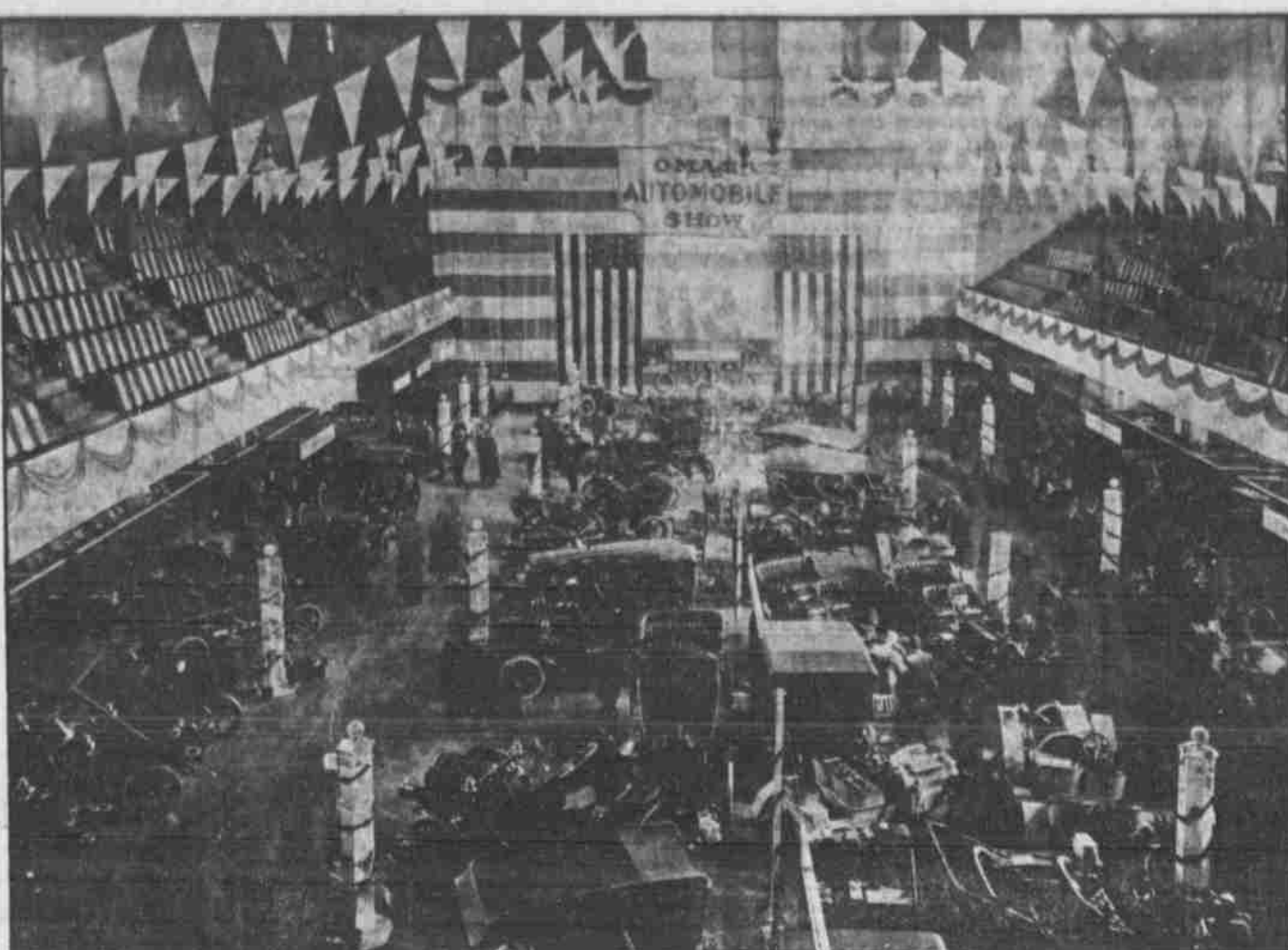
mobile company of Angus, Neb.; Fuller car; Central Tire and Rubber company of Lincoln, Michelin tires and rebuilt tires; Powell Automobile company, with automobile supplied accessories; Mier Automobile company; Mier car; Karbach, with Firestone tires; Oldsmobile company, three models of Olds' machines; Omaha Rubber company, with automobile clothing; Louk & Hathaway, with Maxwells; Kimball Automobile company, Stanleys, Stevens-Duryean and Babcock electric; Lindner Implement company, with Oakland; Drummond Carriage company, White Steamers; J. J. Durlight, with Stoddard-Dayton and Ford; Van Brunt of Council Bluffs, with Pope-Hartford, and the Plover Implement company, with Jacksons.

The occupants of the second French car attracted considerable attention at the show. They had shipped their car on by freight and took occasion to lay over in Omaha a few days to see the American cars. They were especially interested in the exhibition of the touring car, the runabout and the chassis of French-made cars, exhibited by Frank L. Woodward of Kansas City. Mr. Woodward wanted to show his interest in Omaha and did so by bringing personally three cars to Omaha and staying throughout the show to exhibit them. They attracted great interest, because they were the highest priced cars at the show and also the only cars of foreign make. Mr. Woodward kept one of his cars on the outside, that he might use it in "seeing Omaha."

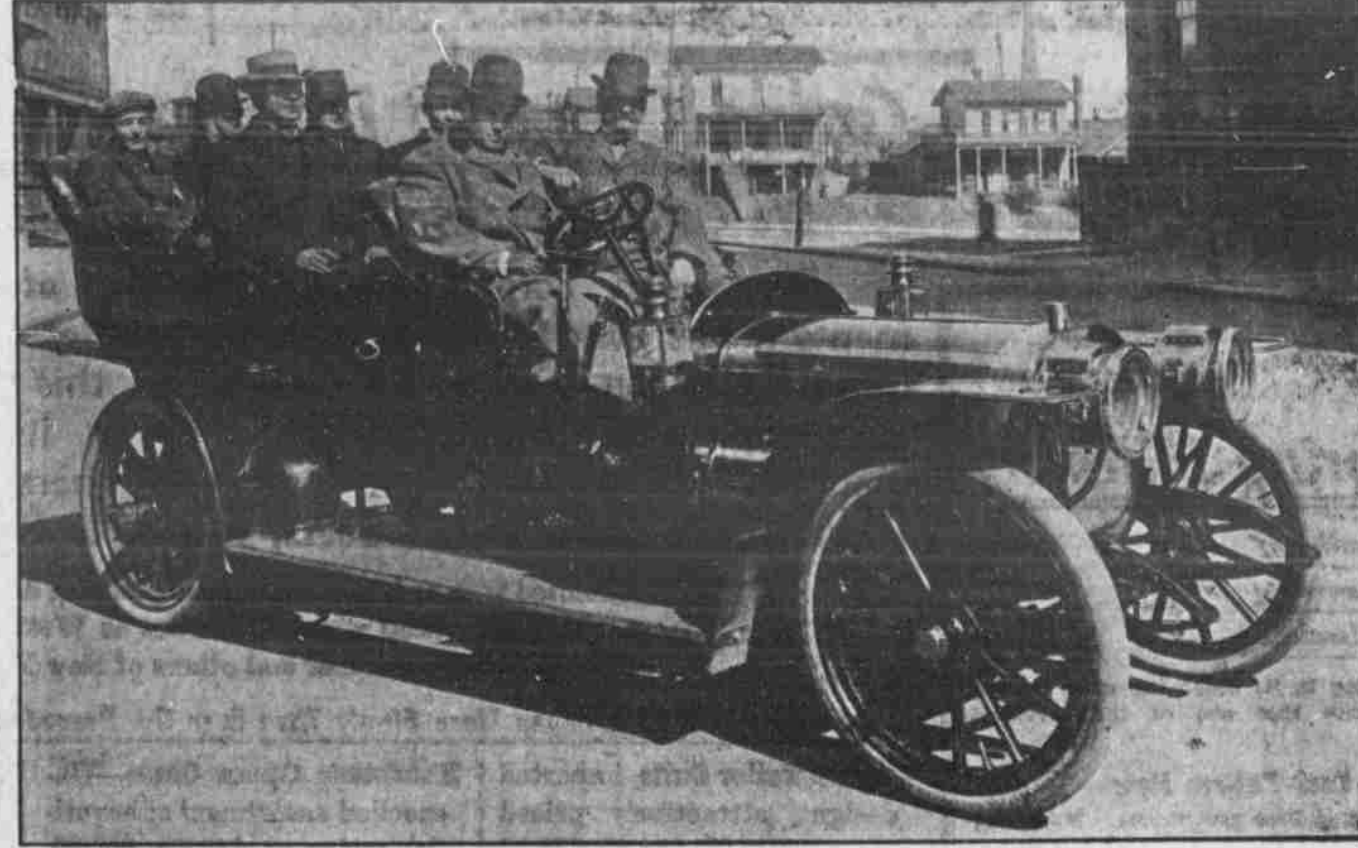
What a transition there has been in the automobile during the last ten years. Ten years marks the length of time the automobile has been in use in Omaha, and during that time the car has passed from a luxury to one second-hand machine to nearly 60, some of which are the highest priced cars built in America. Before the show Omaha could not boast of a foreign made car. From this time Omaha got to be the possessor of four machines there has been a sort of organization amongst the owners.

Twelve people took part in the initial run of the Omaha Automobile club. A report of the run says that "as high wind interferes with gasoline automobiles, but twelve were present, although twenty-five were expected." Taking part in the run were: F. N. Connor, L. Root, J. J. Straub of Fort Crook, Carl Nether, H. E. Fredrickson, C. F. Shoemaker, George Patterson and J. E. Tutsel. At the start this club prepared to make runs every Wednesday evening, and as there were some automobiles entered the run, it was arranged that the run should be to that place, where the band would play and the officers have some refreshments.

The formation of this club followed in the wake of the old wheel clubs, of which Omaha and Council Bluffs had so many and such good ones. Many members of the



GENERAL VIEW OF OMAHA AUTOMOBILE SHOW TAKEN JUST BEFORE THE DOORS WERE OPENED TO THE PUBLIC



FRANK L. WOODWARD OF KANSAS CITY SHOWING A PARTY OF FRIENDS HOW HIS BIG FRENCH CAR OPERATES.

first automobile club had been members of one or the other of the bicycle clubs. The most noticeable difference was the ease with which century runs were made. In ye olden times of the bicycle century rider, all were not able to finish, and when they did, they were found to be in a state of practical exhaustion. With the automobile it was found that double century runs could be made with as much ease as century runs were made a wheel.

H. E. Fredrickson made the first century run out of Omaha in an automobile, scooting northwest along the Elkhorn valley for a round trip of 123 miles. It took him six hours to make the run, Mr. Fredrickson became so enthusiastic over the run that he announced that he would soon receive a machine that would break a whole ton, patterned after the record breaker of the east. He said it would be built low to the ground and capable of going forty miles an hour. That was considered the fastest time possible on road work, but machines are now in use in Omaha which would break a speedometer gear only to sixty miles an hour.

The first feat of an automobile in or around Omaha to gain publicity for the machine was a hurry run Fredrickson made

to Blair with H. K. Burkett, the undertaker. The run up was uneventful, but after Fred had unloaded Burkett he drove into the heart of the city to get a bite to eat. The news spread and soon four-fifths of the town turned out to see the horseless carriage. Fred had forgotten to tie the horse and the farmers marveled.

"By gum, this year's a funny wagon," remarked a prominent citizen. "Where do you suppose he hitched his mules?"

"Gee whis, Bill, the buggy's on fire," yelled one of them. "Go call the fire department." He walked close to the machine and accidentally grabbed the propelling lever. The machine started and the assembled crowd grabbed it to pull back the lever. Someone heard him and pulled it back too far and the machine started to back, again running over several who were in the way. Fredrickson remarked afterwards that the thought flashed through his head that he was glad he had an undertaker with him.

The citizens of Blair were sore and for years Fredrickson sidestepped Blair on his automobile runs and advised all other tourists in horseless carriages to do the same. For the report spread that the mayor of the town had issued a proclamation to the citizens instructing them to greet the next new-fangled horseless vehicle that tried to enter the town with a lead of buckshot.

A year later Fredrickson was boasting to Omaha and this is what he said: "There are half a dozen now in use at Omaha. Mr. Whitman, the other local dealer, has one, a steam carriage. Dr. Anderson has one propelled by a gasoline engine. C. K. Custer, Genl. Beyerderfer and I have steam machines and I have an order from a prominent store for another. Besides these Colonel Sharp is having one built to order in Omaha."

The cost of the first "mobile" used in Omaha was \$750, and people hung back waiting for the cost price to become less, but they waited in vain, because instead of the demand arising for a cheaper machine the tendency has been upward and people have been asking for something better and better all the time, until last week at the automobile show a machine was shown the cost of which was \$8,000 and several \$4,000 and \$5,000 machines were on exhibition.

The Winton was the first large machine to be owned in Omaha and people told the dealer how foolish he was to spend his money for such a high-priced machine as he would surely "lose money on that."

How wrong the wise ones were, for the high-priced machine was sold and each year the owners have been trading back their old machines and taking something more expensive. D. C. Bradford has what is said to be the highest-priced machine in use in Omaha and he is said to have paid \$7,500 for the machine and its trimmings. Judge W. D. McHugh recently purchased a Great Arrow, for which he paid \$4,700.

The transition and demand for high-priced machines was slow but steady. It is not about to give way to touring cars, and then limousine bodies were demanded, until at present several families have as many as four machines and all are put to constant use.

The first automobile seen in Omaha was not owned here, but was loaned by an eastern firm to the Boston store, and was run on the streets of Omaha during the first exposition. The next year Fredrickson heard of a man at Geneva who owned a machine which had run away and frightened his wife until he did not care to use it again. Fredrickson hid himself to

Geneva, bought the machine second-hand and thus owned the first machine, the same with which he took his ride to Blair.

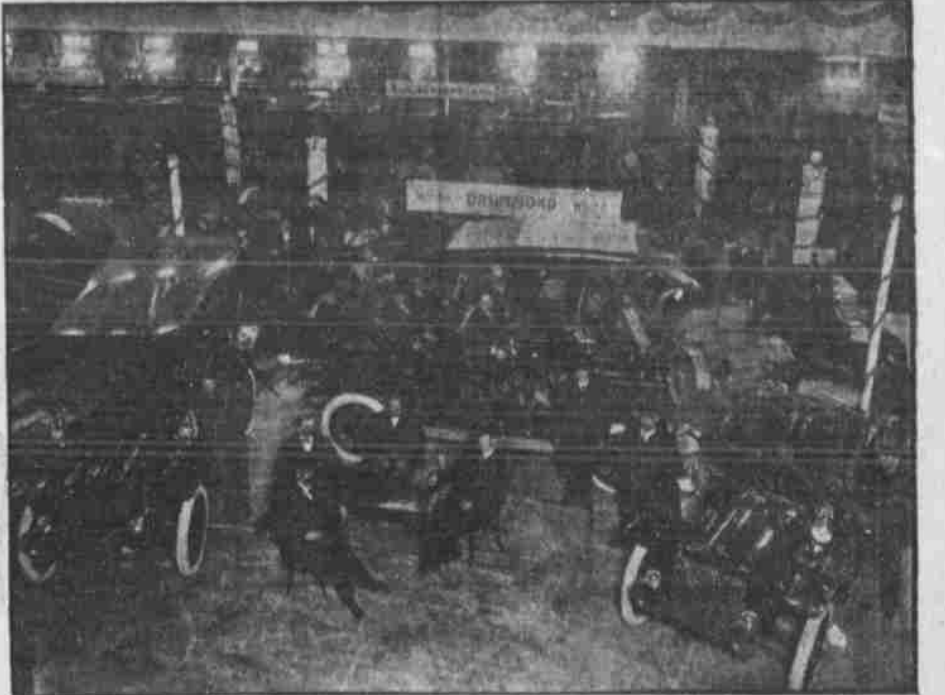
In 1902 the Omaha Automobile club was reorganized, and this time the members of the club were: F. N. Connor, G. W. Patterson, H. E. Fredrickson, John Colman, B. L. Baldwin, A. L. Root, E. W. Lamersaux, J. J. Durlight, F. H. Dorek, C. F. Shoemaker, O. A. Goodrich, J. N. Westberg, E. E. Holland, Dr. Dettweiler, E. A. Packard, H. Sharp, O. Beyerderfer, D. Risley, all of Omaha; L. A. Casper, H. Van Brunt, J. B. Atkins, Richard Stewart, M. Wollman, J. Kimball, L. P. Madsen, F. L. Childs, T. B. Lacey, Jr., and Dr. T. B. Lacey of Council Bluffs and Captain Straub of Fort Crook.

Although the Omaha Automobile club is not very active at the present time, it is ready at the call of the officers to go to the front when help is needed. The Automobile club, composed as it is of some of the leading citizens, has ever been a strong factor in Omaha, especially in the matter of demanding that the streets be kept in good condition.

The first call for united action which



WHERE THE ACCESSORIES WERE SHOWN



DRUMMOND'S EXHIBIT SEEN FROM THE GALLERY.

came to the Omaha Automobile club was to combat an order issued four years ago by the Park board to prohibit automobiles from using the parks and boulevards of Omaha. At that time the owners said they did not care so much about parks, but they did not want to be kept off the boulevards. The rule was issued, not because the automobiles would spoil the driveways, but because horses were frightened by the machines and accidents were quite liable to happen. It was claimed that several horses had been frightened until they had run down the high embankments along the boulevards. It is different now, as horses are becoming used to the white-wagons and pay no more attention to them than they do to street cars.

Several stretches of road, between the city pavements and the macadamized-thoroughfares to the country were for years unpaved and the automobile clubs were after the city fathers and the county commissioners to see if the gap could not be filled. The result is that automobiles well as wagons can now drive to the country without having to cross a patch of unpaved roads, simply because the city and county could not get together to decide on which way to pay for the pavement.

Discussing the inclination of horse users to inquire if gasoline machines are not superior to electric, or vice versa, Hays, Genl. manager of the Studenbaker Automobile company, sagely observes:

"Now that the great majority of large scale wagon users are satisfied that the horse has got to be superseded by the power wagon, we are continually hearing them inquire if they shall adopt gasoline or electric machines. The two are not necessarily competitive. Confining our consideration to large cities, in the great majority of cases either one power or the other is distinctly the most economical available for any given service. In general, to accomplish a given amount of work, fewer drivers are required for a gasoline installation than electric, while on the other hand the maintenance and station charges are in favor of the electric. This is, of course, a rule of the most general character, from which there are infinite departures to meet the multitude of varying conditions. In the majority of cases, the limitations of traffic in cities throws the advantage in economy to the electric on all installations of any considerable size. In some cities of peculiar topography, it is expedient to use both types in the same installation."

On the other hand, the makers of electric cars maintain that their cars are far better adapted for the use of women in running around the city, as they do not have to stop to crank their machines after stopping to do a little shopping, nor are they subject to such engine difficulty as a gasoline car. They do not have to work with gasoline, but have a cleaner car to handle when attracted in their good clothes. It is claimed that the electric requires less care and is better for a man with a small establishment or one who does not keep his own chauffeur.

Omaha also boasts of some splendidly equipped garages. As the drivers of the foreign cars in the New York to Paris race passed through Omaha, they one and all stopped off here a few days to give their cars a thorough overhauling, all uniting in saying that Omaha possessed the finest garages to be found anywhere west of Chicago.

These garages were adjuncts of the third annual automobile show and were decorated with flags and banners in honor of the event. The owners invited all visitors to the show to visit the garages, where attendants were on hand to show the visitors where the Omaha police keeps its machines and to give those who desired a ride over the streets of Omaha.

Carpenter's Letter
(Continued from Page Two.)

only about a half dozen on the Sybil, and they and the English officers are the only Europeans. The sailors are half in the sailors' territories on the south side of the lake, and the steward and cooks are Hindus who are paid a little more. The passengers are two British officials on their way to serve in interior Uganda, a German surgeon who is bound for Mwanza in the sailors' territories on the south side of the lake, a Kongo trader who has about a carload of beads and brass wire with him to buy ivory and rubber, and a missionary who is going to Kampala, and who will get off at Entebbe. In addition to these are myself and son, who will leave the boat at Entebbe for Uganda.

We have also on board a half dozen native soldiers and one of these is always guarding the mail. The bags were carried, under guard, on to the boat at Port Florence, and a soldier with a gun in his hand stands beside them day and night throughout the voyage.

Coming Tourist Center.
The prospect is that Lake Victoria will some day be as well known to the globe-trotter as the great lakes of America. The expense of coming here is too high for the ordinary traveler, but the man who can pay the bill can live on these boats almost as comfortably as at home. It is nearly as far as eating and drinking are concerned and as respects the climate. There is much to be desired in the matter of freedom from cockroaches, rats and other insects. I have never seen so many and such wild animals of the roach kind before. My cabin has some as large as mice and it seems to me that they come out in the daytime and look at one while they sharpen their teeth in order to trouble him the better at night. The roaches run through the dining rooms, and when I put my foot on one, as I do whenever it is possible, it leaves a grease spot as large as my hand on the floor.

Another infernal insect is the jigger. I don't know where I got mine, whether on shore or on ship, but my native boy has extracted the eggs of three of these pests from under my toes during the voyage. The jigger is a little insect which bores a hole in one's flesh, choosing the foot, and usually places under the toenail. It lays its eggs there in the form of a little sack about as big as a pearl shell button, and this sack must be cut out at once. If not and the eggs hatch, they turn into worms

Gossip and Stories About Noted People

A Study of Hitchcock.
FRANK H. HITCHCOCK of Washington who resigned from the Postoffice department to assist Secretary Taft in his campaign, is a typical instance of one class of successful men in the executive civil service. He was a clerk in the Department of Agriculture a few years ago and one day was told that his services were not needed longer. It meant him a new job and he was telling a fellow clerk that he did not know where to look.

"Haven't you any influential friend?" asked the other clerk.

"I don't know a man in high position except Mr. Cortelyou," said Hitchcock.

As a result of the talk Cortelyou was appealed to, and the president sent word that his secretary's friend must not be disturbed. From that time he was known as "Cortelyou's man," and as such flourished. He was promoted in the Department of Agriculture until he became a division chief. Mr. Cortelyou made him chief clerk of the new Department of Commerce and Labor in 1904, and later took him to New York as his right-hand man in the campaign of 1904. He was made first assistant postmaster-general when Cortelyou became postmaster general, and this is the position he resigns to become Taft manager in the south.

Mr. Hitchcock is a fiend for work. He works from twelve to sixteen hours a day, and accomplishes about as much in that time as an average man of his position would in eight hours. He makes work, works around in a circle, fairly drives stenographers into insomnia, and accomplishes little worth while. Yet his reputation as a worker is sending him south for Taft and may yet land him in the cabinet. He would be a good cabinet officer, too, in the way that Cortelyou is familiar with every phase of government administration, a good hustler, but a poor counsellor.

Mr. Hitchcock is a Harvard man from the academic course, six feet two in height, well proportioned, with a fine face and a firm jaw. He has a warm handshake, a charming smile and a confiding look in his soft, blue eyes that makes you

want to buy his brick without opening the satchel.

Last Words of Noted Men.
There is a collection of "last words" of celebrated men which contains many beautiful and startling phrases. Whether they were really uttered by the men to whom they have been credited, says the *Esoteric Post*, is another matter. Thus the words of Augustus. "The comedy is at an end—did I play my part well?" are known to nearly every reader. The collection of last words of great physicians published by the *British Medical Journal* gives Haller credit for saying, "The artery beats—it beats no more," and says of Nothnagel that he wrote: "The night of July 6, after a violent attack of angina pectoris * * * I will die of arterial calcification." Cooper, Bright and Brodie died with blessings upon their lips, and Darwin, looking death calmly in the face, said: "I really do not fear death." Looke's last words were flippant—"Au revoir, gentlemen—at the autopsy we will meet again." None of these classic sentences, however, impress one so much as did the words of one of the few mortals who to our knowledge went into the unknown with mind illumined. He was an old man who had lived a good and full life. With his last breath he said: "It is not yet time—I want to stay"—that was the voice of nature.

Ex-Senator Stewart's Light Lunch.
Ex-Senator William Stewart of Nevada, who has been in Washington several weeks, will probably remain here until spring. He likes the severe winter climate and at the advanced age of 53 enjoys nothing more than a brisk constitutional down Pennsylvania avenue. And he can set a pace for a man half a century younger, too. He is as hale and hearty as when he first took his seat in the senate in 1885. Proceedings at the senate still interest him, and he is a familiar figure there. His former colleagues continually ask him how he manages to keep so young, but while the Nevada statesman and financial expert knows how to do it himself he can't inform others.

The other evening the senator strolled down into the business section, and dropped into a Bohemian cafe much frequented by

sporting and theatrical people. He attracted immediate attention because of his distinguished appearance. A friend hailed him and invited him to join a little party.

"No," said the senator, "I haven't time to stay. I just dropped in for a light lunch. Walter, bring me a stein of beer and some hamburger cheese."

Muir's Simplicity.
John Muir does not write for money. He is probably paid less for the time he consumes than any other recognized writer of his day. He makes far more as a ranchman than as a writer, relates the Bookman. He has a horror of the hampering fulfills of life, cares nothing for accumulation, save in valuable experiences, and seems to despise wealth as he despises danger. Once in a long talk with E. H. Harriman he frankly told that gentleman that he was richer than he was.

"I know what you mean," said Mr. Harriman, "but I won't admit it. Don't you think wealth is a good thing for a man?"

"Not great wealth—no. Your rich man renounces too much. I would rather lie down at night by an old spring I know up in the Sierras than to own the Waldorf-Astoria—that is, if I had to live in it."

This story, I know, is hard for the average city man to understand, but of its soundness there is no doubt. And that would the bewitched couple dining ostentatiously in the Broadway restaurant make of this instance of his simplicity:

Once Muir was dining with me in a cafe in San Francisco. We sat down and he began to tell me a story. The waiter came around several times, but as the story was such a good one, I thought I would wait until it was ended before I gave the order. Muir talked and talked, and in between he would reach over and break off a piece of bread from a French loaf on the table. This he did a good many times. The story reminded him of another, and so he talked and ate bread, until finally, being very hungry, I broke in with:

"What shall I order for you, Mr. Muir?"

"Order!" he repeated in his abstraction. "Yes, order—to eat."

He looked over at the last little remaining piece of bread on the plate and said, as if waking from a dream:

"Eat! Why, I've had all I want—that bread was butly."

the wine list and give a few of the prices. A full peg of whiskey and soda costs 5 annas or about 5 cents, while a halfpenny cost 15 cents. Brandy may be had at the same prices. The word "peg" for "drinks" is used here on all bills of fare. This is common throughout India, and it arises from an old saying that every drink of intoxicating liquor one takes is a peg in his coffin. If you want a man to take a drink with you you ask him to come and have a peg, and there are certain hours of the day which are known as "peg times" or simply "pegs."

As for me, I am drinking the water of the lake. Our missionary on board tells me that it is perfectly safe, and I know it tastes as sweet as the waters of Lake Erie.

Islands of Lake Victoria.
As I write we are coming near land. During a great part of today we have been out of sight of anything but islands. Victoria Nyanza is 225 miles wide and 225 miles long, and there are places where one can travel for a hundred miles or so and not see land. Here in the north the shores are bordered with beautiful islands, some of which are wooded. Others have grassy hills along the shores, with high islands behind them. Some regions make one think of Thousands Islands of the St. Lawrence, and many of the islets would not be out of place if they were off the shores of Ireland or in the English channel. These places have a settled look, and at a distance the country appears just like ours, save that it lacks houses and barns and has thatched villages instead.

Shores of Uganda.
We are now nearing the shores of Uganda. The scenes from the ship are more like those of a settled civilized territory than the heart of the black continent. The landscape reminds me of that along our great lakes. Much of the ground is cleared and there are clumps of dark green woods here and there. In one place there is what seems to be a series of fields where the wheat or corn has just been harvested, the shocks standing out among the yellow stubble. These shocks dot the country as regularly as though they were so many shocks of grain, and as we passed them I had a discussion with a fellow-traveler as to whether they might be wheat or corn. I bet upon the wheat and my friend bet upon the corn. We left the question to the captain, who brought out his glass and showed us that what we thought were shocks of grain were really masses of yellow clay, the homes of white ants.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.