

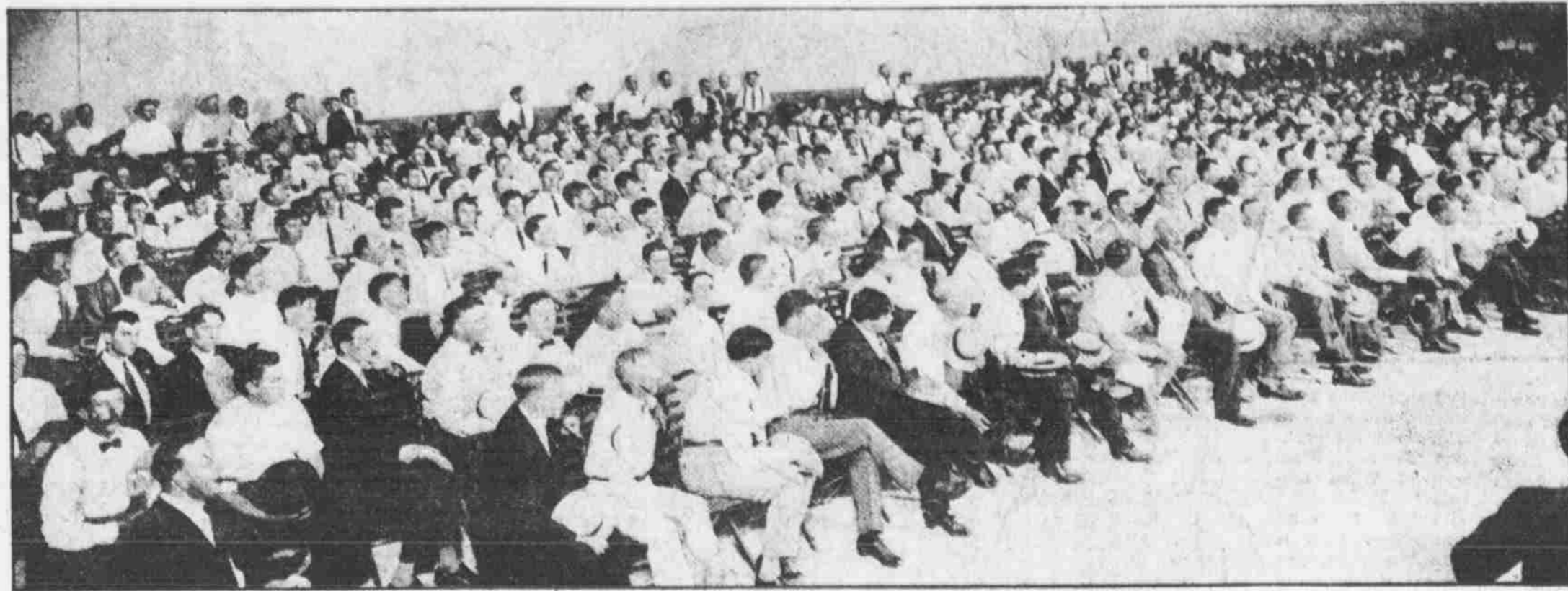
Distinguished Men Have Been Knighted by Ak-Sar-Ben

BOB MANLEY'S PRETTY NEWS GIRL AT THE DEN.



SHE SOLD MILLIONS OF COPIES OF THE GOAT, BUT IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR TO TELL WHO SHE IS.

Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Intent on Progress of the Gymkhana



FLASH-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING PART OF THE CROWD DURING AN INITIATION AT THE DEN.

HERR DIRECTEUR OF DAS GRAND OPERA.



OSCAR LIEBEN.

"Halley's Pug-Nosed Comet," now famous in the annals of the Den for its wonderful rogue of performances with never a cold or unresponsive audience, and never an empty house, was the offering which the Ad men enjoyed. They fairly swarmed in their efforts to be properly initiated and the "kink" himself had great trouble in keeping them properly in line.

In the sixteen years of its existence the Ak-Sar-Ben organization has taken every opportunity to entertain distinguished visitors to the Kingdom of Quivera in such a way that they would remember for ever the king and his glory. It has not been only to the visitors from Nebraska cities, or even to delegates to the many national conventions which are held in Omaha that the Ak-Sar-Ben Den has been made a famous place. Whenever one of the nation's greatest men goes through Omaha in the warm time of year he nearly always gets taken in charge by the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben.

Perhaps the most memorable day in the history of the organization was also a great day in the first year of the Transmississippi and International exposition in 1898. Jubilee week of the exposition came October 10 to 15, inclusive, and for two days during that time some of the most distinguished men who ever visited in Omaha came here with President McKinley. In that entertainment the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben took a leading part. It could hardly be said that the party was their especial charge, but they helped, and as the leading men in the Ak-Sar-Ben were the leading men in the exposition to a great extent the same persons acted as hosts as in later years have entertained in the name of Quivera.

Among the people who rode October 11 behind a column of Ak-Sar-Ben knights on horseback were the president of the United States, William McKinley, and members of his suite; the Chinese minister, Wu Ting Fang; the Korean minister, representatives of Cuba, Brazil and Argentine Republic, the members of the president's cabinet, including Cornelius N. Bliss, Secretary Wilson, Lyman J. Gage, George D. McKeljohn, governors and senators and congressmen from Nebraska, Colorado and other states, Major General Nelson H. Miles and Brigadier General Sumner, Chief of the Weather Bureau Moore, Commissioner of Education W. T. Harris and Generals John C. Black and A. W. Greely, with colonels, majors and captains galore. As the history of the exposition says, "The board of governors of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben, in their natty uniforms, mounted, formed the escort of honor, and as the distinguished guests passed along the streets tens of thousands of the citizens of Omaha and visitors greeted the president and the other noted officials with great enthusiasm. . . . On the reviewing stand in front of the city hall were gathered many representative citizens of Omaha and the Transmississippi territory, and as President McKinley appeared a great shout of welcome went up, and it

was with great difficulty that order was restored and a way cleared through the street for the passing pageant, which consisted of the electrical parade of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben, unexcelled in the spectacular and artistic beauty of its floats." But the year 1898 had other great events for Ak-Sar-Ben beside the presidential visit. Presidents are unimportant to the king of Quivera. Several of them have done him homage and he takes it as his right. Just a week before the president and the great party were here Governor Bushnell of Ohio was at the exposition to help in the celebration of "Ohio day" and incidentally saw the electrical parade, which was almost as beautiful in those days as it is now. After it had passed the reviewing stand he said enthusiastically, "Splendid! Beautiful in conception and artistic in every detail. It is one of the finest parades I ever had the pleasure of witnessing."

At the ball of that year, 1898, no less a personage than Chauncey Mitchell Depew of New York was in attendance. He came when his reputation as an orator and statesman was at its height. A newspaper of October 8 says: "As Chauncey Mitchell Depew advanced through the double quartets of dancers he was given an ovation that could not, but have pleased him. He was accompanied by President Callaway of the New York Central railroad. . . . Dr. Depew and his fellows gallantly

paid their respects to the king and queen, the former saying many complimentary things to her royal majesty." In the history of the Ak-Sar-Ben initiations there will probably never be an event of greater moment than the initiation on the night of September 2, 1910. At that time Theodore Roosevelt, former president of the United States and as well known a public man as the west had ever seen, was making his great swing around the circle as a private citizen. It was a triumphal journey for the colonel and Ak-Sar-Ben never took in a more worthy or redoubtable subject.

"Halley's Comet" was the show that delighted T. R. and it was with the ceremonies of that year already tried out on many less important novitiates that he was taken in. After a strenuous day in Omaha, when his entertainment had included a banquet, luncheon and speech at the Field club at noon, a speech at the Auditorium in the afternoon and another banquet and a short speech at the Omaha club in the evening. He went whisking out to the Den in the big scarlet touring car in which Gould Diets had been driving him around all day, and was taken to the initiates' entrance on the side. When he entered with members of the various entertaining committees he was taken in charge by seven ferocious devils. These busy little demons, deaf to his pleas for mercy, hustled him

into the secret fastnesses of the building and to a private box, where he could see the performance of the comet and be seen by the thousands present. That was the punishment, the ordeal which he had to pass to become a knight. Horrible! The colonel had hoped to escape making another speech after his hard day, but after President Pickens had introduced Albert W. Jeffris and that orator had voiced his brilliant eulogy of the guest Mr. Roosevelt rose to the demands of his audience. He veered away from politics, kept out of Ananias discussions and avoided generally his favorite fighting topics. As a paper of that date described it, "It was just a little friendly chat." It served, however, to round out satisfactorily a memorable day and a very memorable initiation.

The performance of Halley's comet that night was a marvel of brilliance. Never did the broilers prance more seductively and the colonel was cajoled into waving his hand at them as they flitted about the stage. The first time Theodore Roosevelt was a visitor at the Ak-Sar-Ben Den and was entertained by the Ak-Sar-Ben knights he was not really initiated into the mysteries of the king's inner shrine. It was in April, 1903, when he was in the chair as chief executive. He had just returned from his famous rest trip through the Yellowstone and was fresh and vigorous, hurrying to get back to

the east and begin again his heavy labors. He spoke at the Den and 12,000 people, including the Knights, heard his address. He said in closing:

"My fellows citizens, men and women of Omaha, let me close in expressing the abounding confidence I have that you of this city, that you of this state, will in the end work out your fate aright, because I hold you to be in a popular sense typical of all that is best in the American character."

When William Howard Taft was made a full-fledged, thoroughbred, blown-in-the-bottle Knight of Ak-Sar-Ben, he said he had the time of his life, and he was probably about right. The last time the president was here was two years ago, September 20. He started on the trip on his birthday, September 15, just as he did this year, but took a shorter route in getting to Nebraska. "I am delighted to be introduced to your company," said the president, as he stood upon the platform during the oprey, "especially on this side of the footlights and to look at the goat from this side of the railing."

"Paprika Schnitzel," the dainty offering that graced the boards at the Den that year, was interspersed with pleasantries for the special benefit of the president. The chorus sang with great glee: "I'm simply daft on Billy Taft, I think he is a bird, The swiftest gent for president who ever yet occurred;

But as for geeks with putts and cleeks—for me the stuff is off. And punching pills around the hills—I cannot stand the gawf."

When they sprung that reference to his favorite recreation the president was delighted. When he first came into the Den Dave O'Brien, dressed as a Scotchman, handed over to the president a speaking likeness of his own person done in O'Brien's best taffy. That pleased him still more. Then Uncle Joe Cannon, natural as life, strode up and handed over a copy of the Weekly Bunion. The main stunt of the evening, however, was a golf game played by the quartet. While they were singing the little verses quoted above a little pickaniany, equipped as a caddy, entered with an enormous bag of golf sticks. Then came on the likeness of the president himself, and proceeded to tee up his ball. The president in the box laughed and laughed still harder when a moment later a gang of photographers rushed up and got in the mock president's way so he could not make his stroke.

Ak-Sar-Ben initiations have frequently been attended by delegates to great conventions who have been gathered in Omaha—"live wires" from all over the country have been there, but probably no better advertised bunch ever attended the kingdom than the delegates to the national convention of the Associated Ad clubs, which met here in July, 1910.

Gymkhana at Which Samson Entertained Guests of the King

(Continued from Page Five.)

from them and then bullets poured down on us. They didn't come hard enough to hurt, but they had us worried some.

"At that the Hottentots jumped in among us and started prodding us into line behind the king and T. Hellyer Seigh and their fellows. Some of us tried to escape, but it was no use. We thought we were going to be 'bully entrees' sure enough. The knights and visitors sat still and yelled 'goodbye' at us, which wasn't encouraging.

"They got us out of the theater and then ran us through a long, dark passage. Pretty soon they got us up to a door and we could look through and see that it led back into the theater. I was one of the first. I could see the fellows in the theater were looking towards this door and they seemed to be expecting something. "One of the Hottentots gave me a

shove through the door. I landed on my feet in a big revolving tube, like one of these washing machines they use in laundries with the head knocked out. Before I could straighten up the thing commenced to revolve. The gang looking at me started to roar. I lost my feet and the thing started to speed up. It turned me over and over until I didn't know my head from my feet. When it slowed down I would start out and then somebody would start it going again. The more I struggled the more the crowd roared. I finally made it, though, and then I sat down and had my fill of laughter at the others. There was a sign beside the thing that said it was the 'Milwaukee Mixer.' I guess every fellow that got into it was pretty thoroughly mixed before he got out.

"When a man got through too easily he was grabbed and driven into another dark passage, so when all had been through the mixer they had

some material for more stunts. These fellows they dragged up to the tops of three parallel flights of stairs. They set them down in trilos and then shoved them off. They bumped their ways down as best they could, the stairs rolling under them and giving way when they tried to catch hold and check the descent.

"But the end was not yet. Three candidates were taken up on the stage for a weight-lifting contest. Sakonutz had some weights for them to lift, as he said they claimed to be athletes. They didn't seem to be able to accomplish much in the lifting line, though the Hottentots threw the weights around as a boy throws his blocks. Sakonutz pronounced them imposters and they were ordered held until fit punishment for them could be devised.

"Three more were brought up before T. Hellyer Seigh and the king explained that they had been casting slurs at the management because

they had been in the Den since 8:30 and hadn't been given a drink. His lordship proposed they be forced into a drinking contest. They were lined up and each was given a huge mint Julep in a crock or jar that would hold about a gallon. When old Sak counted three they were to start drinking. The man who finished first should win a valuable prize. As they raised the juleps to their lips they completed an electric circuit that knocked the drinks from their hands and left them scared, trembling and foolish-looking.

"We hardly were through laughing at their sad experience when two more candidates were drawn onto the stage and stood up on opposite sides of a big board, back to back. The king announced that the piece de resistance was about to be pulled off. Prof. Hoganinski, the famous knife thrower and sword swallower, was to demonstrate his ability by showing how near he could come to hitting the candidates with his knives and still miss them.

"They seemed to have some trouble in finding Hoganinski, but he finally was located. It seemed as if he had got to drinking with some of the boys down town and it had made him late to the Den. T. Hellyer Seigh was for abandoning the knife-throwing, but Sakonutz said that never would do. He allowed that Hoganinski when in his cups was a better knife thrower than any of his imitators when sober. 'He never has killed a man yet,' says the king, 'and never put out but two or three eyes—I think only two.' "The professor smoked a cigarette or two and picked up his knives. He dropped two or three as he walked away a few paces and T. Hellyer Seigh became alarmed. He begged the king to call it off, saying it would be terrible if anyone should get hurt and Ak-Sar-Ben didn't want to face any damage suits, to say nothing of criminal prosecutions.

"Hoganinski said he was all right, though, and the king would stand for nothing but to go right through with the performance. The professor's first throw was a wild one. He missed the board completely and the knife went sliding across the stage. T.

Hellyer Seigh gasped. 'Take your time; aim more carefully,' said the king.

"Hoganinski said he needed a few more puffs on a cigarette to steady his nerves. He took them and got ready to throw again. Pretty soon he let go. We could hear the knife bury itself in the wood. Hoganinski smiled proudly. The candidate turned his head to see if there really was a knife there. There was all right. The candidate was trembling considerably. The professor took another little smoke and after some trouble in gathering up his knives—he still was pretty nervous, made another throw. It was a good one and so were the rest. It required only a few minutes to put the knives around the candidate on the other side. Cheers for their nerve in not fainting and laughter at their fears filled the air. As a matter of fact, Hoganinski never threw the knives. He made the motions, but he switched the blades into his roomy sleeves. Other knives, binged to the board and concealed in slots, flopped down as the professor affected to throw.

"The three imitation weight-lifters remained to be punished. They were dragged to a bench and forced

to kneel. A party who turned out to be his Satanic Majesty appeared behind them.

"They are imposters," he shouted. "They're out after the dough. Give it to them."

"With that the bench suddenly went down from in front of them and they were pitched forward towards a trough of dough that suddenly had come up from somewhere. They saved their faces by shoving their were knights. The initiation was over and we had fifteen minutes of rattling good speeches, limited to three minutes each. When they were over we made for the banquet room. It was as big as the theater and everything was informal. There were piles of sandwiches, ham and cheese and hot wieners, hard boiled eggs, pretzels and pickles. Everybody helped himself. There was milk, buttermilk, coffee and beer to drink. We stood around and ate and talked and laughed and had a general good time.

"When I went home I was filled with enthusiasm for Ak-Sar-Ben and Omaha and Nebraska. I never missed a meeting night after that. It was great to be eaten by the cannibals and it was a darned good town."

Gallant Horsemen Who Rode for Life and Love Each Week



SIR B. HANGEDIE KNOTT AND HIS ESCORT.

Professor Hoganinski's Feat



JOHN HOGAN THROWING THE KNIVES.