A VILLAGE'S DISGRACE.

REMARKABLE CASE OF HOMICIDE.

THE SHOOTING OF JOHN RUSK BY THOMAS HART —WESTCHESTER'S MANY AFFLICTIONS.

One of the most remarkable cases of homicide in the history of Westchester County, and certainly the most astonishing and bewildering in the annals of the village of Westchester, was the shooting of John Rusk, a young man of Throgg's Neck, by Thomas Hart, at different times constable, detective, political heeler and bartender. The stages of the case from the firing of the shot to the marvellous result of the coroner's jury, the gentle and solicitous indictment of the Grand Jury, the half-hearted and nerveless prosecution and the final hollow mockery of justice's sentence, after months of dallying and idling and fencing—the whole farce from beginning to end illustrates a town's shame and disgrace.

Thomas Hart drew a revolver on the evening of December 18 last and shot Rusk down. Rusk had turned a joke on Hart with a play on the "McGinty" expression. Hart whipped out his weapon and instantly sent a bullet at Rusk, saying, "Then go down like McGinty." The wound was mortal and the victim died on the following day. And now began a series of movements to save the slayer which to the dull and conscienceless brain of a thick-skulled South Sea Islander would have seemed hideously grotesque. To the class of ruffians and civilized savages who set to work to hedge around Hart's life as diligently as honest men would have striven to aid the law, the succeeding incidents were a source of self-glorification. A coroner's jury found that Rusk died from natural causes. Two physicians swore upon oath that they had performed an autopsy upon the body and gravely and wisely announced to the intelligent jurors that the victim had died from "acute congestion and oedema of the lungs." The innocent irony of the jury's verdict is to be seen in the following amazing result of their deliberations:

"We find that John Rusk came to his death from acute congestion and oedema of the lungs, this verdict being rendered on the evidence of Drs. MacNichol and E. A. Williamson. We, the jurors, having no evidence from the testimony taken from the witnesses before us to prove that Thomas Hart shot John Rusk, therefore it is our duty to exonerate the said Thomas Hart from the affair or of being the cause of John Rusk's death."

Hart had admitted that he shot Rusk, but declared that the killing was accidental.

INDIGNANT OVER THE VERDICT.

Westchester had become hardened to a condition of affairs which was appalling in many ways, but this verdict aroused a storm of indignation and disgust. The District-Attorney demanded and forced a second autopsy in the face of howls of rage and disappointment from the "protecting" ring. The two physicians who made the second examination were not residents of Westchester. One was Dr. Louis Livingston Seaman, of this city, and the other was Dr. G. A. Lyons, of New-Rochelle. The result of their labors in the case brought forth some startling revelations. They found that in the first autopsy the examination had been extremely superficial. The lungs floated like corks. Had there been "congestion and oedema" they would have sunk as heavily and swiftly as lead. If any previous examination had been made of the majority of the other vital organs some mysterious influence had skilfully obliterated all traces of it.

Seven ragged holes were found in the intestines where the leaden missile had torn along its fatal course. The two other physicians testified that the ball had passed through muscles and skin only. There were all the signs of rapidly developing peritonitis, while the lining and coating of the heart were firm, glistening and clear. As for the first examination of the lungs, the two incisions were so slight that the true condition of these organs could not have been ascertained.

But more interesting testimony came up later before the Grand Jury—evidence which, despite the assertions of Drs. MacNichol and Williamson and the refinement of intelligence displayed by that wonderful coroner's jury, absolutely forced an indictment down the throats of the band of henchmen who were shielding their comrade from the scrutinizing glass of the law.

A MILD INDICTMENT.

But the indictment charged only manslaughter in the second degree. It is interesting, when making a psychological study of the brain of a certain class of citizens, to notice the testimony given before the Grand Jury.

Dr. Edward A. Williamson, Rusk's attending physician, and one of the two who made the first autopsy for the guidance and enlightenment of the coroner's jury, composed of the same political gang as Hart, testified that the ball had ploughed its way through the abdominal muscles, not entering the peritoneum. It entered "a little to the right of the anterior superior process of the crest of the ilium," and it lay "a little to the right of the umbilicus." On the other hand, in the copy of notes for the autopsy made by Dr. Seaman and Dr. Lyons, which when put in evidence before the Grand Jury caused the indictment, it is shown that the bullet entered "two inches above the anterior superior spinus process of the left ilium, and one inch to the left of said process." On the right side of the abdomen was found a wound where the bullet had been removed. This was "two and one-half inches to the left of the anterior process of the right ilium, and one inch above said process." Stripped of their technical phraseology these expressions go to show that whereas Dr. Williamson declared that the bullet entered the body at a point near enough to the front of the abdomen to cut a course near the outer circumference, the expert testimony showed that the ball entered further back and did not take so sharp a deflection toward the outer surface. It took a more central course. Regarding the post mortem Dr. Williamson said in reference to the probing: "When I made the post mortem I tried to follow the track of the bullet as accurately as I could. When I made the examination I succeeded so well that I came right on the track of the bullet. There was an incision made from the breast down to the pubis, another from crest to crest. The one from crest to crest was the one I made, and when I made it I began on the opposite side from the wound entrance, and I made a cut right down, and saw a streak of blood, where the bullet had travelled through the muscles. It did not go through the peritoneaum at all. It only went through the skin and muscles."

THE TRACK OF THE BULLET.

"What evidence was there of the track of the bullet?"

"It was very plainly seen right through the muscles."

"When you examined and searched for the course of that bullet, after you made the incisions up and down the body and across the body, did you raise up the skin so you could see its course?"

"Yes, sir. It was dissected right back. The external oblique was dissected away back, to allow us to see the wound."

But witness the expert testimony: "Neither wound had been disturbed at any previous autopsy; nor had the intervening tissue between the two openings been divided or laid open, except where it was cut at right angles to the track of the wound by the longitudinal incision from the sternum to the pubis." (The two flaps of the tissue were preserved to prove that the intervening tissue had not been divided or laid open).

Again the expert evidence goes on: "A long probe was then passed through the opening in the left parietes, or wall, from without inward. The right flap was then raised and the probe passed through the opening in the right parietes, or wall, from within outward. This probe marked the direction of the wound. Just behind this track numerous perforations, one-half to three-fourths inches in diameter, were found in the jejunum. The borders of these openings were found contused and lacerated and in a highly inflamed condition. As it was immediately apparent that here was the cause of death, the entire small intestine, together with the stomach, was dissected out and placed in a jar containing a mixture of alcohol and water, 50 per cent each, and preserved for future inspection and evidence."

A SUPERFICIAL EXAMINATION.

Again: "The lungs had not been removed. A longitudinal incision four inches long and one inch in depth had been made into the substance of the anterior portion of the right lung, and another five inches long and still more superficial, three-fourths of an inch deep, into the corresponding portion of the left lung. Hypostatic congestion was present in the dependent portion of the lower lobes of both lungs, but not more than usual when death occurs from heart failure. . . . The lungs were next removed and placed in a vessel containing water. They floated like corks. . . . . The pleura was smooth, glistening and normal, in marked contrast to the peritonaeum."

The expert testimony gave the cause of death as "peritonitis and hemorrhage due to traumatism of the intestine."

But Dr. Williamson, in answer to the question "Were all the organs that you examined except this wound and the lungs perfectly healthy?" said: "Yes, sir. We did not go any further, because that (oedema) is what we thought caused death and looked for it."

But the most remarkable assertion was made in the following part of the testimony:

"Then, according to your belief, you do not think that he died of a pistol-shot wound?"

"I should think not."

"Is it your opinion that the man would have died at or about this time if he had received no injury?"

"Yes, sir, I think he would have died just the same."

MORE OF THE SAME KIND.

Dr. MacNichol's samples were cut from the same piece of cloth. Testifying about finding the track of the bullet, he said: "We dissected them (the muscles) up off the peritonaeum, out of the way, made an incision across below through the muscles and we could trace the course. There was a discoloration of the bullet track right through the muscles of the abdomen."

"Did you sever the muscles and did you locate the passage of the bullet in such a manner so as to state whether or not that bullet penetrated the peritonaeum?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did it, or did it not?"

"It did not.

Dr. MacNichol was inclined to believe that Rusk's trouble was "la grippe." He said this perfectly seriously.

The proceedings before the Grand Jury were conducted by District-Attorney William H. Platt, the successor of Nelson H. Baker, whose term of office had expired on January 1. Mr. Baker had pushed the case with vigor, having the second autopsy made on the very last day of his term. Mr. Platt announced that the prosecution would spare no efforts to bring about a just and speedy conclusion of the case.

AMAZING END OF THE CASE.

Hart, as has been said before, was indicted for manslaughter in the second degree. He still received that delicate consideration and courteous attention which had marked the case from the first. It was discovered that his friends could not furnish sufficient bail to release him from the county jail and his bonds were reduced. Then, although the work of preparing testimony seemed to be going on diligently, and although the expert evidence as to the cause of death was ready to be presented at any time, there came excuses, delays and postponements. Of a sudden there came the last climax to the many which had preceded it. Hart pleaded guilty. He was arraigned for sentence and fined $250. Justice Dykman said that the section under which the indictment was found and the circumstances attending the case defined the act as one of culpable negligence.

Thomas Hart, therefore, in half a year after the shooting, during the greater part of which six months he was out on bail and cared for by his friends, by a mysterious working of the laws, whose intricate machinery seems to be understood by those who run it as they run everything else in Westchester, was a free man with a fine of $250 imposed upon his friends.

The way in which the case came before Justice Dykman is illustrative of the methods employed throughout. The case was to come before Judge Mills, but it was well known, as by the prosecution as by the defence, that Judge Mills would not view the shooting through politically tinted goggles. The prosecution took away the breath of every one by having the case transferred to the Court of Over and Terminer before Justice Dykman. This was all done as quietly as possible. A well-known lawyer, familiar with the courts of Westchester County for many years, declares that such a transfer, in such a case, has been made only once before in his memory.

Meanwhile Hart's defenders in the village where the shooting had taken place were not idle. Vigorous efforts were made to find bail. One man, the editor of a local paper, who was hand in glove with the gang that "runs" the town, was open in his defence of Hart. This man at a recent election stood over a ballot-box to browbeat, intimidate and cheat colored Republicans who asked to be allowed to cast their votes against the ring which has made the village of Westchester a cesspool of political vileness and its reputation a football on the toes of outrageous blackguards. He spoke with feigned horror of the bitter persecution against Hart, protested against the second and third autopsies, declaring that such brutality and butchery must be harrowing to Rusk's aged parents, and violently accused decent, self-respecting and law-loving people of "hounding" Hart for political purposes.

Even Westchester people opened their eyes in wonder at the result of Hart's trial.

A RING-TRODDEN TOWN.

When one has examined the phases of this Hart affair it is not difficult to explain the octopus in whose clutches the village of Westchester is a helpless victim. The town is notoriously mismanaged, misgoverned and terrorized. There are over seventy-five liquor-shops within its limits, and it is only a small village. These groggeries are flagrant violators of every law and provision known to the Excise Board. The men who control the politics, the elections and the expenditure of town moneys are open and defiant in their contempt of the opinions of decent people. The ring orders and the ring's servants carry out the commands of their superiors. Such a thing as the arrest, conviction and punishment of an excise violator in Westchester is undreamed of. Drunkenness is rife in the streets, and no arrests are made. Young ruffians block the sidewalks, insult passing women and children, and at night fire pistol shots and smash windows with reckless and insolent license. At the railroad station where many New-York people leave the train to go to their country places or to the Country Club the ruffians gather by the score. Their language and demeanor are indecent and disgusting, but the authorities do not presume to check them.

Among the many well-known people who have country places at Westchester are men like C. P. Huntington, Jacob Lorillard, James M. Waterbury, the Havemeyers, J. L. Furman, the Morrises and the many who belong to and frequent the Country Club. They long ago ceased to hope for a better condition of affairs, and have resigned themselves to their fate. One of the men mentioned above proposed to get up a stock company to start a barroom where liquors were to be sold at absolute cost. In this way the other places were to be starved out, when the stock company would shut its doors. As fast as another rum shop was opened the killing competition was to begin again. But this scheme was given up, perhaps because it was known that the low element of the town, despite its insatiate desire for liquor, would prefer to pay ten or fifteen cents for poor liquor and consort with its own degradation than to get good liquor for three cents and be forced to wear the outward cloak of respectability. Anything but respectability, real or apparent.

WESTCHESTER'S MISFORTUNE.

This condition of mob rule, unchecked license and lawless impudence and corruption has blighted one of the fairest villages along the Sound. The big race track of the Morrises has furnished another moral sewer, whose outlet is in the defenceless village. It supplies another slimy stream of stable boys, scrubbers and hangers-on, with all their profanity and vileness to be emptied on poor Westchester.

The village has been so favored by nature that it is hardly to be matched for its loveliness of site and attractive surroundings. Rising hills and knolls are carpeted in summer with the deep green of a rich and luxuriant sward. Bits of dark-tinted woods and copses in magnificent foliage have been scattered with lavish but discriminating hand. Superb lawns stretch away from airy, cool-looking houses. From the Sound, whose waters come up to kiss the feet of the little village, breezes are carried to the people, odorous and light, refreshing and sweet as the breath of a young girl. The air is pure and fresh and mildly stimulating. When the blue sky is spotless and the ascending sun drives his chariot with a free rein the water in the Sound flashes and gleams below. The hand of nature seems to have been most gentle and kind in everything it touched here, for the village down among the grass, the trees, the flowers and the sparkling waters is a dainty jewel, delicately fashioned in a fine setting. But the beautiful gem is clutched in a rapacious, brutal and dirty fist.

SOME NEW TOOLS OF SPORT.

BETTER AND BETTER EVERY YEAR.

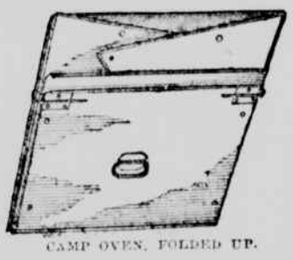
THE BRAIN OF THE INVENTOR AT WORK FOR THE PLEASURE-SEEKER'S ADVANTAGE.

"We thought we made pretty fine sporting goods ten years ago," said a member of one of the largest dealers in this line the other day, "but the best we made in those days we could not sell at all in these. They were not fashioned carefully enough, for one thing; nor finished neatly enough for another. Men's flannels, such as tennis coats and trousers, rowing togs, running clothes, fishing and shooting suits, etc., used to be cut from the cloth by the same women or girls that sewed them up. Now the cutting is done by skilled men and the finish of the make-up is as elaborate as that of ordinary ready-made clothing of the same price.

"This is due, of course, to the growing popularity of outdoor sports among Americans, who have gone into the thing with the same disregard of dollars and cents compared with comfort and elegance as they apply to almost everything else they do. The ingenuity of Americans is famous all the world over, and for inventiveness they lead the earth, but this is not due, in my opinion, one half so much to any peculiar shrewdness which American inventors possess for evolving new things out of old as it is due to the stimulus which the rest of the Nation affords them, by

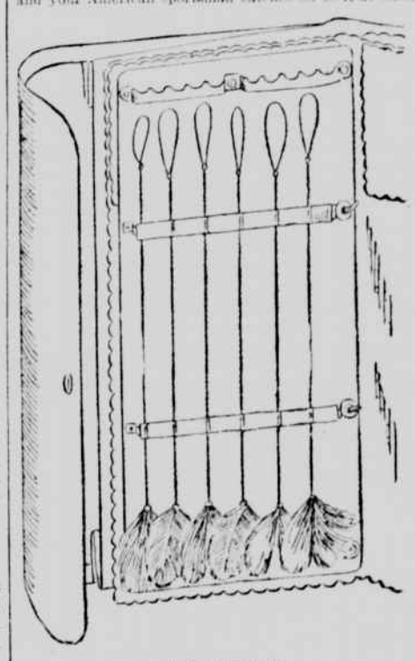
CAMP OVEN, OPEN.

the eager way in which it snaps up anything and everything new that is worth adopting, regardless of expense, and before the old utensils are half worn out.



CAMP OVEN, FOLDED UP.

"Now take this little portable camp-oven, for instance. It has just been put on the market, but hundreds of sportsmen who have seen it for the first time in my windows, and have camped out themselves, have bought it at once. They were quick to perceive its advantage over the old camp-fire cookery. You see it can be folded up as flat as a pancake and packed among the luggage, taking up very little room. It has no solder about it to melt and let the joints open, but it is all hinged with metal which will stand fierce heat without harm, and all one has to do is to stand it up close against the camp-fire on the opposite side to that from which the wind is blowing, and his duck or his bread, or his venison, or his pork, or his fish, will be roasted as nicely without being smoked as most men could cook it on all ordinary range. You can see into the oven all the time, to watch that your food is not burning, and you can pull the oven back from the fire to baste the roast or abate the heat, and then push the whole thing back in place again, or lift oven and all on to the camp table, keeping the food hot in this way for a long time with the greatest ease. I tell you it's a vast improvement on the old style of fry, fry, fry, that generally prevails in camp cookery, and your American sportsman catches on to it at once.



BRAY FLY-BOOK.

"One of the latest things in fishing rods," continued the expert, "is a steel tube. It tapers to a point, of course, in the ordinary way, and the joints fit together in the ordinary manner, but it is all of steel, and the line runs up the inside from butt to tip, and thus entanglement is avoided a good deal. For those who prefer the bamboo rod, however, and that includes the vast majority of fishermen, the latest improvement is what is known as the 'Kosmic' rod. The chief claim to popularity which this rod has is its admirable ferrule covering the joints. The joint is the weak spot in the bamboo rod. Just as a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so a bamboo rod is no stronger than its weakest joint. When you once cut through the hard outer shell of the bamboo you come to a wood that is by no means hard, and here is where the mischief lies. Now the latest ferrule has a water-proof zylonite cushion shrunk on to the inside. This simple device has been found to add an amazing amount of strength and durability to the joint.

"Another thing that fishermen have waited for a long time is a fly book into which flies with leaders of any length can be quickly and securely fastened, in such a way that they will not fall out, will not get entangled and can be pulled out again in a jiffy. The new 'Bray' book supplies the want. The hook catches on the indentated bar you see at the top, and the leader is slipped between the rings of the fine steel springs which run across the middle of the leaf. If the leader is longer than the book, turn it up again and fasten in the spring till you come to the end, if you have to run it up and down the page a dozen times.

"Another new and good thing for fishermen is the automatic reel. Many a beginner has lost a fine fish through inability to manage his reel with the necessary skill and quickness. This reel almost handles itself. Those who angle for fish requiring a long line will appreciate its good qualities, particularly the rapidity with which it recovers the 'slack' often caused by the eccentric movements of a gamey fish. Indeed, with this reel properly manipulated, there can be no slack. By simply touching a spring the recovery is practically instantaneous. Another advantage is that the resistance of the spring is just sufficient to curb the fish without imperilling his loss by 'tearing out,' and the adjusted pressure will not only hold, but bring in a fish of less than five or six pounds weight as speedily as any one could desire. It is certainly an ingenious piece of mechanism, and when one gets used to it the old-fashioned reel must seem both slow and cumbersome.

SLOCUM TOURNAMENT RACKET.

"The way in which tennis is going ahead in popular favor is so wonderful that the advance in the paraphernalia of the game is not keeping pace with it. This is largely due, however, to the fact that the goods are about as perfect now as they well can be. I think, however, that the 'Tournament Slocum,' introduced this year, is just about the finest thing in rackets ever offered to players. It is made from a model approved by H. W. Slocum, jr., champion of the United States, whose recommendation naturally carries great weight. The truth of this fact is attested by the rapid sale which Mr. Slocum's book on tennis is having. This book contains all those nice little points of instruction about the game, the making of difficult shots and other clearly put and inestimably valuable instructions, both for the old-timer and for the beginner, which only actual experience could enable an instructor to describe.

OXFORD TENNIS BELT.

"Have you noticed," continued the dealer, "how many men are wearing tennis sashes during business hours now and with all sorts of costumes, too? As some has said: 'The masculine sash at present is exaggeration run wild. Originally, when men left off their waistcoats in hot weather, a small black belt and buckle on a modest silk sash were worn so as to conceal the buttons and suspenders which appertain to the trousers of mankind. It was a valuable idea, and as such was widely adopted. But the inability of the average haberdasher to let well enough alone called his inventive faculties into play, and he has produced a series of violent things that cause the judicious to grieve. Blue, red, yellow, purple and green are the mild ingredients of most of the patterns, and the belts have increased in size from two to ten inches. To see an otherwise dignified looking man wandering about town with his waist clasped by a huge and glaring sash, such as might have been designed for the burlesque stage, is a sight far too often encountered in the streets of New-York. As the taste of the public cannot be counted upon in such matters, the manufacturers of these monstrosities should be appealed to.'

"Now, modesty in the sash is as much to be desired as anywhere else. Let me show you one combining utility, style and modesty. Here it is—a combination you see of sash and belt. No other sash will support the trousers. The belt addition in this sash supports the trousers and retains in the sash that easy and graceful appearance that naturally belongs to it. Furthermore the back of any other sash is unsightly, owing to the buckle or fastening being exposed. In the Oxford sash these objections are overcome as can be seen in the sketches. Buckle the belt at back with short end of sash over left hip as in Figure 1; carry the long end around the back of body and over the short end, as in Figure 2; pass the long end upward between the belt and body at left hip and bring it down between the body of the sash and the short end, as in Figure 3.

"You have heard, I suppose, that Captain Miller, of the 17th Separate Company, of Flushing, is getting up a bicycle reconnoitring corps, after the manner of the English and Germans. The men are to be drilled particularly for the service and will be equipped with rifles, knapsacks and all the accoutrements of soldiers. The 'safety' wheels will be used, with the rifles strapped across the men's backs and the knapsacks fixed to the seats behind. In Europe similar corps have been found of use for general reconnoitring and dispatch service, as a man thus mounted can travel from 100 to 150 miles in a day, an almost impossible feat for a horse. Twelve members of the New-York Bicycle Club have enlisted as members of the corps, and will take their regular drill in cavalry manœuvring at the 17th separate Company's field drill in October. A good many more bicyclists are expected to join before the drill season begins, and some time before the season ends the company will take a run to Peekskill and return the next day.

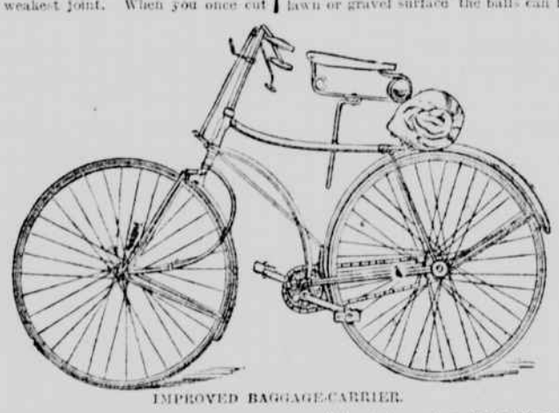
"Now, such a corps could carry little in the way of knapsacks if they had to be placed in the old-fashioned baggage-carriers that fitted right up on the steering gear of the bicycle in front of the chest of the rider. A thing as big as a knapsack would be in the way there. But the new luggage-carrier is fitted to the backbone of the bicycle behind the rider and there he can carry without inconvenience a bundle as big as his powers of propulsion will allow.

"A novel device has been contrived by an old line wheelman to enable him to enjoy a quiet smoke awheel without inconvenience. An attachment is made to fit on the handle-bars, a pipe being secured by a nickel-plated clip and spring, and being connected with the rider by a flexible tube with mouthpiece. All vibration to the teeth is thus prevented, and also the danger of sparks and tobacco ash lodging in the eyes. The rider can mount and dismount without detaching the pipe, and when not riding can use it in the ordinary way.

"Another new thing for wheelmen is the bicycle horn. It consists of a hollow rubber bulb shaped somewhat like the handle of a pistol. This being pressed violently with the hand forces air into a metal nozzle, shaped like the muzzle of the old-fashioned blunderbuss. A reed is fastened in the nozzle and this emits a noise like the yelp of an angry dog in pain, magnified in intensity about forty times. This delightful instrument is screwed to the handle of the bicycle where it can easily be reached and pumped and is warranted to give notice of the approach of a wheelman to anything that has ears and is within the radius of a mile or two.

"A new lawn game is boccie (pronounced botshie), which can be played on a lawn, court, or on any level gravel surface, or on a smooth court, floor or carpet. It is played by rolling the balls. When played on a lawn or gravel surface the balls can be tossed, thrown or rolled, at the option of the player. A set of balls consists of a centre or object ball and from twelve to twenty-four hand balls, all of wood and different colors, half of the set being in dark colors, half in light of corresponding shade. The centre or object ball is carved to show six faces, numbered from 1 to 6.

"The players are divided equally into two camps, dark color on one side, light on the other. The centre or object ball is then placed in position twenty feet from the stake lines. The lights and darks play alternately, the object being to place the hand ball as near as possible to the centre ball, and to dislodge if possible an opponent's ball if nearer the centre ball than any of the player's side. The centre ball is not moved except by a rolled or thrown ball in process of play until the end of each game, when it is placed in its proper position ready for the next game, at a distance of twenty feet from the stake line. The number of balls of either side nearest the centre ball, after each side has exhausted its balls, is multiplied by the number shown uppermost on the centre ball."



IMPROVED BAGGAGE-CARRIER.

BICYCLERS WILL FIND THEM USEFUL.

Picked up by The Norwich Bulletin.

Bicycle riders have been annoyed by dogs running out from farm houses and snapping at the wheel and at the legs of the rider. A number of accidents have occurred from this cause and not a few men have been bitten. It has been a problem with many riders to discover a means of effectually driving away these dogs, but until recently none has been found. It remained for William Sidney Downes, of Birmingham, to solve the problem.

When starting on a ride he carries several big torpedoes, such as the boys use on the Fourth of July. As the dog rushes up barking and snapping Mr. Downs casts a torpedo directly under the animal. The explosion and the sting of the sand with the burn of the powder successfully cures that dog of the desire to attack any more wheels. If every wheelman will thus provide against these animals the road will soon be free of them.

A GREAT UNION OF TOILERS.

GROWTH AND OBJECTS OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR.

ITS ENERGETIC PRESIDENT, SAMUEL GOMPERS —THE IMMENSE AMOUNT OF WORK DONE AT THE HEADQUARTERS IN THIS CITY.

Not only are a million or more workingmen personally interested in the operations and methods of business as transacted by the American Federation of Labor, but thousands of the employers of labor are equally anxious to become acquainted with the work and policy of this organization of workingmen, the largest in the world, and which so greatly, though indirectly, control the labor situation in this country. The phenomenal growth of the American Federation of Labor in membership and wealth is due entirely to the conservatism of its officers, the economy of its forces and the progressive principle of its policy. In 1887 the membership of the Federation was 2,421 local unions or branches and 600,340 members in good standing. There are now over 750,000 members and nearly 5,000 unions united under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor.

Mr. Gompers is a short, thick-set man, with a strong face and well-set head, crowned with locks of curling black hair, and he bears the stamp of that energy and determination which have won him a foremost place in the ranks of labor.

He was born in London, England, and came to America when a boy. He joined the Knights of Labor when working at his trade as a cigarmaker, but not being in harmony with the policy of this organization, he resigned to take part in the formation of the body of which he is now the president.

SAMUEL GOMPERS.

The headquarters of the American Federation of Labor are at No. 21 Clinton Place, and from early morning until dark the force of clerks is kept hard at work by the business which pours in upon them from all sections of the country, and which must all pass through the president's hands. It is in this office that every detail concerning the organization of new unions, the conducting of strikes, the admission of members and financial business generally is conducted, and it is from here that charters, seals, certificates, cards and labor literature are distributed, not only through America, but Europe as well. Bookshelves and pigeon-holes cover the walls, great piles of papers stand on the floor to be sorted and filed, desks and tables are scattered about the large office, and everywhere and at all times those present are busy each in his own special line. Mr. Gompers's office is by itself, and into this "den," as he calls it, few have the privilege of entering. Here, assisted by a stenographer and typewriter, he transacts business affecting the interest of a million people who call him "chief."

The methods by which the officers of the Federation are kept posted on every detail of the workings of the unions and the occurrences in all parts of the country which may bear upon the labor question consist of a perfect system of reports sent to headquarters at regular intervals by nearly 5,000 unions, the representative of some one of which can be found in nearly every town and city.

The officers of the American Federation of Labor, which now constute its executive council, are Samuel Gompers, president; William Martin, of Pittsburg, first vice-president; P. J. McGuire, of Philadelphia, second vice-president; Christopher Evans, secretary, and Henry Emrich, treasurer.

Christopher Evans, the secretary, and the only member of the executive council who is always to be found at No. 21 Clinton Place, has had a large and varied experience in the field of labor. He was born March 8, 1841, in Staffordshire, England, and came to this country when twenty-eight years old, in 1869. He settled in Ohio and joined the now disorganized, but then powerful, Miners' National Association and rapidly became a leader in its councils, representing it in convention until 1874. In 1875 he joined the Knights of Labor, and then became president of the Ohio Miners' Association, District No. 1, and it was while president of this association that he conducted the famous Hocking Valley strike, during which the miners held out for nearly a year. Mr. Evans joined the American Federation in 1886, and was first elected assistant, and then general secretary, succeeding P. J. McGuire.

CHRIS. EVANS.

Mr. Evans is a hard worker and can be found at any time during the day attending to such business as does not require the signature of President Gompers. His right-hand man and chief clerk is Edward H. Blick, a genial man and a conscientious worker. Ever since the organization of the American Federation of Labor in Pittsburg, on November 15, 1881, it has grown to be more and more the rival of the Knights of Labor, and every year it is gaining many recruits from that organization. This is for several reasons: First, because the dues to the central body from international and national trades unions are only one-fourth of one cent a month for each member, or 3 cents a year; second, because each trade is organized separately and has free labor bureaus and sick benefits; and third, because the policy of the Federation is to deprecate trade strikes without great provocation.

The aim of the American Federation is ultimately to absorb every labor organization in the country formed under the trade-union system, and so between the Federation and the Knights of Labor there is a continuous struggle for supremacy, which bids fair to continue indefinitely. The largest federated trade which is a member of the Federation is the International Cigarmakers' Union, which has branches in every city where cigars are manufactured, and a membership of over 20,000. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America is also a powerful union. It was the latter union which was chosen to inaugurate the fight in this country for eight hours, and in nearly 200 cities it has been successful.

As set forth in the constitution, the object of the Federation is to secure legislation in the interest of the working masses; to influence public opinion, by peaceful and legal methods, in favor of organized labor and to aid and encourage the labor press of America.

It is the belief of the officers of the Federation that the best way to help their fellow-workers is to shorten the hours of labor, and to accomplish this they have spent many thousands of dollars and issued millions of pamphlets, which have been distributed all over the world, and agitation is now in progress for another attempt next spring to extend the eight-hour workday to other trades. On nearly all documents and pamphlets issued from headquarters is the following stanza:

"Whether you work by the piece or work by the day,
Decreasing the hours increases the pay."

As long as its conservative and peaceful policy is adhered to the future of the American Federation of Labor seems assured.

IN THE CHURCH PORCH

THE CLERGY AND POLITICS.

Bishop Potter's opinions on most questions are entitled to considerable weight, for besides being one of the foremost clergymen in an influential Christian body, he possesses a well-balanced, finely cultured mind. He is a man of the world as well as an ecclesiastic, who constantly mingles with men of affairs, and has every opportunity to know the tendencies and drifts of the age. But the bishop's views are not of necessity right, and he would be the last to claim that they are. When therefore, as in his Phi Beta Kappa oration, he indulges in severe strictures on current political tendencies it is proper to ask how far these strictures are justified by facts.

It may be admitted at the outset that there is a great deal of dishonesty and jobbery among certain classes of politicians. This is a notorious fact. But it is a fact which is only possible because Americans are as a rule so prosperous, happy and contented that they have become for the time being indifferent to the routine details of government. "Oh, yes," they would say, if you could get their opinion, "of course there are a lot of harpies in politics, and they probably divert a good deal of money to their own pockets in one way or another. But we are too rich and too busy to look very closely after such small fry, unless they should really threaten to do harm. In that case we would rise in our might and clean them out in short order. But ordinarily we have so many other important matters to attend to that we have no time to bother about politics." This is substantially the view that the average citizen takes of corruption in politics. With a cheerful optimism that no logic can weaken, he believes that this is the greatest country in the world, that its people are the happiest, that its government is the most perfect, and that somehow or other, without any care or labor or forethought on his part, everything will finally come out all right. Corruption and misgovernment in the meanwhile? Yes, he admits; but these things are mere sporadic facts, largely due to an unassimilated foreign population, the newness of the country and other temporary causes. They will disappear in time, ominous as they seem now. And they should therefore be eliminated from any large and comprehensive view of the future.

Such optimistic confidence in the future doubtless seems childish to men like Bishop Potter. But it is not. It is founded on solid facts; and while it does not excuse good citizens from neglecting their political duties, as many of them do, it explains their neglect, and proves that their interest in honesty and good government is not dead, as the political pessimists say, but only temporarily distracted. The American people can always be trusted to take matters in their own hands when a really great crisis arises; and at such times it is apt to be very unpleasant for the leeches and barnacles.

Moreover, Bishop Potter's denunciation of what is known as the spoils system is altogether too sweeping. There are redeeming features in it. In the first place the civil service of the United States is, on the whole, the cleanest, the best, and the most honest in the world. Those who enter its ranks are, as a rule, intelligent, reputable and honest men, in every way competent to discharge the duties of the offices which they hold. When do we ever hear of the Government of the United States losing as much as a cent? Never. When do we hear of its civil servants offending public decency by their vices? Very rarely. When do we hear of them treating the public with insolence? So seldom that it is hardly worth talking about. But we are told that these men work for the offices that they so worthily fill, and therefore they must be held up to opprobrium and scorn. And ministers of the Gospel who are called by a heavenly call to work in the Lord's vineyard, in season and out of season, without hope of any earthly emolument or reward, are especially severe on "professional politicians" because they expect an office as a reward for party service.

But as a matter of fact, what is the record of the clergy in this matter? Do they work without any hope of an earthly emolument? Do the most gifted men in the ministry eschew high place and "fat parishes," and go to work where there is no money, but where there is plenty of sin, misery and crime? To all of these questions we must answer No! There is no use in blinking plain facts. Everybody knows that some of the best and most devoted clergymen are the most ambitious. They covet the highest honors of their denomination and the parishes which pay the largest salaries. And in doing their work they distinctly have these things in view as a possible and a deserved reward. Is this wrong? No; it is human nature. Enlightened self-interest is, in the last analysis, the mainspring of all human endeavor, and the work of the ministry is no exception. It is not wrong for a clergyman to cherish an ambition to be a great dignitary or a great preacher, if he can thereby do more good. But it is wrong for such a clergyman to deny that he has these things in view, and to denounce the statesman and the politician because they, too, are looking for honor and place. Cleric and laymen, we are all animated by the same mixed motives, and even the monk who has forsworn the world has not been able to tear entirely out of his heart the seeds of ambition, or the insatiable craving for the applause and respect of men.

Perhaps you think I overstate this matter. Well, let me quote from a letter which a clergyman of Bishop Potter's own church, the Rev. Milledge Walker, has written for "The Churchman." He resigned a short time ago the rectorship of a desirable parish. "In less than three days," he says, "after the announcement of the resignation, the parish began to be flooded with applications for the rectorship. Rector, wardens and vestry, as well as private members of the parish, have been receiving letters from clergymen far and near begging for the place, or at least asking for an opportunity to come and display themselves and their great abilities before the congregation.

"Now what a deplorable, what a humiliating state of affairs does this evidence—a perfect army of hungry applicants watching the personal column ready to descend on the first eligible vacant parish! It is a revelation to me such as I could never have dreamed of, and would never have credited did I not have ocular demonstration. I am well nigh overcome with a sense of shame that such multitudes of my brethren of the sacred ministry should thus demean and humiliate themselves by thus forcing themselves into notice.

"Where is the dignity of the priesthood of the Church of Christ? Is there no sense of self-respect?"

That the practice here complained of is common in all the Protestant denominations is a notorious fact. Church vestries and committees on supply could, if they chose, tell some startling stories about this unseemly scramble for desirable parishes. And the worst of it is that it is not merely the clerical "dead beats" who take part in this scramble, but many men of ability, who already have important parishes, where they have a wide sphere of usefulness, which fact, however, does not prevent them from working for something better in a way not sanctioned by good taste. Surely while such things are done the clergy might try to be just a little charitable to the politicians who are also engaged in advancing their individual fortunes as best they can.

Personally I am an optimist. I believe that in spite of appearances the standard of political and social morality is higher in this country to-day than it was a hundred years ago. There is more virtue, honor and honesty in the world than there has ever been before. It is well for us to be acutely conscious of the sins and evil tendencies of the day. It is well for us to see these sins and evil tendencies exaggerated and magnified in our satirical journals. Caricature preaches most powerfully to the multitude; for it forces them to see and to think. But when our preachers and moralists and political economists assume to discuss our condition, they should not use the brush of the caricaturist. We expect from them a true and accurate perspective, and a large and comprehensive view. This age seems relatively worse than preceding ages, because, first of all, our moral standards are higher than they ever were before, and, secondly, because our failures to reach these standards are more ruthlessly exposed than they ever were before. Even the Golden Age would no longer seem to be golden if a lynx-eyed press had existed to record its shortcomings. All history is idealized. Outside of the great cities, which contain large masses of indigestible elements composed of the moral off-scourings of Europe, the people of this country are singularly responsive to the teachings of the church. The fact that utterances like those of Bishop Potter command universal attention, and provoke the widest comment, is the best possible evidence that the people still look to the clergy for moral guidance. It is also good evidence that they are vitally interested in the question whether or not we are advancing morally, as well as materially. And so long as that is the case, there is no reason to despair of the future. But to retain their influence, the clergy must keep in touch with the age, and rightly discern the signs of the times. In attempting to play the role of John the Baptist, they must see to it that they do not become merely a weak imitation of Jeremiah. The world to-day sorely needs the strong, clear, hopeful voice of the preacher whose message is touched with hope. But it has no ear for the doleful lamentations of a cheerless pessimism.