

ON THE C. P. TAFT RANCH.

Golf and Other Amusements Await President in Texas.

If President Taft doesn't find things right when he comes to visit the 125,000-acre Texas ranch of his brother, Charles P. Taft, in the latter part of October, it will not be the fault of the many zealous workmen who are fixing matters for his reception. Joseph F. Green, manager of the ranch, has had especially large and strong new chairs installed in the residence of La Quinta, or the villa, which is three miles from the town of Gregory and faces on Corpus Christi Bay. It is hoped that these chairs will meet the situation when the President is resting from a game of golf or an automobile hunt after wildcats.

A new bathhouse erected for the honored guest at the beach would have had a door 9 feet high and 5 feet wide if the carpenter on the job had had his way. The well meaning mechanic thought that Mr. Taft would need the space, having a slightly exaggerated idea of the Chief Executive's greatness.

A golf course, which begins and ends near La Quinta, has been especially laid out for the President's benefit by two experts, Robert H. Connerly, of Austin, and Frank Lewis, of San Antonio. It is said to be among the best links in the country.

It is expected that the President will do some horseback riding during his four-day stay at the ranch, and he will be well provided with mounts. Two automobiles will also be at his service. Watching a wildcat hunt from the comfortable seat of an automobile will be a new sensation for the distinguished visitor. There is a "pasture" of 28,000 acres where the cats abound in mesquite thickets, and whence a trio of "cat hounds" owned by the ranch manager, Mr. Green, will dislodge the energetic packages of fur and claws for the delectation of the hunters. Night is the proper time for a wildcat chase, and there will be some fun if the moon furnishes sufficient illumination. A hunt after wolf and deer may be added to the programme.

Mr. Green hopes to show as much of the immense Taft ranch to the President as possible during the visit. The thriving little town of Taft is one of the places to be seen. It is seven miles from Gregory, has a population of six hundred, and cast a solid vote for its namesake last year. The town is on ranch land, and here the great industrial enterprises of the ranch are being established. There will be a large meat packing plant, a cottonseed oil mill, an ice plant and an additional cotton gin. These concerns, which will be mostly in operation by the first of next year, represent an investment of about \$300,000.

The meat packing plant will handle not only the product of the ranch, but cattle from other ranches of South Texas. It is an entirely modern plant, sanitary and labor saving, costing \$100,000, and with a daily capacity of about one hundred and fifty cattle and numerous hogs and sheep. The waste of the cottonseed oil mill will feed three thousand or four thousand cattle annually. At present there are about fourteen thousand head of cattle upon this ranch. The source of supply for the packing house will come chiefly, however, from the other Texas ranch of Charles P. Taft, which property embraces 240,000 acres and is about one hundred and fifty miles west of Gregory.

At La Quinta ranch a medicinal water, found at a depth of 175 feet and classed as a "sodic, carbonated, muriated alkaline water," will be served to the President during his visit, for drinking purposes. The state chemist of Texas says it is good for a lot of diseases.

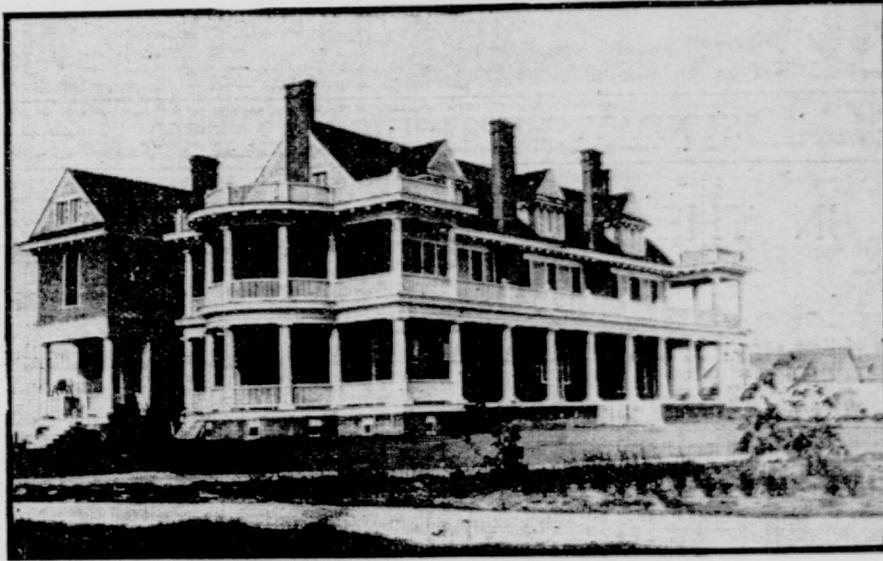
A force of 225 men is employed on La Quinta ranch. While some of them are technically cowboys, they are sobered down by the routine of a big industrial enterprise, and they have almost forgotten their picturesque feats through tending to tame thoroughbred cattle. Their chief work is repairing wire fences. So there is not much chance of a cowboy exhibition to amuse the President. There are a good many Mexicans among the ranch laborers.

It was upon this ranch that the first extensive experiments and practical demonstration of dry farming in this region were made, and as a result of the success attained the value of the land has increased within five years from \$4 to \$50 an acre. Ploughing is done by a two-section, twelve-disk plough, weighing 4,500 pounds and drawn by a gasoline traction engine. This machine ploughs twelve acres a day. The owner has had a good part of the land cultivated on shares in one hundred acre lots, receiving from the tenant one-fourth of the cotton and one-third of the feedstuff raised in lieu of rent. The cotton production has yielded a net profit to Mr. Taft as his share of about \$10 an acre each year. This is considered an extraordinary result in cotton farming. Mr. Taft had not visited the ranch for nine years until last spring, when he instructed the manager to put in cultivation sixteen miles of land along the railroad between Taft and Portland, amounting to nine thousand acres.

AT THE BOOKSHOP.

"I want a copy of 'Who's Who in Indiana,'" he said as the genial salesman inquired as to his wants.

"Sorry," said the salesman, with a sweet smile, "but we're just out of 'Who's Hoosier' literature. We have last year's telephone book, if that will help you. Out here we're all mostly alike."—Lippincott's.



HOUSE AT LA QUINTA WHICH PRESIDENT TAFT WILL OCCUPY.

A BAD MAN.

Thomas Nelson Page was talking in the smoke room of the Amerika about the old-fashioned bad men of the West.

"They are extinct now," said Mr. Page, "and I am sorry. They were, you know, so pictu-

understand, I would be turned into a human pincushion or worse.

"Well, as I sipped a friendly glass of something resembling wood alcohol, a very bad man indeed rode on a prancing mustang right into the barroom. He drew up and had a drink. Then, spying me, he said:



"CAT" HOUNDS ON THE TAFT TEXAS RANCH. They will be employed in the chase for President Taft's amusement.

resque. I remember a Western trip"—
He laughed heartily.

"We were all seated in the barroom of Tin Can or Dead Cur—some such town. I was the only tenderfoot present. Every man about me bristled with guns and knives like an enraged porcupine. If I refused to drink, I was given to

"'Whar ye from, stranger?"

"'Richmond,' said I.

"'Not good old Richmond, Virginia?" he exclaimed.

"'Yes,' said I; 'do you know it?"

"'Know it?' he shouted. 'Know it? Best jall I ever was in!'"



HOTEL AT GREGORY, WHERE PRESIDENT TAFT'S OFFICE WILL BE.

ALL ABOARD FOR ARCTIC.

Some "Don'ts" and "Dos" for Excursionists to Northland.

Now that the North Pole has been staked out by Cook and Peary and we know the things that are not there, it remains for an enterprising promoter to open popular poleward excursions. "Sport! Education! Amusement!" as the prospectus will remark. "Get on top of the earth. Visit the high latitudes. We guarantee the air. Beats all the health resorts."

Of course, it is rather doubtful whether any excursion will proceed to the exact spot where the Stars and Stripes have been recently nailed—or planted—because it would take too long and the average traveller would get cold feet and revolt against the monotony of muck and steak. The comforts of home must be provided on the trip and the dangers must be seen at a safe but dramatic distance. A nice little summer vacation trip will about fill the demand.

A traveller who has been on a summer excursion to Northern Norway, Iceland and Spitzbergen gives some valuable hints to the assembling hosts of Arctic visitors. He warns them of some facts they are likely to overlook, although they studied them in their geography days. For example, there is no night in high altitudes in summer. The sun only makes a pretence of going down; it ducks toward the horizon, but never passes out of sight. There are important consequences flowing from this condition. A person who has insomnia will either be cured or driven mad by the eternal daylight of summer. It is necessary to make a sleeping schedule with your friends, otherwise your slumber hours will conflict and you will be bothered at midnight by people who devote other hours to rest.

In general, there is a tendency to sleep less and eat more. Four or five meals a day are consumed with avidity. If the excursion does not guarantee at least four meals, it is not what you want. Hunger is a terrible thing in the Arctic wastes, and no excursionist should be reduced to the necessity of chewing sole leather or trunk straps for sustenance. It must be remembered also that cameras work overtime in twenty-four hours of daylight, and that a kodaker needs twice as many films to satisfy his normal propensity to snap while there is light.

As for clothes, you may leave New York in duck and linen, but you will want wool and fur when you arrive in the Arctic neighborhood. And, despite the wafts of chilliness from the pole, you will be glad to have a few bottles of citronella and some joss sticks to keep off the Arctic insects, including mosquitoes, which act as if they had been born and bred in the latitude of the Hackensack meadows.

There is vegetation up there which looks timid and discouraged, like what the grower offers at a bargain late Saturday night. When you pass Westman Islands around Iceland, says the traveller, you behold vertical cliffs swarming with millions of down-bearing eider ducks. There is no game law in that region, and no reason why each visitor should not bag half a dozen ducks or so to make a hat for wife or sweetheart. Only it seems a shame that they will almost feed out of your hand. Hundreds of sea birds will flock aboard a steamship and become as familiar as domestic poultry.

A sportsman who wanted some of these confiding creatures to feed to some Iceland falcons he had aboard could not make up his mind to slaughter them in cold blood. Therefore, with effort, he shoed them off and shot them on the wing. In this way his honor was technically satisfied, while the result for the victims was the same.

Plenty of whales and icebergs were met by the traveller mentioned, and he recommends visitors not to pay any attention to whales that are not alive. The dead ones, to be sure, will announce themselves on the breeze. But do not collect beach trophies of whale bones and the like on your return, for what is unobjectionable in the refrigerating air of the north changes its nature when brought into a warm room.

The same might be said of Lapp and Esquiman mementos. The best time to call on Esquimas is when the thermometer registers 20 degrees below zero. At higher temperatures the natives thaw out and conditions are better suited for an ethnological student than for a social visitor.

A FEVER RESISTER.

Professor Frederick Starr, anthropologist, was discussing in Chicago the Roosevelt hunting trip.

"Mr. Roosevelt," he said, "will encounter very grave dangers in the jungle. I don't mean the wild beasts; I mean the fevers. Mr. Roosevelt's is not the temperament to resist these dangers, either.

"His is a heady, rushing temperament; but the sort of temperament that keeps jungle fever off is like—like—

"I once boarded a four-wheeler in Piccadilly," said Professor Starr, "and I bade the driver drive to Claridge's.

"He drove at a snail's pace. Exasperated—for I was already late for luncheon—I put out my head and shouted:

"'Look here, cabby, we're not going to a funeral!'"

"The cabby looked at me, took out his pipe and frowned.

"'No,' he said, 'and we ain't goin' to no bloomin' fire, neither.'"