HOKE SMITH ON HIMSELF.

ALSO ON NEWSPAPER MAKING, SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT, REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES, ETC.

A Batch of Interviews with Interesting People About Interesting Things—The Flagler-Plant Competition in Florida—The Gridiron Dinner and the Wits and Statesmen Who Turned Up There.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1.—It is almost the rule among Washington correspondents to be off terms with the Administration in power. I attribute this to the want of moral hardihood and social insinuation among the writers.

While proprietors of newspapers easily penetrate into the circle of the President and Cabinet, their writers lack the property support to feel at home among these great people.

Besides, the nature of the press is not to support power in this country; exactly the opposite being the regulation in England.

American presses were established, in the first place, by Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, and others to attack the Government. To this day defending the Government seems parasitical. When the people come firmly to the support of the State the press may do the same.

I found myself at dinner lately beside Secretary Hoke Smith of Georgia.

He is one of the largest men in public life, and, being smooth-faced and straight haired, his appearance is that of a college boy or college teacher.

I should think he might weigh 275 pounds.

He has a clear skin, eyes wide apart, every appearance both of youth and health; and he is without concealment, speaking boldly his views, and when I left him I had a decidedly stronger impression of his leadership and possibilities. At one time I said:

"If we should have a war with any European power which would compel us to land troops in the tropics, those troops would have to be Africans, and there would be a large draft on the Southern colored people to become soldiery, which might lead to momentous consequences?"

"That would not do the colored people South the least harm, nor the whites either," said Secretary Smith.

As I looked at him a little surprised, he remarked:

"The colored people are doing first rate. They are liable to continue to do well. You misunderstand me if you think I have ever stood in the way of their opportunity to advance. I think the idea exists, or once did exist, in the North, that I was a Bourbon, a reactionary opposed to new things obstinately. Just the contrary has been my record in Georgia. I have been on the side of liberality, utility, development, and strict financial and economical science. I was in favor of low tariff (he did not say no tariff), sound money—if necessary, gold; in favor of bringing our politics to business realities, and I know very well that we need full intercourse, more population, the promotion of our schools," and so on.

"You are quite a young man?"

"I am forty," said the Secretary. "When I came into office I was thirty-seven."

"I believe you were born in North Carolina?"

"My father came from New Hampshire. He was teaching an academy at Lancaster, Pa., an old German county from which came a great many of our North Carolina settlers. These established a German reformed college, and sent to the North for a President and teachers. Thus my father was picked out at Lancaster, Pa., about 1852, I think, and he came to my native State, where he married a young woman who was a representative of that old German stock, and who also represented a member of the Mecklenberg Convention, which is said to have declared for independence before the Continental Congress did it.

"You were a newspaper man also, Mr. Secretary?"

"Why, I went into that business almost accidentally. I bought a building in which was a newspaper owned by a man from Ohio who had got tired of it. He was a tenant of the building in which I removed my office. He wanted to sell out and get back to the North. I had his books examined, and, to my surprise, I found that he had a genuine circulation of 3,000 subscribers, and had made $4,000 per annum clear. He wanted to sell out to me for $12,000. I said to two young newspaper men in Atlanta, 'If that stranger can make $4,000 a year, you can make $20,000. I will sell you third interests and take your notes and let you pay them out of what you will earn by attention to the paper.' In three years they earned their shares without paying me other money. Later on I bought one of them out and paid him several thousand dollars in addition to his interest. The paper is the only afternoon paper in Atlanta, and there is but one morning paper. I buy the stock when it can be had at its present par value of $100,000, though it was stocked at but $20,000 when I took it."

"Is not the future of many newspapers somewhat involved by mechanical changes?"

"The absolutism of the printers' union causes all the type-setting machines to be invented. We have made one mistake in our paper, in putting in an inferior machine. I am going on now to alter the type-setting plant and put in a machine which casts each individual letter instead of a whole line, and is also easier to correct. Its principle is to play on a keyboard which perforates the paper, and that perforated paper manipulates the moulding and setting of the type. For $7 a week a woman can play on that machine and cast and set type."

"Do you think, that all the writers on the press must ultimately learn to play the piano?"

"Oh, no, those who write the paragraphs, the mere items, may find it to their convenience to learn the keyboards. Contributors, literateurs, writers, &c., will hand in their copy, and the performer on a machine can repeat it cheaply. The newspaper press, at least in the United States, has for the present come down to be business, and not either politics or literature. It is a mercantile organization. Wherever you look, you find the strongest publishers to be business men or merchants."

"If the mere reporting of everything, from games to crimes, baseball to society, is to be the stock of the newspaper, what will the reader resort to whose mind has been otherwise disciplined?"

"Why, I think that the reading of books may revive. It is absolutely necessary for the man who would not have his mental constitution dispersed by the modern newspaper to get the continuity which comes from the library."

"The Interior Department is a good deal like the new sort of newspaper, I suppose, in its dislocation of parts?"

"The Interior Department is a sort of medley, yet almost every bureau in it has a magnitude which goes to the life and progress of the race. Before I came there the Interior Department had been drifting. Mr. Noble, my predecessor, let it run itself. Mr. Lamar, the predecessor of Mr. Noble, was not a person of details. The work had got far behind. I have set myself to work in the bookkeeping spirit to bring business up to date, and with the exception of the legal or law division it is exactly up to date now, for the first time in years. I work from 9 o'clock until 6, and very frequently give four hours at night after that to the department. I am not afraid of work, and my constitution and years will stand it."

"I suppose you have seen much to do personally with the Patent Office, for instance?"

"No; except to see that more precision is attained in its discipline. I have had the power of appealing a patent case limited to six months, where it was formerly two years. I found that with the wealth which flows in from modern patents the proprietors of inventions would take all the time they could get so as to put off the commencement of their patent income. There is the Berlinger superseding the old Bell telephone. They wanted its right to commence just as the Bell patents went out. These extensions are to the prejudice of the consumer and progress. I also had two old dignitaries of the Patent Office removed and their places supplied by young men, whose instruction was expedition and exactness. The Land Office is also a strong bureau in the Interior Department. It is the first office of importance in the new States and Territories. Land cases had been allowed to lag. The records of the office are brought up to date now, and I feel well assured that the public can get no oversight in such a heterogeneous department. The records of the office must be the Secretary's historian. When I went into that office I had no idea of the subject of our lands and land laws."

This conversation was not all in the order of my report, as the roosters around us were crowing and jolting, and by little bits I obtained the purport of these narrations.

The Secretary asked me whom I thought the Republicans would nominate.

I said that the present attention was being drawn to Morton.

"Gov. Morton," said the Secretary, "if he could be nominated, would make an admirable choice for the Republicans. He would go a long way toward settling the finances. I admired his personal conduct and affability while he was Vice-President. He reminded me of President Arthur in his softening, pacified, and yet genuine talents. But I think McKinley will get the votes in the South, the way the thing is looking. Morton has been anticipated if he really means to run. Gov. McKinley's active friends have pretty well supervised the South. The high tariff elements there, as everywhere, are naturally drawn to McKinley. I think Morton would give the better equilibrium to a pro-tariff reaction. Yet they will urge his age against him."

The business answer as to Morton's health is that he is administering the office of Governor of New York very ably and giving it his full time; and while the Legislature is in session that office is as onerous as that of President. We do not hear that he is in ill-health. Then there is Allison?"

"No more delightful man to come in contact with on the public business is around this Capitol than Allison," said Mr. Smith. "I have had considerable business with him, and it is a pleasure to coöperate with him in the public business. But I do not believe the East will take Allison. They have an idea that he is a soft-money man, or a double standard man. If not that, he is flexible toward his Western constituencies. I think that Teller is going to be the Populist candidate. Teller has many things in his favor to get that nomination; he is the ablest man, I think, to present that side of the cause. He made a first-rate Secretary of Interior; his record in that department is a strong one. With the executive, legislative, and the legal qualifications, with his strong appearance and address, he is the best qualified to lead the Populistic or silver classes."

"I have heard it remarked, Mr. Secretary, that if there are hard times in 1896 McKinley will be well in the lead of all the other candidates. And don't you think the times are hard?"

"I think there will be hard times," said the Secretary, "as long as the standard of money is unsettled."

He raised his hand above the table where we sat, and varied its length.

"It is like measuring with that kind of a yard stick," said he, passing his hand up and down. "Till you have a firm measure of value people will be discouraged in trading with each other, in giving credits, and in loosening up the crystallized state of the exchanges."

"Will not Georgia stick out for silver?"

"If I could get away from this department of mine and take the question into Georgia, I believe I might help to turn that State for sound money. But as it is at present running I think that the silver men are in the lead."

That same evening I talked with two Southern railroad men, William A. Turk and H. W. Fuller, the latter representing the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. Both systems are under the control of the Pierpont Morgan interest or combination. Mr. Turk I originally met in South Carolina with Mr. McIlee, the son-in-law of Preston S. Brooks of Charles Sumner fame, and I rode with those two in their private car from Salisbury to Asheville.

Mr. Turk is a very large man and was decidedly the biggest man at the Gridiron Club dinner. He is a Virginian. Mr. Fuller has a farm in Albemarle county, Va., though he came from Vermont.

Mr. Turk said: "The unprofitable condition of the Southern railways is due to a want of population. The political unrest in the South is the expression of this desire for more population, more cities, and more manufactures."

Mr. Fuller said: "I do not believe that the population living immediately on the line of our road is larger than it was fifteen years ago. Experimental cities have been boomed and have again receded as the population came to them and again dispersed. The need of the South is for more people, and a more mixed people. The mere drifting hither and thither of a population not skilled, or a plant, does not secure a city, though the houses may be put up. The surplus populations out of the cold parts of the North, with manual skill, steady habits, and thrift, with a knowledge of how to employ their savings, will be of the greatest benefit in the South, where a splendid country, the strongest country in the world, lies almost under the eyes of the Northern people."

Mr. Turk then continued: "The South is a moderately fertile country. Take it in the altogether, it is kind in its soil. Its best wealth is in its climate, which is not subject to great changes, nor does it require a large outfit of warm clothing or the consumption of much fuel in winter. The wood which grows, and which is cheap, is fuel enough. The Southern people have been highly impassioned for a short time, when excited by something unwonted, but at normal times they are a quiet people, and many things are there to live for which make life worth the living; whereas, in the more avaricious parts of the country the man of moderate expectations and modest conduct is depressed because he has not the headlong business force. I do not say that in the South men can get rich as quickly as in the North, but they can live out their lives better; it is above all places in the world the place to make a good living with fair exertion. The railroads of the South have come to the end of the period because the expansion which was expected of them has been diverted. Our first need is for a population, and that need is so respectably admitted all through the better South that Northern men will find no friction hereafter.

"Politics is at a very low ebb in the South. I believe that a modern man like Allison of Iowa could almost carry the Southern States in bulk with the present feeling. The subsidence of the sectional friction is complete. The trouble with Southern railways is that they have no uniformity of support. For a portion of the year they haul cotton, and for another portion they haul consumptives, and along the northern lines of railway towns and factories are thick, and there is a moving to and fro all the while of people—livestors, laborers, tourists, &c. I know, as a Virginian, that our early teaching was against towns, but the inclination is now all the other way."

Mr. Fuller said, speaking of one of the important railways in the border South: "To tide over great obligations and endeavor to extend them, with the certain fact that they must be met next year, was, I think, a mistake. These are the times to take advantage of the bad state of business, and reorganize on a smaller and firmer basis. The railroads now require railroad men to work them. Their support is not to come out of financial centres after they have paid their dues. These centres may take care of them for a while, but if they have not reorganized to suit the times that reorganization must come. A year is a short span in the history of a railroad."

Mr. Turk took his turn again: "Fifteen years may produce extraordinary changes in the entire railroad system in America. It is possible that those roads may have another revulsion and become like the older roads of England and the Continent, firm dividend payers. That is the motive at present, to buy their stocks or bonds. But in the immediate present the railroad man insensibly drifts toward high Federal views. You would not expect me to report that, as an old-established Southerner, I am becoming the fashion in the South to break up into individualisms. I have a relative up about Stanton, Va., who has bought an old newspaper, for no other purpose than to knock down the Monroe doctrine. He says it is a miserable old fiction of the States' rights, slave trade, and secession, which we threw the garden of Eden away for. So the railroads cannot be perpetually poor, and the society to which they pass happy. Now, take our road—the Southern system, which stretches from the Potomac through seven States, to Greenville, on the Mississippi River. In each one of those States we have a different system of laws and regulations. About seven Boards of Railroad Commissioners are annoying us.

"In one State colored people have to ride in separate cars; in another State they ride, according to the fare they pay, with white people. One State has a mileage or tonnage taxed on a certain figure; another State a different one. You have a nice party of gentlemen from Boston or Philadelphia taking their dinner, and suddenly they ask for another bottle of wine on the cars, when they are told, 'We are very sorry, but we have just passed the Virginia line.' Now what a state of things is that for a nation. I am one of the men who believe in looking at the present rather than the past, and I cannot for the life of me see what earthly good these old State formations are in such matters as locomotion and highways. Here is an Inter-State Commission sitting on the figment of a political boundary line, having jurisdiction over nothing except that which passes all actual jurisdiction. Are you going to live on in this way, taxing the subsistence out of things for the benefit of particular societies? Is the American to be reminded as he goes onward that he belongs to a half dozen or a dozen tribes instead of to one race of men?"

I found the railroad men interested in the supposed rivalry between H. M. Flagler and H. B. Plant in Florida. Mr. Plant was a Connecticut man who lived South before the war, and was in the express business. After the war he picked up and united the links of the great railroad system, and extended this into the piney woods and on to the Gulf of Mexico, and put on steamers to Havana, and even to Jamaica. Mr. Flagler, meantime, whose name is Holland Dutch, and is a representative of New York State, took a fancy to Florida as the El Dorado province in which to put up Almanzor's palace. He had the old architectures of Cordova and Seville studied out, and raised his magnificent structures, the Ponce de Leon, the Cordova, and the Alcazar, bringing back to us those Moorish arches and slender frames which were wafted to our imagination by the pen of Washington Irving, whose studies in Spain gave him a poor idea of the Spanish compared to the Moors. Mr. Plant now took a notion to put up a great hotel also at Tampa. He had the artificial stone made out of sand and shells there, and brought bricks from every kiln in Georgia and the clay country. He gave a hotel with every room opening outside, and a splendid park to hunt in. He and his wife went to Paris and bought draperies and ornaments.

Mr. Plant's troubles had just begun. Flagler now, with the strong income he derives from a large ownership in the Standard Oil Company, resolved to build on the Atlantic side of Florida. He ran a railroad 300 miles long, and more than that, down to an inlet island and port which admitted shipping. He put on a steamer to run over to Nassau in one night; another steamer runs in six hours to Key West.

What would Ponce de Leon, De Soto, and such other swashbucklers say to this sort of Yankee development?

I computed, from the circular handed me, that Flagler's different hotels would accommodate more than 3,000 people with rooms.

Such wars like this terrifically develope a country almost without inhabitants must have an intense perception of old-fashioned State rights, when they were about to remand him from Florida to Texas for selling oil at less than some fixed or comparative price.

The Gridiron Club is exclusively a dining club, without much periodicity. It is about the only thing in Washington which brings Bohemia and bureaucracy together. At this dinner I first saw Mr. Frank Thomson the leading Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, a gentleman of delicate frame, with gray hair, and spectacles, and almost suggestive of a rare professional man, scientist, college President, or even minister. Reference was made to the St. Paul having gotten up on the beach at Long Branch. Mr. Thomson assented to a remark of mine that such an important port as New York ought to have lightships with bells and whistles outside the jaws of the channel. It is absurd to think of Long Branch in a fog without a steam whistle along its dangerous beach.

Chauncey Depew, as the President of another very important railroad, came down to this dinner with one of his inimitable speeches. He is looking thin. James Husted, now dead, once told me that he was a college mate of Depew at Yale, and that Depew even at that time was striving for the laurel of oratory, and finally did get the valedictory. Depew's gentlemanly nature has had much to do with his high promotions. He is both a good fellow and a courtier. He delivers speeches just as Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote poems, because they are in him, and bubble out like the springs of water under pressure. He has a fine capacity to invent anecdotes or to adapt old ones, as when at this dinner he convulsed the house by describing a new member of Congress seated in an old black barber's chair, and saying, "You have shaved many other statesmen in the past, such as Clay and Webster!"

"Yes, sir," replies the barber, somewhat frigidly; "you look somewhat like Mr. Webster."

"In my brow?" inquires the statesman, who has in the mean time been rendered helpless in the barber's chair.

"No," replies the negro, "in your breath."

This anecdote, shaped by Mr. Depew himself, is of the character of the newspaper comments on public men which several speakers that night appeared to reprobate. Democracy makes sport of itself. While Mr. Depew was thus referring to Mr. Webster's bacchanalian breath, some of those very invited guests were having their will of Mr. Depew's constitution. He got credit for being everything but a railroad man, yet I heard him say some time ago that he gave more hours to his railroad duties than any corporation President in the country.

While Depew could probably draw large audiences all over this land mainly upon the faith of his wit and eloquence, there sat Gov. Hill and notified the company, amid roars of laughter, that they knew he was not going to lectures any more. Although he is supposed to be the popular idol of the Democracy, he went into Wisconsin, but lately a Democratic State, and did not draw houses. Yet Hill is a strong public speaker. I noticed that he had the best articulation of any speaker among the many talented ones that night. He somewhat grinds his articulation into his jaws and gives a slightly unpleasant sound there, but he is quite a different man from the Mugwumpian picture of him. Hill has become during his Senatorial term both a social character and an intellectual one. He absorbs information and likes to impart it. He is as clean as a newlaid egg.

The public idea that some men are born perfectly good and others perfectly bad retains its last authenticity in the Mugwump's print. The whole genius in public life consists in taking a talented man with raw instincts and transforming him into an instrument of civilization. Those who were the most raw, the most froward, the commonest in their association, come out of the alembic of official experience ten times stronger men than college mates and those who were parboiled in their youth. Mirabeau, Danton, Clive, Daniel Morgan, Anthony Wayne, Sir John Macdonald, all bear out this view.

I asked Judge Martin McMahon of New York a few days ago, when he was in Washington, if Hill still had his standing with the New York Democracy.

"Why," said Judge McMahon, "they never were as proud of him as they are now. His Senatorial experience has justified both them and him in his becoming a Senator. Right out of Democratic party discipline they see evolved a Senator who can hold his own in any debate or any question. Why should not they be proud of Hill?"

Mr. Gorman of Maryland also replied to a little toast that night in terms showing that flexibility which is his abounding quality. He spoke of his defeat as condign, and said that the club showed him a year ago a photograph of the White House, but this year had withdrawn even that shadow of a shadow. "There is nothing left for me," he said, "but to come to this annual banquet of yours."

The approbation which greeted him on every hand showed that the natural man far outlives the official man.

Indeed, the superabundance of Democratic Presidential timber at this dinner, and the absence of Republican timber, were commented upon by the speakers, such as Vice-President Stevenson, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Hill, &c.

Morrison told me, some time ago, that but for Republican quarrels there would have been but one party in control till men forgot there was a war. He brought this idea up at the banquet, but the chaps didn't seem to take full play, and his moral was lost in their catcalls.

As Morrison grows older, there is a good deal of the President likeness in him. His aggressiveness and Scotch-Irish factionalism pass now into the cheerful and philosophic and abounding kindness of intercourse. He told Admiral Benham and myself how old Kaskaskia, the French town where he was raised, had lately been cut off from the Illinois side by the Mississippi River, for the Kaskaskia River channel, running the whole town into Missouri. I asked him whence his people went out there. He said from Pennsylvania, probably from some log cabin up in the wilds.

Judge Brown of the Supreme Court expressed the same indifference to ancestry by commenting on the birth of his wife's family in a city where every man had to have a grandfather. He said he was positive he had never had a grandfather, never would have one, and had no use for one. Then he read a paragraph from a Western paper, every line and item of which was a mistake, as to the evidence of the accuracy of the press, and said that, with all its mistakes, he had known a decision of the Supreme Court to contain more mistakes than that paragraph. I thought that Justice Brown acquitted himself the best of any speaker of the evening. He brought out that strong fact which theologians, as well as Turveydrops, must come to, that there is no such thing as original, immutable truth. Justice itself is a choice among opposite elements. Supreme justice is the majority principle of a large bench.

A very respectable young Catholic priest, curiously called Father Stafford, talked to me about *Hamlet* and Shakespeare before the dinner. Popular opinion says that this is one of the brightest ecclesiastics in his denomination, but that his literary qualifications are really a prejudice among his elders, as when Simon Cameron and his group of Senators discussed the "damned literary fellers" who were getting offices. As one sign of the times, this young priest, who was but a subordinate in the oldest church here, repeated a lecture on "Hamlet" about a week ago and earned $1,200 for charity. The old-fashioned method would have been to beg this money through the superstition of the people. Mr. Smithmayer, the architect of the Georgetown College, related to me that a number of the old Fathers, who never read "Hamlet," started to California to get money to pay off their debt among the Floods and O'Briens and other rich parishioners out there, and that they came back with only about $7,000, hardly more than Father Stafford can earn by delivering his lecture a week in half a dozen cities.

A strong head at this dinner was Gen. Miles. Mr. Hoke Smith commented on his fine cranium. It rose in at the brows, but back toward the occiput, and then swelled out back of the head, where one supposed to be the combative and fortifying faculties, to a noble sphere. Miles had a little of the devil-maycare look about him. On the whole, his face is handsome. He is about of the perfect size for a Napoleon; not a Napoleon, like Winfield Scott, nor a Punchinello, like Phil Sheridan. He spoke without any preparation, and as a layman might be expected to speak, but he said two good things; the first, that Western cities had been asking him if they ought to adopt municipal flags, and he said, "Our song, one flag, one country!" Secondly, that he had observed at this dinner that the President of the United States had not been toasted. Said he: "Every President of the United States, from Washington down to the present time, has done his duty. I propose the health of the President." The youngsters found themselves all standing up drinking to Cleveland, whom probably not many of them liked.

Admiral Benham, who behaved with decision against the insurgent admiral in the harbor of Rio, Brazil, was engaged with Gen. Miles in conversation. Benham, I think, is of Connecticut stock, perhaps the son of an army officer. He is a rather short, stocky man, of about the size to be expected of an old sailor. His nose is rather heavy, but his head is good, covered with fine gray hair, and he looks more of the sailor than most of the Admirals. A little of the tone of the Irishman is in his accent.

Vice-President Stevenson is a particularly gracious man, with a decidedly Western wit. He has been more popular than Cleveland with the original level of Washington contact. Yet Cleveland is said to be a very agreeable man to those he likes. Perhaps his literary preoccupations derange him for general society. The tendency of literature is to make a man very sensitive and somewhat overbearing.

The Secretary of Agriculture, Morton, is a blunt, off-hand man, and I am told that he was once a newspaper correspondent, while Stanton, the Paymaster-General, it is said, left the reporters' gallery of Congress at the outbreak of the war, became a hard Indian fighter, and he certainly presented at the table one of the most original and least harmonious strong mugs to be seen.

GATH.

Gov. Morton's Axe Incorrectly Reported.

ALBANY, Feb. 1.—The friends of Gov. Morton in Albany have detected an error in the Congressional Directory that might have embarrassed the Governor's friends when his name is presented in the Republican National Convention at St. Louis. The directory of the Fifty-fourth Congress, second edition, contains a list of the twenty-two Vice-Presidents of the United States, giving the date of their birth and age at the time of their inauguration. In this list Gov. Morton's age at the time of his inauguration as Vice-President in 1889 is placed at 68 years instead of 64.

MORTON'S HARMONY FEAST.

MAYOR STRONG WILL BE THERE—IF HE DOESN'T STAY AWAY.

He May Have an Attack of Rheumatism as He Did Last Year—His Presence Will Be Regarded as an Assurance that His Faction Favors Gov. Morton's Candidacy.

ALBANY, Feb. 1.—Mayor Strong will be one of the guests at Gov. Morton's grand harmony spread on Tuesday night; that is, provided he does not stay away. His acceptance has been received, but after his performance last year no one feels certain that he will come until he is safely seated in the Governor's dining room, surrounded by Thomas C. Platt, Edward Lauterbach, and his other friends in the State machine. Last year, after accepting an invitation to a similar dinner, Col. Strong sent word that he would be unable to come on account of his rheumatism. His health picked up within the next day or two to such an extent that he attended a dinner in New York the night before the Morton affair.

It was understood last year that the reason the Mayor changed his mind was that, after thinking it over, he could not bring himself to sit at the same table with such wicked politicians as Mr. Platt. This year, and especially within the last few days, the relations between Messrs. Strong and Platt have become much more hostile than they were last year.

Owing to this state of affairs, up-country Republicans have been awaiting with great interest the announcement of Mayor Strong's acceptance or rejection of the invitation. It has been felt that his presence or absence at the dinner would fix to a large extent the attitude of the Brookfield contingent toward Gov. Morton's candidacy for the Presidential nomination. The up-country Republicans regard the anti-Platt camp in New York county as a hotbed of secret antagonism to the Governor's ambition and support for the McKinley boom.

It has been freely said that if Mr. Strong and the other Brookfielders invited to the dinner should stay away, it would practically be an open avowal of opposition to New York's Presidential candidate, and no further consideration should be shown to their faction by the Republicans of the State. It is believed that the principal idea in giving the dinner was to remedy the non-inclusion of the faction in the gathering of about all the other kinds of Republicans around Dr. Depew's board a month ago, and force its members to show their hands. The presence of the official leader of the faction will be regarded as a sufficient assurance that it will be for Morton in its entirety.

Cornelius N. Bliss, the financial backer of the malcontent faction, has declined an invitation to the dinner because of the death of a relative. Mr. Platt has sent his acceptance, and so has Mayor Wurster, who is ambitious to be the leader of a united Republican organization in Kings county. Some of the others to whom invitations have been sent are Chauncey M. Depew, Warner Miller, Edward Lauterbach, Lieut.-Gov. Saxton, Speaker Fish, Comptroller Roberts, Secretary of State Palmer, State Treasurer Colvin, State Engineer Adams, and several Democrats.

Mr. Platt's local organ, in an editorial tonight, makes the curious suggestion that Mayor Strong's object in hanging up $500 bills for evidence of corruption among his factional supporters was for the purpose of discrediting them, declaring himself through with them, and getting in line with the machine.

"There is doubt," it says, "that he realizes the blunder which he has made in the management of his office, and he now sees an opportunity to cast off the petty politicians who have been his advisers. He will cleanse his administration of these barterers of public patronage, who acted without his knowledge or consent, and, like a trained acrobat, land on his feet in the band wagon of the Republican organization—the happiest man in the State of New York."

STRONG'S POCKET BUTTONED YET.

He's Doubtful if It's Worth While to Investigate Berliner's Prize Affidavit.

Mayor Strong has about made up his mind that the cases presented by the affidavits sent to him by Secretary Manchester of the Republican County Committee are not such as call for an investigation by him. He is said to be averse to acting on the affidavit of Sol Berliner that William Brookfield, while Commissioner of Public Works, offered places to William Germain and two other Twenty-fifth district men in consideration of their voting the Hedges ticket for State delegates in last September.

Early yesterday morning the Mayor said that he probably would appoint a committee to investigate the charge, but later he said he had not finally determined to do so, and may not. He acknowledged the receipt of Mr. Manchester's letter and the affidavits, but did not advise him what course he would pursue with regard to the latter.

The Mayor's hesitancy is due to the fact that the case is not a more important one. His friends say that he had expected some attempt would be made to implicate the whole town into trict leader, and he is averse to deal with one made on the affidavit of Sol Berliner. Another argument urged by the Mayor's friends is that no investigation which can be made now will be final in its results, because Mr. Brookfield is on his way to the Mediterranean and will not be back until next spring, and Mr. Brookfield will certainly have to be heard in his own defence.

SENATOR M'NULTY'S ELECTION.

Legislative Inquiry Into the Brooklyn Major's Eligibility.

The Committee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate, detailed to settle the dispute between James A. Taylor and Major Peter H. McNulty, who are striving for the Sixth Senate district seat, held the second session in the case at the Murray Hill Hotel yesterday. McNulty, at the last election, was elected to the place by a large majority on the Democratic ticket. His opponent was Mr. Taylor on the Republican ticket. Mr. Taylor began a contest on the ground that McNulty, being a member of the Board of Education, and therefore an employee of the city of Brooklyn, could not legally be elected to a State office. Taylor was represented by Attorneys Stillman F. Kneeland and Gen. W. C. Wallace, and Major McNulty by M. L. Towns and Abraham Gruber. Thomas Willicott, Harry E. Eagle, George Wagner, and Herbert F. Gunnison were sworn. They are newspaper men, and testified to the fact that the newspaper publication it was clearly made known before election that Major McNulty was a member of the Board of Education. Both sides concluded to submit briefs, and it was agreed to sum up at a session to be held at the Murray Hill Hotel at 11 o'clock on Feb. 15.

REPUBLICAN BROOKLYN.

For the First Time No Democrat Is at the Head of a Department.

The new heads of the municipal departments in Brooklyn took charge yesterday, and for the first time, it is said, in the history of the city the Republicans were in absolute control. Little ceremony attended the change, but all the Commissioners received handsome floral tributes from admiring constituents. The work of weeding out all the Democratic subordinates in the various departments who can possibly be spared will be carried on quietly, but none the less thoroughly.

Nevertheless, County Clerk Saffen has reappointed Charles Y. Van Doren chief clerk and John Moore and Joseph Winters deputy clerks in the County Court. The two latter are probably the only Democrats who will be retained in office.

County Register Harman of Kings county was obliged yesterday to suspend temporarily the twenty-four clerks who have been engaged in transcribing the records of the office. Work will not be resumed until another appropriation has been made.

Health Commissioner Emery discharged three assistant sanitary inspectors, a clerk, a vaccinator, and seven foliagators yesterday. This is in harmony with the policy of economy inaugurated by the new administration.

Prohibition State Committee.

UTICA, Feb. 1.—About thirty members of the Prohibition State Committee met in this city to-day. Among those present were Dr. M. Downing of Poughkeepsie, F. F. Wheeler of Albany, E. J. Wheeler of New York, William T. Wardwell of New York, W. R. Hunt of Elmira, William Ramsey of Batavia, and H. Clay Bascom of Troy. Delegations at large to the National Convention, to be held in Pittsburgh, May 27, were elected as follows: W. W. Smith of Poughkeepsie, H. Clay Bascom of Troy, Francis Baldwin of Elmira, and Thomas J. Hissell of Rochester. They were empowered to name substitutes. The following supplemental delegates were chosen: Stanley P. Roberts of Utica, B. J. Hall of Buffalo, F. F. Wheeler of Albany, and W. T. Wardwell of New York. It was decided to hold the State Convention in Syracuse, Aug. 19.

Massachusetts Democrats Organize.

BOSTON, Feb. 1.—Judge Corcoran, Chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee, was reflected at a meeting of that body held today. Henry V. Cunningham was elected Secretary and John H. Sullivan Treasurer. It was decided to hold the Convention to elect the State delegates at large to the National Democratic Convention in Boston, but the date was not fixed.

GOSSIP OF THE POLITICIANS.

A personal friend of Gen. James S. Clarkson read in THE SUN the other day how most Republicans said that ex-President Harrison was the greatest speechmaker in his party, and how Mrs. John C. New interrupted a visitor in London, who was extolling Harrison's capabilities as a speaker, with the remark, "Ah, sir, you should hear him pray!" Mrs. New said this with all the fervor of her heart. The News and the Millers and the Harrisons of Indianapolis are all great prayer-meeting people, and Mrs. New spoke by the card. Gen. Clarkson, as Chairman of the Republican National Committee, visited Chicago and other Western points in 1892 just before the Minneapolis Convention. His mission was to strengthen Gen. Harrison, who was a candidate for renomination. Gen. Clarkson ascertained that the Republicans of that region were friendly to Harrison, but they believed it would be a good thing if President Harrison would conciliate the friends of Walter Q. Gresham. Plenty believed that this could be done if Harrison would place Gresham on the United States Supreme Court bench. Gen. Clarkson returned to Washington. President Harrison invited him for a drive, and on that drive the results of Clarkson's mission in the West were told.

"Finally," said Gen. Clarkson to President Harrison, "I was told to sound you on the Gresham question and to ascertain if you would not, in the interest of harmony, appoint Judge Gresham to the United States Supreme Court bench."

President Harrison held the reins at the time. He quickly grasped the whip and snapped it over the horses' heads and replied:

"General, I am a good Presbyterian, but I want to say to you that I'll be damned if I appoint Gresham to the United States Supreme Court bench."

John Sheridan, the Democratic National Committeeman for West Virginia, tells a little story which he says will illustrate Senator Joe Blackburn's real position in Kentucky.

"John Little, an old friend of mine in Piermont," Mr. Sheridan said, "a number of years ago got up the finest remedy in the world for hot feet. You know that many people's feet perspire winter and summer, and it is an affliction. There was no better ointment ever made for this affliction than that made by John Little. John thought he was to make a fortune, and he really ought to have made a fortune, out of his ointment. The ointment was all right. But he failed disastrously, for the reason that there were not so many people in the United States suffering from this affliction as John Little supposed. It is just so with Brother Blackburn. He has an idea that all the folks in the universe are troubled with the free-silver craze. He has had a similar experience to that of John Little with his foot ointment."

Many Republicans who are familiar with the affairs of the District of Columbia maintain that serious criticism is soon to be directed against the management of municipal affairs in the City of Magnificent Distances. Their opinion is that a secret investigation is going on, and that this will demonstrate that the gas companies and the railroad companies of Washington have obtained privileges and franchises on a very much more generous scale than that enjoyed by them in other cities in the United States. This is merely gossip; but, for all that, it is known that something of the kind predicted is sure to come.

Major Dukesbury, who was Longstreet's chief of ordnance, told at the Fifth Avenue Hotel last night a little story which has not been in print before, and in view of the coming parade of the Confederate and Union veterans here on July 4 is especially interesting. "I very well remember," the Major said, "the reproof that Stonewall Jackson gave to one of his general officers early in the war. Two or three United States flags had been captured, and this general officer had just passed a trailed one in the street in the presence of Jackson. Jackson reproved him. The general officer was a little sullen, and he was ordered to the rear. Jackson turned to me and said: 'We are not fighting that flag. I once fought under it, and displays of this kind can be of no benefit whatever.'"

There are any number of Republicans in New York State who believe that Francis Hendricks of Syracuse should be nominated for Governor. They have said repeatedly within the last month or two, that if a Republican is to succeed Mr. Morton Mr. Hendricks is the man for the place. They say that he is of judicial temperament, moderate in all his ways, dignified, and refined, and yet believes in Republican organization and machine rule. The trouble with this, however, with reformed Republicans say, is that Syracuse has had quite enough distinction for some time. They point out that Gov. Morton made Judge Vann a Court of Appeals Judge and appointed young Frank Hiscock, nephew of the ex-Senator, to the Supreme Court place vacated by Judge Vann. Mr. Hendricks in recent years has been regarded a counterfeit presentment of the late Samuel J. Tilden. He speaks in low and smooth tones, in fact he almost whispers, and he is shrewd and calculating.

The Hon. Henry Burleigh of Whitehall and the Hon. Isaac V. Baker of Comstock's are engaged in a new quarrel. These two Republicans have been arrayed against each other for ten years or more. Baker has triumphed over Burleigh often, and Burleigh occasionally has triumphed over Baker. The present fight concerns the selection of two delegates from the Congress district to the Republican National Convention at St. Louis. A Republican National Convention without either Burleigh or Baker would be a strange affair indeed, and so the Republicans familiar with the battle between the two believe that they should negotiate an armistice, so both may represent the Congress district at St. Louis.

MARINE INTELLIGENCE.

MINIATURE ALMANAC—THIS DAY.

Sun rises ... 7 10 | Sun sets ... 5 18 | Moon rises 9 40

HIGH WATER—THIS DAY.

Sandy Hook. 9 45 | Gov.Island.10 04 | Hell Gate.. 11 53

Arrived—SATURDAY, Feb. 1.

Ss Paris, Watkins, Southampton.
Ss Willehad, Richter, Bremen.
Ss Rhynland, Afferbach, Antwerp.
Ss Cherokee, McKee, Charleston.
Ss Pottsville, Ritzen, Philadelphia.
Ss Lebanon, Robinson, Philadelphia.
Ss Pawnee, Johnson, Philadelphia.

[For later arrivals see First Page.]

ARRIVED OUT.

Ss Georgic, from New York, at Liverpool.
Ss Manhattan, from New York, at Rotterdam.
Ss Massachusetts, from New York, at London.
Ss Persia, from New York, at Hamburg.
Ss Venetia, from N. w York, at Stettin.
Ss Iroquois, from New York, at Charleston.

SIGHTED.

Ss Kensington, from New York for Antwerp, passed Scilly Islands.

SAILED FROM FOREIGN PORTS.

Ss New York, from Southampton for New York.
Ss La Gascogne, from Havre for New York.
Ss Donn, from Bremerhaven for New York.
Ss Scoiedam, from Amsterdam for New York.
Ss Belgenland, from Sligo for New York.
Ss Sarum, from Shields for New York.
Ss Thingvalla, from Stettin for New York.
Ss Cherubia, from Lisbon for New York.
Ss Ethiopia, from Glasgow for New York.
Ss Nomadic, from Liverpool for New York.

SAILED FROM DOMESTIC PORTS.

Ss El Mar, from New Orleans for New York.
Ss City of Augusta, from Savannah for New York.
Ss Kansas City, from Savannah for New York.
Ss Benefactor, from Philadelphia for New York.

OUTGOING STEAMSHIPS.

	Mails Close.	Vessel Sails.
Sail To-morrow.		
Fluminense, Barbadoes	1:00 P. M.	3:00 P. M.
Cherokee, Charleston		3:00 P. M.
Sail Tuesday, Feb. 4.		
Lahn, Bremen	7:00 A. M.	10:00 A. M.
El Sol, New Orleans		3:00 P. M.
Sail Wednesday, Feb. 5.		
Paris, Southampton	8:30 A. M.	11:00 A. M.
Britannic, Liverpool	7:00 A. M.	10:00 A. M.