The Sun.

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The Power to Tax National Banks.

The statutory system for the taxation of personal property established in this State operates so unfairly and the assessments under it are so unequal that there is a general sentiment in favor of the repeal of the laws imposing taxes upon personalty. This sentiment has recently found expression in the public utterances of Mayor GAYNOR and President PURDY of the Department of Taxes and Assessments. We must have something more than mere words, however, to effect the desired change. A statute of repeal must be drafted with the guidance of experts in taxation who have a clear comprehension of the existing system and will not blunder into worse perplexities than those from which we hope to escape.

We desire to call attention to one obstacle which has thus far been overlooked. The taxation of national banks by a State is dependent upon the tax which the State imposes upon money in the hands of its citizens; and if New York abolishes all taxes upon personal property it will by the same act destroy its right to tax national banks.

Section 5,219 of the Revised Statutes of the United States expressly permits the Legislature of each State to determine and direct the manner and place of taxing shares of national banking associations in their State. This power, however, is subject to the restriction that "the taxation shall not be at a greater rate than is assessed upon other moneyed capital in the hands of individual citizens of such State." If such moneyed capital in the hands of individual citizens is not taxed at all, as in case the taxation of personal property is abolished, then it will follow that the shares of national banks will also be free from taxation.

In pointing out this provision of law we are not actuated by any spirit of opposition to the proposed abolition of taxes on personal property. On the contrary, we regard the present system as intolerably unjust. Reformers, however, are frequently so impetuous that they fail to consider carefully all the effects of the measures which they advocate with so much zeal. We hardly think that the opponents of the existing system of taxation on personal property in this State want to exempt national bank shares, yet they will certainly do so if the Legislature absolutely repeals all the existing provisions of law taxing personalty. We commend the question which we have suggested to the consideration of those who are engaged in the movement for the abolition of personal taxes.

The British Dilemma.

With the meeting of the new Parliament no way out of his dilemma appears for Mr. ASQUITH. Each of his dominant partners insists on the satisfaction of demands, which, it may be inferred from the delay in the announcement of the Government's intentions, the Liberal party is not ready to concede. There is a curious setting back of the clock several centuries in the Labor appeal to the King to insist that his Ministers shall cut the claws of the Lords. It was by the alliance of the Crown with the people that the absolute monarchy was established in France; the same combination in England enabled the Tudors to rule arbitrarily; the crushing of the power of the privileged classes was beneficial for the moment to each.

The call on the sovereign to interfere by the most radical of the parties in King EDWARD's third Parliament is a flattering admission that Britain recognizes in the sovereign alone, just now, the shrewdness, the diplomacy and the statesmanship that can rescue her from the present quandary. The fact that the sovereign is a constituent and essential part of Parliament is being brought to men's minds emphatically. If rumor is right the King has held Mr. ASQUITH up short in his projected onslaught on the Lords, and has reminded him that the abolition of a second chamber is not a reform. The suggestion of other changes in the Constitution attend it, and it seems clear that Britain has no desire for a socialistic republic as yet.

If Mr. ASQUITH must do without the support of the Labor members the control of the situation in Great Britain is, for the moment, in the hands of Mr. REDMOND and his Nationalist following. With his group of seventy Irish votes he can give either Liberals or Unionists a majority of about twenty over all opponents. Though he cannot hope to extort home rule, he certainly should be able to obtain great advantages for Ireland. He calls for no abolition of the Lords, but for a restriction of their powers and reforms which either party might concede.

Should Mr. ASQUITH decide to retain office, he seems to be put in the humiliating position of being equally impotent to urge Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE's budget without modifications, though that was the issue that he declared the election was fought on, and to demand the radical changes in the House of Lords which his Labor and Nationalist allies call for. Should he resign it seems difficult to believe that Mr. BALFOUR would consent to form a Government that must depend on Mr. REDMOND's Nationalists for a majority. Yet both parties must be reluctant to adopt the usual expedient, a new appeal to the country, when they have just measured each other's strength and neither can well hope for a majority large enough to do away with the importance of the two lesser parties.

The logical solution of the difficulty, which though unusual would not be without precedent, would seem to be the formation of a coalition Ministry by the two parties which have most interests in common, the Liberals and the Unionists. They certainly could be united in resisting the progress of socialism. Such a Ministry could be only temporary; it would involve the retirement for the time being of both leaders, Mr. ASQUITH and Mr. BALFOUR, but it could settle the financial question and the reform of the Lords and put off a new general election till the fall at least. Who is there, however, that can bring it about? Lord ROSEBERY has put himself out of politics, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN has just exhibited his physical incapacity, and it is impossible to name a living Englishman who has shown real initiative in politics.

When the address from the throne is read Monday and Mr. ASQUITH presents himself with his programme to Parliament, the riddle will be as perplexing as it was when the result of the election was first made known.

The Grave of General Shields to Be Marked.

It came out in the course of a discussion in the House of Representatives on Wednesday that a soldier whose effigy can be seen in Statuary Hall—that remarkable chamber of incongruous sculpture and ill assorted fame—has lain in an unmarked grave for thirty years. Illinois contributed the statue of General JAMES SHIELDS, who was born in County Tyrone; but Missouri has failed to raise a memorial over him at Carrollton, where, after dying in Ottumwa, Ia., the veteran of two wars and a Senator from three States—Missouri, Illinois and Minnesota—was buried. Mr. BURKE of still another State, South Dakota, recently introduced a bill appropriating $3,000 for a suitable monument to General SHIELDS in the cemetery at Carrollton.

To this generation in the House the gallant Irishman seemed to be almost a stranger, and to one Southern member, the Hon. ROBERT BRUCE MACON, he proved a revelation. Mr. KEIFER of Ohio, an old stager, contributed the odd information that the man who had fought with distinction in the Mexican and civil wars and represented three States in the Senate finished his public career as a doorkeeper or sergeant-at-arms in the House or Senate, Mr. KEIFER did not know which or what. In the course of the discussion Mr. MACON of Arkansas received a shock and learned history. Mr. ANTHONY of Kansas had referred to General SHIELDS as the only Union General who had ever whipped STONEWALL JACKSON. The Arkansan was blankly incredulous:

> "Mr. MACON—Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the gentleman where he finds authority for such history as that. I do not believe any man on earth ever defeated STONEWALL JACKSON. Dig up the history; I want to see it.
>
> "Mr. ANTHONY—I regret that the gentleman from Arkansas is not well posted in American military history.
>
> "Mr. MACON—I would like to have the gentleman point out the history that teaches that STONEWALL JACKSON was ever defeated in battle by any one.
>
> "Mr. ANTHONY—It is true, nevertheless."

The gentleman from Kansas did not enlighten the gentleman from Arkansas, but the history is easily "dug up." With a superior force SHIELDS defeated JACKSON at Kernstown, Va., March 23, 1862, the Confederates losing 869 in killed or wounded, and the Federals 565. In reporting the affair to General BANKS General SHIELDS realized that he had done a big thing. "JACKSON," he wrote, "with his supposed invincible Stonewall brigade and the accompanying brigades, much to their mortification and discomfiture, were compelled to fall back in disorder upon their reserve." Here they were routed and driven from the field, leaving 300 prisoners, two guns, four caissons and a thousand stand of small arms in the hands of SHIELDS.

It is satisfactory to know that the House of Representatives passed the bill to raise a monument over the grave of the versatile SHIELDS at Carrollton. If he had never done anything in war but prevail over the great strategist he would deserve the distinction.

The Mission of Zayas.

Señor ALFREDO ZAYAS, Vice-President of Cuba, was interviewed by the Washington *Star* the other day about the Administration of President GOMEZ, his former rival for the leadership of the party. It is true, as Señor ZAYAS said, that much fiction of a more or less vicious character has been published about affairs in the island. It was doubtless to make out the best possible case for Cuba that he came to this country, but allowing for his personal interest in the matter and an enthusiasm that is characteristic of him, the account Señor ZAYAS gives of conditions at home confirms what has come to us from impartial sources. For instance:

> "I can affirm that when the Provisional Government left the island we had in the treasury $2,000,000 in cash, and against this a debt of $9,000,000. In one year, since January 27, we have paid more than $5,000,000, notwithstanding that the budget had been increased by new expenses created by the Provisional Government, such as a permanent army of 5,000 men, the civil service commission, and other institutions. It is true we have a budget now that is higher than in the days of the Palma Administration, but we can say that the ordinary estimates, not counting extraordinary expenses, are not greater. The excess in the present over the former budget is due in part to the payment of the debt, to the increase in the creation of new boards, to the new census, to claims from the custom house."

The good crops which Señor ZAYAS mentions are of record, and the agricultural and industrial development of the island will be still greater if the Gomez Administration is not interrupted by factional quarrels. Of late the race problem has excited misgivings in this country. Señor ZAYAS professes not to be disturbed by it:

> "The relations between the whites and the negroes are friendly. Our slavery system was not as severe as that in the United States, and our colored people have been protected and educated by the whites. We don't anticipate the slightest hostility between the races even though a few people on the island have attempted to start a negro party. This fact has been exploited in certain parts of this country, but in Cuba we attach absolutely no significance to it."

Comparatively little significance, at any rate; for there is no race hatred in Cuba of the kind that exists in the South. The negroes in Cuba claim a certain share of the offices, and the claim is allowed. Personal relations between white and black are amicable and tolerant. The only danger to be apprehended is incitation to race dissension from without. But it is not the conservative course of administration and the rising prosperity of Cuba that give the greatest promise of the stability of the State; it is rather the ability the Liberal party has shown of late to live in harmony. Appearances may be deceptive, but we are inclined to think that the experiences that brought about the second intervention, and the lesson of it, have sobered factional leaders. Señor ZAYAS himself seems to have grown in wisdom and acquired foresight and caution; in a word, to have matured. The spirit of tolerance and suavity seems to pervade other men besides himself who have ambitions. It is at least an augury of good for Cuba.

The Real Banana Belt.

Twenty inches of snow in Cincinnati, seventeen in Indianapolis, in Columbus "the deepest snow on record"; zero and fourteen inches in Illinois; in Louisiana snow and "a drop of 30 degrees in the temperature in four hours": the implacable despatches paint for us a chilled and bedraggled world in too many parts of the Mississippi and Ohio valleys. In Ohio some little frost might have been looked for by the attentive reader of THE SUN'S Columbus letters, but what devotee of the wisest almanac could have surmised this sweep of Arctic bluster?

Meanwhile, here in this happy and sequestered vale the song sparrows and robins were trilling to the first faint blossoms; eager thousands were seeking refreshment from the intempestive ardors in the popular ices of Ann street and the soda stands; straw hats beamed with invitation from many windows; at the Battery and other stations on the Manhattan Riviera the bath guests thronged the benches; the inclemencies of the titular South but made more comfortable and comforting the balmy breath of the never ending Manhattan spring.

We are far from crowing over the Boreal brethren southward and westward; we merely condole with them, and bid them come and cheer themselves in the meridional capital.

Speaker NIXON was a strong man and had powerful political backing. The legislative leaders of the present have little power when compared with him. Not only did he boss the Assembly, but he found time to do some bossing outside. It will be remembered that the Platt-Odell feud did not occur, or at least did not flare up into open warfare, until after Mr. NIXON'S death. NIXON was strong enough to take ODELL and PLATT in hand and keep them from open rupture. Even the political overlords of those days deferred to the Speaker of the Assembly.—*The New York Times.*

NIXON was a fly on a wheel in the Platt-Odell feud. The Odell conspiracy to unseat PLATT was secretly organized at the Executive Mansion in Albany in the spring of 1901, five months after PLATT had nominated ODELL for Governor. The Platt-Odell feud came to an end in the spring of 1904, when ODELL, Governor at the time, had become powerful enough to elect himself chairman of the State committee and supplant PLATT as Republican boss. NIXON died in the fall of 1905. ODELL was then on his last legs as the Republican boss of the State. NIXON took no active part in the Platt-Odell feud. He was too busy with his personal affairs.

One of the leaders of the House, who declined to allow the use of his name, said to-day that he was opposed to accepting the proofs of Mr. PEARY that he discovered the pole merely because the National Geographic Society had accepted them.—*Despatch from Washington.*

The gentleman was sensible at least in not allowing his name to be used.

That sturdy Shakespearian warrior Dr. F. J. FURNIVALL celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday by an exhibition of the equality of muscle to brain. He rowed bow in a four-oared crew, with a young woman as coxswain, from Hammersmith to Richmond and back on the Thames in a downpour of rain on a February afternoon. His diet on that day may be of interest to rival octogenarian athletes: he breakfasted on a poached egg, two slices of toast, a roast apple, and cocoa, and after the row put away two poached eggs, spinach, a roll and a cup of coffee.

In the Malay States.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The editorial in THE SUN of February 17 "The British Raj in Malaysia" was of particular interest, and I may perhaps be permitted to compliment you on a clear perception of the question.

I lived in the Federated Malay States ten years ago for five years, and being engaged on pioneer surveys and railroad construction had ample opportunity for observation. So far from being full of savagery and lawlessness, the jungle is one of the most peaceful places imaginable, as well as one of the most beautiful.

The Malays are friendly and hospitable and naturally of gentle mind. They, however, are not as a race native to the peninsula. The aborigines are the Sakeis and other like tribes, who still remain apart from general civilization and are often found living in the heart of the jungle in an almost nude state. These people too are gentle and friendly, especially when spoken to in their own language. During the time I was there reports of amok were rare and mild, and far less horrifying than some of the things reported almost daily right here in New York.

The danger from wild animals is negligible. In five years I saw one bear, one tail of a tiger, and caught a faint sound of one herd of elephants. The most troublesome animal is the mosquito, and this is the chief "danger to the person" which still attends commercial and most other transactions.

R. F. A.

NEW YORK, February 18.

Automobile for Kansas Circuit Rider.

Hutchinson correspondence Topeka Capital.

Reno county believes it has the first automobile circuit rider in Kansas. The Rev. W. B. Stevens of the Hutchinson Methodist Episcopal circuit, who preaches at Mitchell and Poplar country churches, to-day bought a touring car in which to visit his churches and make pastoral calls.

WHAT IS TO BE SAVED IN OHIO?

COLUMBUS, February 17.—The more you attempt to grasp the condition of Republican politics in Ohio the more incredible it seems that any man having an adequate alibi should venture into them at all. They are not different from those of New York. A legislative investigation is as busy at Columbus as in the New York State Senate at Albany. Furthermore, in Columbus the statute of limitations cannot be invoked. Republican offences in Ohio are not merely criminal, they are recent enough to permit prosecution.

When the Republican legislators who visited Dayton on Saturday to hear the White House orders returned to Columbus it was to resume the investigation of the conduct of Republican officeholders. The first testimony heard was that of a self-confessed grafter who under promise of immunity testified that for several years the former Supervisor of State Printing had been accustomed to charge the State for supplies alleged to have been bought from him but in fact never bought at all. The witness calmly related that by agreement the money drawn from the State treasury for these pretended purchases was actually divided between the Supervisor and himself, and he did not get half.

The theft caused by the system in five years was estimated at $25,000. What will make admirable campaign material presently is that the money was taken by the Republican Supervisor to pay losses on account of his bad judgment in political betting. The spectacle of a State official taking taxpayers' money to bet on Republican candidates and losing it is regarded as sure to appeal to the rural sense of humor.

The mere triumphs in thievery of one State official do not cover the evidence of Republican official activity now before the people of this State. The Democratic State Treasurer has already contributed, with the assistance of the Democratic Governor, to the evidence before the legislative investigating committee. For a number of years the practice prevailed among Republican Treasurers of loaning the State surplus privately and pocketing the interest. Suits are now pending to recover the interest thus applied to personal uses by several Republican State Treasurers who followed this well established custom.

It is not necessary to dwell further on the phase of Republican policies under investigation as presented by a Republican Legislature which has derived and will derive surprisingly helpful support from a Democratic Governor. In the State capitol talk of further disclosures is as common as at Albany. Investigation is the order of the day and Republicans are being exhibited regularly to an interested electorate in a manner that entirely justifies the ante-election pledge of the Hon. Judson Harmon. The credit of the disclosures, moreover, belongs and is given to him.

Mr. Taft selected the Hon. Wade H. Ellis to be his representative in Ohio. The latest disclosures of the legislative investigating committee reveal that proof of Republican sinning now generally known lay on Mr. Ellis's desk when he was Attorney-General of the State of Ohio. In fact Mr. Ellis's opinion that nothing could be done in some of these matters is now quoted, when due processes of the law have been invoked in the case of offenders by Mr. Ellis's successor in the Attorney-General's office.

It is not charged against the Hon. Wade H. Ellis that he shared or profited by the system that existed in the days when he was Attorney-General. What is charged is that he was a better Republican than prosecuting attorney for the people, that he sat down heavily upon the dangerous situation, kept sitting there until his term ended, and now is on record as having followed this course at a time when Ohio is frankly exercised over the whole affair.

Another detail deserves passing mention. At the Dayton conference there was elected to head the League of Republican Clubs, a somewhat indefinite organization, a public official whose office is next on the list to be probed by the investigating committee of the Legislature. Democratic pleasure at this incident is based upon a somewhat wide belief that Governor Harmon himself has been busy collecting evidence as to the administration of this particular office. That irregularities in which this official did not share will be disclosed is generally believed.

Such, briefly, is the situation upon which the President of the United States stepped suddenly last Saturday. Such are the instruments selected by him to represent him in the State of Ohio at the present moment. That Mr. Taft would refrain from interfering in the situation until local political matters had been arranged, which is a euphemistic phrase for explaining that a sound thrashing at the polls will be the Republican share next fall, was generally expected. The truth seems to have been that no one in Ohio was looking to the President for light or leadership. Perhaps no phase of the surprise that the President's action produced was more profound than that resulting from the realization that the President thought himself concerned or potential in the situation at all.

Mr. Taft, however, has now informed an astounded electorate that it is to vote next fall not upon local thievery but the national tariff; that its decision in the matter of State elections, which promised, therefore, to be based upon local issues, must be predicated upon his national Administration; that to reelect a Democratic Governor to punish a sinful party now exposed is impossible because Mr. Taft wills it to be impossible. Having done all this, moreover, the Ohio view seems to be that the President only touched the real summit of the affair when he selected the Hon. Wade H. Ellis to go to Ohio to deliver his message.

It would hardly be fair to say that there is general indignation at Mr. Ellis. On the contrary he seems to have many friends, all of whom are sorry for him. That he can succeed in uniting politicians whom he has displaced is not suspected. That his record in office in Ohio will appeal to the people at the moment is not anywhere suggested. He seems to be the last straw. Why he was selected, what previously demonstrated political ability recommended his choice, what strength he brings, no one knows, no one even ventures to guess. All that is suggested by way of explanation is that in this incident Ellis is a natural detail, in perfect harmony with the whole design.

To Put Ticket Speculators Out of Business.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Hardly a day goes by that some newspaper column does not contain one or more letters on the theatre ticket speculator nuisance.

The remedy is so simple that their existence is almost farcical.

Just a little principle and a little determination to not buy a ticket from a speculator will put him out of business in one night.

If you can't get a ticket at the box office pass up the show, go to another or take a walk.

If the public would get together on these lines the speculators would soon be a thing of the past.

NEW YORK, February 18. S. KATE.

PUBLICITY OF CORPORATION RETURNS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Is it right, expedient, necessary and decent for Congress to spend $50,000 to enable the general public to examine the declarations made by industrial corporations regarding their capital, debt, gross income and net income while the Treasury is assessing or after it has assessed the tax thereon? President Taft declares to Congress that it is. He so declares in face of the precedent that heretofore such information has not been deemed public for the reason that it has been obtained by compulsion "for the purposes of raising revenue." While the Treasury is using the returns or after it is done with them for taxation purposes and after it has collected the tax, why should outsiders be permitted by Congress to have access to them?

It will be edifying to read the President's reasons if he gives them written out in black and white. The Government at Washington did not create the taxed corporations. It cannot regulate their affairs. The corporation may be disloyal to the State creating it, but that is not an affair for Congress to deal with. Share owners and bondholders may have rights to inspect, which the courts of the creating State protect by its legislative and judicial power. In what proper sense are the affairs of all the half million of corporations "public" after the Treasury has collected the income tax? If the public or Congress has been defrauded by any of the corporations there is a criminal and a civil remedy.

The State laws to protect those who have been injured in any way by corporations are ample. Courts will give all persons entitled a right to inspect the books of corporations. If the corporation restrains trade or creates monopolies in violation of any Federal law the chartering State can take the life of the guilty corporation, but Congress cannot. Where does President Taft find in the Constitution a power given to him or to Congress to enable outsiders to pry into the affairs of a State corporation? Congress cannot fix the prices of a State corporation for its products nor regulate its dividends and net income.

It can be readily seen, however, that any one who wishes a tax by Congress on everybody's individual income and a publication thereof in the newspapers may not be unwilling that similar publicity be given to corporation incomes; but the real question is as to the source of power in Congress and the propriety of its exercise to expend $50,000 in order to enable the general public to inspect the corporation income tax returns after the Government is done with them.

PUBLICITY.

NEW YORK, February 18.

THE LAW'S DELAY.

How It Is Proposed to Deal With the Problem in Massachusetts.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* On July 21, 1909, the Governor of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the authority vested in him by the Legislature, appointed a commission to investigate the causes of delay in the administration of justice in civil actions in the Commonwealth. This move was the result of the agitation provoked by the congestion of court business in the eastern counties. New York had taken a similar step in 1903.

The commission's work has been completed and its report submitted, accompanied by a draft of proposed legislation which it is believed will solve some of the difficulties. The entire matter is now in the hands of the appropriate judiciary committees, before which hearings are now in progress. Some features of the report cannot be without interest to other communities where similar evils obtain.

The chief cause for complaint has been found to be the delay in disposing of causes pending in the jury side of the Superior Court, and the proposed remedies deal mostly with the necessity of expediting the determination of these cases.

The commission has taken a conservative stand upon changes calculated to invoke increased expenditures. It does not recommend the creation of new tribunals, nor an increase in the number of Judges. It believes the situation ought to be relieved without increasing the burdens of taxation. The proposal to constitute independent courts to deal with equity and divorce matters is not approved because of the foregoing reasons, and further because, in the language of the report: "We know of no more prolific cause of delay than the necessity of resort to two courts to obtain what might be obtained in one." As was to be expected, the report deals with the congestion of accident cases:

> A very large proportion of the cases marked for jury trial is made up of tort actions for personal injuries. In Suffolk accident claims against street railways consume three-quarters at least of the time given to jury trials. Much cause of delay would be removed if the controversies between master and servant for personal injuries were dealt with under a workmen's compensation act instead of by trial in court.

In railway accident cases a vague recommendation is made that liability be limited. An employee's compensation act is now pending before the House, having been introduced there in its present form every year since 1904.

The commission finds that the disposal of cases is seriously hampered by the accumulation of legal business in a few hands: 1,637 cases upon a trial list for Suffolk county alone were found to be in the hands of only twenty attorneys or firms. It is proposed "that the power and responsibility shall be given to the court itself to establish rules of practice in this regard best calculated to meet the difficulties and abuses as they arise."

To relieve the Superior Court of many of its duties not connected with jury litigation it is recommended that jurisdiction over divorce proceedings be transferred to the probate courts, and that the right to appeal cases from the inferior courts be much limited.

To discourage unfounded litigation the report recommends narrowing the scope of property attachment, now freely allowed before trial, a provision for a system of taking and perpetuating testimony prior to a hearing, and the making of baseless allegations in claims of right more dangerous. It is proposed to impose a fee upon those claiming a jury trial as a slight contribution toward the expenses:

> A jury costs in the fees of the jurors alone $36 a day, and with the expense for officers to attend upon the jury and incidental expenses of various kinds the daily cost is probably not less than $50. Cases of any importance are rarely tried in less than a day, while the great majority extend over a number of days.

The report contains many other recommendations, most of which deal with the peculiar characteristics of court practice in Massachusetts. It is expected that much of it will become law, though some opposition among Boston lawyers is inevitable.

GEORGE R. FARNUM.

BOSTON, February 18.

The Fulfilment of a Princeton Prophet's Forecast.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* A letter in to-day's SUN signed "Princeton" says that "West is for West." The alumni believe that Wilson is for "Wilson, that's all."

It was only a few years ago that a song celebrating imaginatively foreseen wonders of the year 1908 was popular, although then, before the centuries had turned, 1908 did seem far in the future. One of the marvels was: "In Nineteen Hundred and Eight to the north pole we're going to skate." This tuneful seer missed Cook by a couple of years. A Princeton prophet made a better shot.

When Wilson became president of Princeton in 1902 he began his official career by stiffening requirements so that the number of "flunks" in the first set of examinations was appalling to the students, especially the athletes. The *Tiger* published a cartoon showing the campus grass grown and weedy, Old North with windows cracked and cobwebbed, the famous lions drooping in an attitude of utter dejection, rack and ruin everywhere; the coattails of the last undergraduate were flapping as he beat a hasty retreat, leaving the melancholy Woodrow alone and pensive in his perch on the dusty steps of Nassau Hall.

Prophetic inspiration stirred within the bosom of the undergraduate funny man, for the legend underneath ran: "1910: Wilson. That's All."

ORANGE AND BLACK.

NEW YORK, February 17.

RECENT TRIALS OF DIRIGIBLE BALLOONS AT COLOGNE.

The results of the recent great trials of the three German motor airships and the Parseval III. at Cologne have been reported as very favorable to all three systems, not only as regards the functioning of their apparatus and parts but also as regards their technical aeronautical capabilities even at night and in overcoming the difficulties incident to darkness. These tests were for comparison of the three systems as well as for simple efficiency.

It was held that the trials proved that the airship could be a practical factor in war even at night, but when it is asserted that the airship has shown itself to be a perfect means of reconnaissance its advocates go too far, and this assertion must be modified by the many accidents which occurred during the trials. The weather conditions, such as fog, strong wind and rain, during the trials often interfered with the airships and sometimes prevented their use altogether.

The Gross (or military balloon) II. was prevented by strong south and southwest winds before the trials from taking the distance test from Berlin to Cologne, which had been ordered ten days before, and had to be transported by rail; in the same way at the end of the trials bad weather delayed for several days the return trip of Parseval III. to Bitterfeld, and then the trip had to be broken at Gotha on account of a defect in the gliding planes and because of bad weather, and finally given up on account of snowstorms and strong winds, the airship being transported by rail.

On one occasion the trial trip of all four airships to Coblenz had to be postponed for several hours because of strong winds in the Rhine Valley; and on another occasion, during the night trip to Wesel, made difficult by heavy fog, the Parseval III. got into such a dense fog in the vicinity of Reuss that it had to descend very low in order to orient itself, and finally had to land to await better weather. In the enemy's country a landing means the loss of the airship and the capture of the crew.

During the trial trips there were other accidents. In one trip Parseval III. struck the roof of a house and injured it. In another trip the motor of Parseval I. failed to act for a time, and the motor of Zeppelin II., which had failed to act several times during the preceding trial, gave out altogether and had to be carefully examined.

On the return trip in a trial up the Rhine to Coblenz in which all the airships took part delays occurred on account of dense fog, and during the trials at the end of the great trials, which were designed merely for the training of the crews, the airships were compelled to stop on several days on account of continued rain and storms. The ten hour distance trip to Aix-la-Chapelle was also given up.

Nevertheless, on the whole the performance of the airships, partly in dense fog with puffy contrary winds, partly in darkness under difficult circumstances, often in seven hour endurance trips, was very satisfactory and proved them suitable for reconnaissance in all but particularly unfavorable weather conditions. It must also be acknowledged that the landings were invariably safe and easy.

Only once, during a night trip to Coblenz, the use of the airship offensively against a fortified place (the historic fortification of Ehrenbreitstein, which was illuminated by means of searchlights), was tested, either in the way of reconnaissance or to determine the effect of high explosives dropped from the airship. The details of the conditions of the problem and of the results obtained were of course kept secret.

In regard to the conditions of safety against artillery fire the Cologne trials confirmed the conclusions already arrived at during the imperial manœuvres, namely, a reduction in the required height from 1,640 to 1,420 yards.

The repeated night trips during the trials indicate that in order to avoid the enemy's observation and fire as well as the disadvantages of high flight, involving loss of gas and the resistance of strong counter currents, it is proposed to utilize the night as much as possible for advancing against the enemy to reconnoitre his position, and then at daybreak to rise above artillery fire and land in rear beyond artillery fire.

Nothing was reported regarding the use of wireless telegraphy, although the results of reconnaissance can only attain their full value by being constantly transmitted to headquarters.

Long distance trips corresponding to the strategic employment of the Zeppelin airship did not take place, possibly because the Parseval and the Gross (or military) airship could not compete in such trials and are not intended for them. A ten and a half hour spell in the air was the maximum attained. It may be, however, that such trips did not take place because the Zeppelin in its thirty-seven and a half hour return from Berlin was deemed to have performed enough in this respect, or that it was not thought advisable to risk discrediting the performances of the Government airships through the defects, accidents and forced landings likely to arise in long distance trips.

The value of airships in reconnaissance must not be overrated, as is frequently done nowadays. It is often said that the whereabouts of Nogi's army at Mukden would have been revealed to Kuropatkin betimes by an airship, but it should be remembered that large cavalry forces had been held back and not utilized for reconnaissance, otherwise this information would probably have been obtained without airships. Nevertheless in favorable weather the results of reconnaissance by airships in rear of the front of the enemy's army may be of great value.

The trials at Cologne have given valuable experience and will probably lead to further trials, and they have also furnished important information as to the limits of the usefulness of airships.

The appropriations for airships in Europe are gradually increasing. In the last year the German budget for airships amounted to $650,000, and for this year further appropriations will be demanded. The French budget of last year was only $214,000, of which $14,250 was for the purchase of airships or aeroplanes, $60,000 for the construction of airships, $25,000 for balloon halls, and $10,000 for training balloon soldiers. The new budget will probably be twice as large as the old. Austria-Hungary and England appropriated only $25,000 each last year, but Austria is now building several airships and its next budget will probably be for $500,000. She has purchased a Parseval. England has ordered a rigid airship, similar to the Zeppelin in construction, in France. Russia appropriated $12,500 last year, but it is to follow it up with $750,000 in this year's budget. France and England have also appropriated considerable sums for aeroplanes.

The Orange Casuist.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Last evening I was in a hurry to get to my home in the Oranges and hastened to the Terminal building to take the 5:30 o'clock Hudson River tube train. There was barely time to get it. I noticed about twenty persons endeavoring to secure tickets at the ticket office, and it flashed through my mind that the half minute delay in securing my ticket would cause me to lose the train. On the impulse of the moment I decided to drop my nickel in the chopping box instead of waiting to secure a ticket. The ticket chopper grabbed me by the arm and said that I could not go to the train without securing a ticket. I informed him that I had paid my fare to the company and intended to take the train, which I did.

The question now arises in my mind: "Am I guilty of a crime or misdemeanor in paying my fare with a nickel instead of going through the formality of purchasing a ticket?"

Kindly inform me what is proper to be done in the premises, and whether or not I should seek to apologize, pay a fine or serve a term of imprisonment, or whether I should consider that as an ordinary individual I have exercised my right to pay my fare in legal tender of the United States and am to be vindicated for my action.

In the latter case, why should hurried passengers be obliged to wait in line to buy tickets when the easier and more direct method would be to drop a nickel in the "hopper," just as a person does in a pay as you enter trolley car? ORANGEITE.

NEW YORK, February 18.

THE WEAKER SEX.

Account of a Mere Man's Visit to the Opera.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In reading about hitting feet in the letter dated February 8, published in your paper and signed "American Woman Not a Suffragist," I was reminded of a personal experience which I had at the Metropolitan Opera House a few weeks ago. To enjoy a performance of "Aïda" I bought a general admission ticket for $1.50. The standing room was crowded. I found a place on the left side of the auditorium near the stage in the second row.

In front of me to the right was standing a little bit of femininity who, evidently dissatisfied with herself, tried to correct nature by wearing a hat one foot high with a voluminous peacock feather stretched out horizontally in a southwesterly direction ("225" according to the latest compass terminology), commanding a circle of at least three feet in diameter. That of course shut out my view to the right and furnished pleasant tickling by the feather all over my face, almost putting out my eyes.

While I was wondering why women were allowed to keep on hats in the standing room when in the whole house they have to take them off, and coming to the conclusion that the standing room was never intended for women, so that rules for their conduct were not deemed necessary, my attention was suddenly attracted by a woman standing behind me (third row). Nearly six feet tall, with a conical hat one foot high and a determination to get into the first row showing in her face, I divined what was coming. After stepping several times on my left foot, which naturally made me step to the right, she reached her long arm over my shoulder (I am 5 feet 8 inches) and over the head of a little man in the first row and grabbed the railing. When that little man turned around indignantly he was instantly disarmed in seeing a "lady," who sweetly asked him, "Am I in your way?" Such is the submission of mere man to "custom" (or maybe he was a timid Italian afraid of being lynched by all the men in the audience if he had said that she was in his way) that he forgot that there were two rows of people behind him who selected their places because he was short, and eager to oblige the "lady" he moved sideways, and while the three rows of people were readjusting their places to follow the little man the "lady" stepped again on my foot and three seconds later was comfortably installed in the front row, her elbow resting on the railing beside the little man's head and with her hat totally eclipsing the stage to at least six men (value of admission $9).

In the meantime the peacock feather "lady" on my right, evidently inspired by the "touching" music, was working overtime all over my face, including my eyes. There was one redeeming feature, however, noticeable in the standing room at that performance: I did not see any "ladies" sitting on the floor between the acts (as was previously the custom) each occupying a space where about six grown men could comfortably stand. Is it possible that the management has stopped that "custom"?

Your correspondent "Alice" certainly expressed the opinion of everybody, excepting perhaps some women of both sexes, in saying: "They [the women] often do ride roughshod over the simplest rights and the most cherished feelings of others and suffer no rebuke worth the name and lose no standing among their own or the other sex."

NEW YORK, February 18. C. Q. D.

JULIA SEARS.

A Representative of the New Thought Which Is Helping Many Women.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In THE SUN of February 16 is a news article headed: "Rids Us of Evil by Thought; Julia Seton Sears, Prophetess of Better Days." Allowing for the elements which to the writer of that article seemed absurd or fantastic, he could not have failed to find a hint of sound philosophy in any one hour talk of Julia Sears.

In Boston Mrs. Sears helped many women to leave mean, petty ways of living and thinking and bestir themselves to worthier motives and saner, wholesomer domestic and social activities. She is sure to inspire many with a heartfelt desire to know and put into practice the homely virtues.

I do not care for her color schemes and esoterics, but her new thought work is known by its fruits, and she deserves respectful attention from the press.

This new thought movement appeals to thousands of women who do not care for the regular church. It is infinitely more dignified than the sewing circle gossip of other days. It is 'way beyond the neighborly teacup chats about Mrs. Jones's new gown or Deacon White's dyspepsia. New thought is a step in advance of bridge, with its attendant consequences to woman and home. S. W.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., February 17.

Left in the Lurch by the Erie.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The thoughtfulness of the Erie Railroad Company for its patrons was manifested last Saturday when both holiday and "except Saturday" trains were taken off during the rush hours. There was no train on the Greenwood Lake division between 4:20 and 5:52 P. M., three trains being taken out, and a throng of unhappy people were obliged to wait in the most unsanitary and disreputable station in this part of the country and finally walk the entire length of the platform past numerous empty cars to gain their "local."

It is bad enough to have fewer trains on Saturday evening than on other evenings, because, while some business men have a half holiday and return home at noon, the matinée crowd, shoppers and attendants on club meetings are more in evidence on that day than on any other. When to this is added the holiday withdrawal of trains the double deprivation does not seem to a woman a recognition of the rights and needs of the public. MONTCLAIR.

UPPER MONTCLAIR, N. J., February 16.

The Egg Product of Six White Wyandottes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The letter of "J. H. C." about his black Orpington hens moves me to relate my own experience with white Wyandottes. In the early part of December I purchased six pullets, and for about three weeks I kept them in a good sized dry goods box. I then constructed a coop five by seven feet floor space, six feet front and five feet back. I placed a large window in front of the coop, and this I covered with burlap on stormy days. I left an opening in the coop, just under the eaves, seven feet long and eight inches wide. In this opening I placed a burlap frame to be raised and lowered at will.

Now for my egg record. On January 2 I got my first pullet egg, and during the month I gathered fifty-two eggs from six pullets. In the first fifteen days of February my pullets laid fifty-seven eggs. D. C. BYBLE.

OSSINING, February 17.

That Big Moose.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In THE SUN of February 11 "Sportsman" estimates the antler spread of that big moose he tells us of with so much enthusiasm as "at least eighty-four inches from tip to tip."

The record for New Brunswick, where this moose is said to have been killed, is under sixty-nine inches, while that of Alaska, where they have a larger species of moose altogether, is under seventy-nine inches. And now comes "Sportsman" asking us to swallow a gain in the New Brunswick record of not less than fifteen inches! This will to any real sportsman give a line on the probable accuracy of this "Sportsman's" other estimates.

Go to! Is this the silly season, or has the great Irish elk come to life again? EDWARD BRECK.

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, N. S., February 15.

The Late William Everett.

From the Boston Transcript.

It is said that once, while head master of Adams Academy, he threw a Latin grammar at a pupil and scared or injured him. The father of the boy came and expostulated. "But, my dear sir," exclaimed Dr. Everett, "your boy said 'gotten'!"

At the Thursday Evening Club a new member remarked innocently and pleasantly as the members rose one evening: "That was a good paper, Professor Everett."

Dr. Everett turned upon him, white with sudden passion, and almost shouted out: "Don't call me 'professor'! Call me 'Mr.,' call me 'Doctor,' call me 'Billy,' call me anything you please—but not 'Professor'; if you call me 'Professor' people will think I am one of Charles Eliot's minions!"

The Mecklenburg Dialect.

From the Charlotte Observer.

We have heard people speak of them molasses, but to call smallpox "them" is something entirely new to us.

In *McClure's Magazine* for March Mr. Arnold Bennett's remarkable play is concluded. Miss Edith Wyatt describes the Cherry Mine disaster. M. X. Paoli relates his experiences with the late Shah, Muzaffr-ed-Din. Mr. B. J. Hendrick eulogizes stovaine, and there is a discussion of the servant problem. There are five short stories and six poems.