The Sun.

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An Opportunity for Leadership Lost.

The plan of taking away from the Speaker of the House the naming of the committees and creating a many headed committee to make the selections is vigorously opposed by Colonel HENRY WATTERSON, who declares that to adopt it would be sending "the House to sea in an open boat without rudder or compass or a pilot, manned by God knows whom." The matter, however, seems to be decided in spite of sober counsel and the gravest misgivings.

It was to be expected that when the hue and cry against the Hon. JOSEPH G. CANNON brought about a modification of the rules the attempt would be made to reduce the Speaker to an automaton, lifting and letting fall a gavel and announcing that the ayes or the noes had it. The tyrant tamed, the House would do business in its own way by a sort of referendum; instead of two leaders of the responsible majority, one in the chair and one on the floor, there would be as many leaders as there were men who had the lungs to make themselves heard. Colonel WATTERSON assumes that there was nothing for the Hon. CHAMP CLARK to do but fall in with the plan to deprive the Speaker of the authority to make up the committees, which has usually been exercised with good judgment, men of merit and industry being preferred and men of experience promoted. We do not share the opinion that the assent of Mr. CLARK "springs rather from the Missourian's desire not to appear grasping and dictatorial, or to set himself against what seems a resistless movement, than from his better judgment as an old and tried member of the House." Our impression is that the minority leader was shaken with fears that he might not be Speaker if he asserted "his better judgment as an old and tried member of the House." In short, he weakly surrendered. Thus was lost a shining opportunity to prove that he had in him the stuff of which true leaders are made. It would have been better to make a fight, even if he lost the gavel. It takes brains and courage to preside over the House as Mr. CANNON has done. Col. WATTERSON says with no more than justice:

"In bidding Uncle JOE good-by as Speaker let me again take off my hat to him; as good an American as I know, and I have known him five and thirty years; the incarnation of orthodox Republicanism; incapable of a breach of trust; sometimes using a hickory stick with a knot or two where BLAINE used a sceptre and REED a rapier, but personally deserving all the honor and all the respect, along with all the good will, which honest and self-respecting men owe to probity and valor never failing and long sustained."

Mr. CLARK of Missouri is a man of ability and a good American too, but with the privilege of selecting his coworkers and lieutenants taken away from him and exercised by a group of men who have shouldered their way into the Committee on Committees he will have precious little opportunity to guide and lead the majority or to show his mettle. It is to be feared that the House will as often be a mob as a deliberative body, and in a few months the new Speaker is likely to lose the reputation he has been sixteen years in acquiring. It will be a situation unfavorable to good legislation, but eminently suited to log rolling and Treasury raiding. Particularly ought it to suit the minority, led, as it probably will be, by the astutest and coolest man on the floor, the Hon. JOSEPH G. CANNON himself.

The Fire Risk.

Some sixty people have been killed in the last few weeks at small fires, that is fires confined to small areas, in Newark, Chicago and Philadelphia. There should be no need of any elaborate argument to prove that the time has come for drastic legislative action to reduce the fire risk in the United States. The risk is increasing at an alarming rate, partly through the rapid growth of urban centres and partly through the substitution of tall for low buildings. In this town, for example, there are extensive districts in which each city square houses many thousands of people and contains "combustible values" of $25,000,000 or more. Yet our building code permits non-fireproof constructions to be erected even in the most congested business sections and packed with factory operatives, of whom a large proportion are women and children. The New York code is more stringent than those of most other American cities, but perhaps a majority of the buildings authorized yearly under it are of wood without the slightest pretence to any fire resisting qualities whatever.

It is to be hoped that the legislative investigating committee which is just now inquiring into the insurance business here will incorporate in its report some recommendation with respect to building laws in the cities and large towns of the State. Authority to revise our own code is vested in the Board of Aldermen, but that body has shown itself hopelessly incompetent to deal with the matter. About ten years ago the Legislature withdrew the tenement house act from the jurisdiction of the board. After thorough investigation by a special commission the tenement house law now in force was passed, with results which could without doubt be paralleled through a revision of the building code. At present more than a million people live in "new law" tenements. Yet in such houses not a single fatality from fire has occurred, although fires in "old law" tenements kill on an average forty-five persons each year.

The Forty-five Hospitals.

There are numerous ways of doing good at this season of benevolence to the fellow man, woman and child. As to one of the agencies of usefulness, at least, there is no dissenting view in the community. Year after year that noblest of clearing houses the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association has carried on the system of collection and distribution, through the forty-five hospitals it represents, for the benefit of the sick poor of every creed and sect. It has shown everybody how his Christmas dollars can be made most efficient.

To-day in the synagogues, to-morrow in the churches; at any time, but best of all immediately after getting up from the breakfast table this morning, by check or other form of remittance to CHARLES LANIER, treasurer, at 59 Cedar street, New York city.

The Fight for Free Golf in America.

We can imagine nothing more disrupting and terrible than a golf war. The winter season, when the game can be played only by diagram under the parlor lamp, is the time to lay the spectre. In another three months, when dandelions bespangle the turf, it will be too late. We have in mind the threatened declaration of war by the West if the East bars the mallet headed or Schenectady putter.

We confess that we don't care a fig for the sanction of St. Andrews as such, and we sympathize with the insurgent West. All the Eastern clubs do not join in the ban against the homely and effective putter that bears the distinctive name of Schenectady. For instance, President LEIGHTON CALKINS of the Plainfield Country Club is thus quoted:

"I have always been firm in the stand that the United States Golf Association should be loyal to old St. Andrews, and have never failed to work to that end, but the time has arrived when we must think for ourselves. Furthermore, if the governing body here makes the mistake of blindly upholding St. Andrews in this foolish barring of the Schenectady putter, and by so doing should bring about a split in this country, I shall lend my support to the new organization."

The time has come for the men of spirit who play golf in America to revolt against the tyranny of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews if the mallet headed putter suits them. What does it matter if the head is squat and heavy and the shaft goes plump into the middle of it? The question is, can surer putting be done with the Schenectady? We think so. It is as much of an improvement over the goose necked putter as the new Springfield rifle is an improvement over the old Krag-Jorgensen. Golf is difficult enough anyhow. Almost half the strokes of the game are made with the putter. All the other clubs have been changed in form for the better, and the ball has been made livelier and more sympathetic with the mood of the player. Why should the putter not have its turn? The Schenectady has made the goose necked and similar putters obsolete. We trust the free and independent American golfers will stand for their rights and never bow the knee to St. Andrews.

Christmas Numbers of an Esteemed Contemporary.

If our esteemed contemporary the *Congressional Record* has not a reputation equal to its merits it is because it is not read, or is read as a solemn duty instead of a constant pleasure. Many Republican members of Congress and some Insurgents remember the last election day too bitterly to wear a face of welcome for the holidays, yet the two latest numbers of the *Record*, as we take them down from their coign of vantage at the bed's head, are sure to drip, like their predecessors, with innocent merriment. Turn the pages even carelessly and you are more than rewarded. For example, what joy among the good to see an assault upon our wise and pious ancestors the Puritans repelled. The Hon. JOSEPH LITTLE BRISTOW, Salina's pride, rises in the Senate to amend his genealogy and the *Record*:

"Mr. BRISTOW—Mr. President, I desire to ask that the *Record* of Friday, December 16, be corrected on page 368, line 11, so as to change the date from '1630' to '1680.' As corrected, the statement will read:

"'Mr. BRISTOW—Mr. President, the Senator from South Dakota [Mr. CRAWFORD] has accused me of many things. The first was that I am a Puritan. I deny the charge. My ancestors were not fortunate enough to be Puritans. They happened to settle on the Rappahannock, in Virginia, about 1680.'"

Whatever may be said against the Puritans by their own descendants or those of other folks, the Puritans did not "burn" witches, and they are not responsible for Salina JOE. May correction of the error about him be more effective than has been correction of the persistent mistake as to the exit of the weird women in Salem village and other seventeenth century Massachusetts capitals of the Black Man.

Now we are in the House. Our own WILLIAM S. BENNET of the Seventeenth district is exhibiting the artlessness of his intellectuals and having knowledge poured into that wide yawning void:

"This Nautical Almanac comes out bearing a date a year or two in advance. Why is that, and what is the exact object of the Nautical Almanac dated two years ahead? How can they do it? I represent, for the time at least, a seacoast community, and I would like some information on those questions. * * * I will ask the gentleman from Ohio what is the purpose of a Nautical Almanac dated two years ahead?

"Mr. SHARP—I can tell the gentleman some of the purposes, although I could not perhaps tell him all of the purposes of the Nautical Almanac. We are able to issue the Nautical Almanac two years ahead because we have the ability to locate any heavenly body two years ahead, or a thousand years ahead, if necessary.

"One very efficient way we may be able to do so is because we have these various methods of measuring the position of a heavenly body at any given time by measuring them and knowing where they are located at any one time. Years and years ago we computed their speed, their ellipse, or their orbit, knowing just where they would be—not, as I say, three years ahead, but any number of years ahead; so I think it is easy to answer the reason why they can do it. I am not able to answer the gentleman's question fully as to the real value of a determination ahead of two years given time in practical service. I am not a mariner.

"Mr. BENNET of New York—Well, Mr. Chairman, the gentleman has given me a great deal more information that I possessed."

The extent of Mr. BENNET's previous information must have been amazing. At last, however, he is fitted to represent, for the time at least, this seacoast community, which ought to be much obliged to him. Should there not be some public testimonial to this grand old salt? If a sextant would be too costly, why not compromise on a barrel of salt horse?

The Clerk of the House drones in his voice of silver an affecting passage from the legislative appropriation bill, and the Hon. R. BRUCE MACON, the Arkansan economist who objects to everything unobjectionable, leaps to his head:

"The Clerk read as follows:

"'For purchase and repair of bicycles and revolvers for park watchmen and for purchase of ammunition, $1,000.'

"Mr. MACON—Mr. Chairman, I move to strike out the last word for the purpose of asking the gentleman in charge of the bill the necessity for the increase in this paragraph:

"'For purchase and repair of bicycles and revolvers for park watchmen and for purchase of ammunition, $1,000.'

"Last year the appropriation was $400.

"Mr. GILLETT—The increase was for two purposes, one for revolvers and the other for bicycles. They said that a great many of the bicycles were worn out and they had to get a new supply.

"Mr. MACON—How about the revolvers; were they worn out too?

"Mr. GILLETT—They did not have any before.

"Mr. MACON—You had the same paragraph here last year?

"Mr. GILLETT—They did not have any.

"Mr. MACON—You appropriated $400 for that purpose last year.

"Mr. MANN—It is a dangerous thing to let one of these men have a revolver.

"Mr. MACON—It is that; to turn them loose with guns you do not know what will happen. Does the gentleman think this increase necessary?

"Mr. GILLETT—We thought it was wise; yes. We thought they ought to have it.

"Mr. MACON—How many of them are there?

"Mr. GILLETT—Between forty and fifty.

"Mr. MACON—Four hundred dollars ought to get them a pistol apiece.

"Mr. GILLETT—I do not think so. I am not as familiar as the gentleman from Arkansas, of course, with the cost of pistols.

"Mr. MACON—Ten dollars apiece. I think you can get forty for $10 apiece.

"Mr. GILLETT—That would be from $400 to $500 and that would leave the rest, $500, for bicycles; and they have to get ammunition too.

"Mr. MACON—It seems to me a little extravagant to appropriate that sum for pistols and bicycles, but I suppose the gentleman knows more about it than I do, and I will withdraw the pro forma amendment."

Mr. MACON is vigilant, but even he sometimes nods. Arkansas will forgive him the pistols; she has the happiest remembrance of her Attorney-General ROGERS driving the present Senator DAVIS into the river by aiming a lighted corncob pipe at him; besides, pistols are a necessity, and bicycles may be soft Campanian luxuries no longer since the Low Combed Rooster aforesaid drives a devil wagon.

One more titbit and the last:

"Mr. BARTLETT of Georgia—Mr. Speaker, in reference to the debate which has been had in regard to the decisions of Federal Judges annulling the laws of the State, it will be recalled that Mr. JEFFERSON, who was probably the greatest man that this country, or probably any other country, ever produced, had very decided views upon that subject. He did not believe that the United States court had any right to decide that a State statute was unconstitutional, either as contravening the State Constitution or the Federal Constitution."

We sometimes amuse ourselves by wondering what kind of figure is cut by "the greatest man that this country or probably any other country ever produced" when JOHN MARSHALL, sometime of Virginia, runs across him in the Elysian Fields.

Disclaimers from Mr. BRYAN that he has no intention of becoming a candidate for President in 1912 are superfluous. The Democratic party has no intention of allowing him to become a candidate.

M. HUBERT LATHAM is one of the most skilful and attractive of aviators, but it is no great feat to knock over a California duck with a shotgun from the deck of an aeroplane. Ducks travel in such immense flocks along the Pacific coast that any amateur ought to be able to hit one with his eyes shut.

It is likely that the Atlantic battleship fleet now abroad will make a cruise to German ports next summer. A tentative decision upon such a cruise has been reached by the Navy Department. The detailed itinerary has not been worked out. It is probable, however, that the battleships will visit Kiel and probably one or two other German ports.—*Despatch from Washington.*

The Navy Department would have saved coal and heartburnings by including Kiel in the itinerary of the fleet now visiting European waters. We are sure that no slight to Germany was intended by the omission. If an American fleet calls at German ports on a cruise next year the French and British press will have an opportunity to complain of neglect, but no cause to do so. The United States Government is not in the habit of "playing favorites."

An Unworthy Gibe.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Why doesn't "W. H. E.," who complains from Philadelphia on "Christmas Graft," keep indoors over the holidays? But I'll bet a dollar to his average tip that he is sore because he wants to come over to New York to see some life and he knows he will have to "give up" to do it. What does he want us to do—pay for him coming? WHITE WAY.

NEW YORK, December 22.

Mme. Georgette Leblanc Maeterlinck in the *Century Magazine* for January describes the performance of "Pelléas et Mélisande" at her husband's château, John Burroughs writes about the Grand Cañon, and Augustus Post narrates his recent balloon experience. Professor McGiffert continues his pictorial history of Martin Luther, Professor Bailey tells of an Iowan Burbank, Norman Duncan discovers the Water street mission, and F. McCormick discloses secrets of American Chinese diplomacy. Mr. Hichens's serial goes on; there are five short stories, some poems, and many pictures without text, including two in color by Irving R. Wiles and William M. Chase.

ART IN TWO CITIES.

The third biennial exhibition of oil paintings by contemporary American artists is now in progress at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C. It began last week. The two previous exhibitions were so successful, being attended by over 100,000 persons, that the trustees of the gallery determined to hold a similar exhibition this winter and spared no pains in the preparation thereof; the consequence is that the show is not only superior to its predecessors, but one of the finest and most representative ever held in America, Pittsburg and Philadelphia being its only rivals. The display is confined to original oil paintings by living American artists not before publicly shown in Washington. Quality, not quantity, rules. The Hon. W. A. Clark gave $5,000 to be awarded in prizes at this third exhibition. The first prize of $2,000 and a gold medal went to Edmund C. Tarbell for his "The Interior"; the second prize of $1,500, with a silver medal, was awarded to Gari Melchers for his "Penelope"; the third prize of $1,000 and a bronze medal was won by Childe Hassam with his "Springtime," and the fourth prize of $500 and an honorable mention went to Daniel Garber for his "April Landscape." A jury invited by the trustees of the gallery awarded these prizes. They are F. D. Millet, chairman; Frederick P. Vinton, Edward W. Redfield, W. Sergeant Kendall, Lewis H. Meakin. The Corcoran Gallery committee consists of Frederick B. McGuire, chairman; Charles C. Glover and Arthur Jeffrey Persons. To Director McGuire especially we offer our congratulations on the artistic results he has achieved at this notable exhibition.

There are eight well filled galleries and the atrium, 332 canvases in all. No suggestion of crowding is aroused, and while there are plenty of mediocre works the general average is excellent. Pictures in high keys do not predominate, though impressionistic art is well represented. John Sargent sent several portraits and a landscape, and it is to the credit of this exhibition that the indisputable master of living American painters does not loom so mightily, does not "stick out" from among the surrounding pictures as he would have done, say, at the Royal Academy. This does not imply that his exhibits are below the level of his accustomed production. To be sure, he does not show such noble portraiture as the Pulitzer heads, but the portrait, No. 24 in the catalogue, lent by A. Augustus Healy is not to be passed by with indifferent gaze; nor the portrait of a girl, with its characteristic brush work and rich whites, lent by Frederick S. Pratt, nor the beautiful "Garden of Versailles," lent by John G. Johnson. These Sargents, indeed the majority of the canvases in the Corcoran Gallery, have been seen at various times in various galleries of New York. Housed under the hospitable roof of the Corcoran, admirably disposed and hung, it is a pleasure to salute many old acquaintances.

In Gallery A, where the Sargents are, the opening note of the pictorial symphony is struck by that sterling painter W. Elmer Schofield with his "Indian Summer." Frederick J. Waugh follows with his "The Outer Surf"; then Frank W. Benson's "Family Group" and Charles H. Woodbury's "Icy Ledges." H. B. Snell, who has been absent in India, shows a Himalaya scene. Paul Dougherty's "Land's End" we know. Richard Miller has a "Chinese Dress." The trumpets of fame which, posted in front of the Sargents, blow loudly, execute a triumphant fanfare before Daniel Garber's prize winning "April Landscape." It is a better Garber than his contribution to our present Academy. The mountain which serves as a background is solidly indicated, the April trees with their sparse outlines and the tender blues and greens more than hint at the eternal vernal renascence. Next to this landscape hangs the first prize winner, Tarbell's "Interior," one of his beautifully planned and atmospheric works, of which he alone among living painters possesses the secret. It is all very well to vaunt the younger Dutchmen, who model themselves after Josef Israels, but if compared with such a composition as this of Tarbell's their paint seems woolly, their themes tritely sentimental. "Roses," by Joseph De Camp, is lent by the City Art Museum of St. Louis. Jonas Lie's "Fishing Boats at Sunrise," shown at the Madison Art Gallery, and Frank Van Sloun's portrait of an actor, also seen here, are worth while; so is Robert Henri's portrait of Mrs. William Rockwell Clarke. "From the Terrace" is the title of a night effect on the water, Japanese in feeling. H. O. Tanner, Frank Duveneck, L. H. Meakin, F. P. Vinton, Couse, Poore, "The Blue Veil" by W. W. Churchill, which suggests Benson, and "The Coming Shower" by Philip Little, comprise about all that is notable in the first gallery.

Hugh H. Breckenridge has deserted for the nonce his beloved interiors with contrasted light effects, and in Gallery B gives us a "Phlox Garden." Frank W. Benson has a "Girl Playing Solitaire" (lent by the Worcester Art Museum); Clifford Addams a black robed figure, "Tranquillity," and Groll one of his Arizona landscapes; Gari Melchers's "Penelope," the second prize winner, hangs here. It is all that fervent admirers of this clever artist would wish, and pretty in the bargain. Emil Carlsen's "Open Sea" and DeCamp's "The Blue Cup" are old friends, as is Willard L. Metcalf's "The Brook," lent by Major D. C. Phillips. Wilton Lockwood again accomplishes his agreeable trick of painting "Peonies," a companion piece to his Academy flower piece. Walter MacEwen's "Le Robe Jaune" is capital. Ben Foster calls his contribution "Evening Mists." We admired the brilliancy of William M. Paxton in his "Girl Combing Her Hair." Mary Cassatt's "Mother and Child" is lent by Durand-Ruel. The two Metcalfs, "Icebound" and "The Prelude," one lent by the Worcester Art Museum, the other by the Art Institute of Chicago, and Childe Hassam's "La Pivoine," the girl in the blue kimono, are all dazzling spots in this gallery. Nor are they the only interesting ones, for there is the "Green at New Haven" by Hassam, a bully "Boy in Brown" by Henry Salem Hubbell, W. L. Lathrop's poetic "Twilight," and that curiously lovely "Hunter's Moon" by J. Alden Weir. You begin to wonder if such a level of excellence can be maintained throughout the exhibition.

Of course it isn't; nevertheless, there are many fine features to follow. Again Mary Cassatt. Her "Reading" is not an enticing composition. Clara Josephine Kretzinger's "The Day of the Garden Party" depicts a girl in dishabille, executed with bravura. Charles Warren Eaton, Peyraud, H. O. Tanner, Grace Turnbull, her picture with pretty greens; Gardner Symons's "Snow Clouds," an effective stretch of frozen landscape; C. W. Hawthorne's appealing "Youth," shown first at the Macbeth Gallery; William M. Chase's "Striped Bass," Jean M. McLane's chic "Girl in Green," Fred Wagner's very Bellowslike "Steamer at the Dock," the "New Necklace" of Paxton, Abbott H. Thayer's not too interesting portrait, William Sartain, Wilhelm Funk, Paul King, Edward Fulda's "Meal Time," in the Israels key; Bogert, Horatio Walker, not at his best; J. J. Shannon, a strong portrait; D. W. Tryon—these end the list of this gallery.

In Gallery D the portrait of a lady by George De Forest Brush at once arrests the attention. It is rich in quality, almost luscious, though the grain of the flesh tones suggests gooseflesh. The shoulders and bust are bare, the head shows three-quarters, the textures are very well indicated, the modelling and decorative arrangement is Brush at his best. Lilian Westcott's "Celia's Arbour" (No. 100) is stunning. The faded richness of Kenneth Hays Miller's "The Nestling," a nude holding a little bird, is agreeable. The portrait of Dr. W. H. Howell, dean of the Johns Hopkins University, reveals this accomplished artist at her happiest. The austere color scheme is keyed up by a flash of scarlet, the head and one hand are broadly painted, the pose solid and dignified. There are nice values in "The Japanese Print" by Alice Ruggles and in the still life of Helen Watson Phelps. Jules Guerin, Emma Lampert Cooper, Joseph De Camp, "The Fur Jacket," are old acquaintances. Sergeant Kendall's "Cicada" is nothing but good modelling. The flesh tones are, as is the case with this otherwise satisfying painter, chilly and shiny. This "Cicada" draws the biggest crowd in the gallery. Miss Beaux's lyric "The Banner Bearer" and T. W. Dewing's distinguished "Lady Listening" are in this gallery; also Childe Hassam's prize winner, "Springtime," which shows us a little stretch of park, under trees; a nurse with children, the canvas vibrating with green and gold. Philip L. Hale has a girl in loose draperies, very effective and picturesque, and Mary Foote shows a portrait of Frederick MacMonnies.

Gallery E contains a Kenneth Hays Miller, "Mother and Child," with a touch of the Primitive school. The "Red, White and Blue" of Thomas T. Anschutz is as solid as usual, and with a bold note not missing. The decorative character of the talent of W. W. Gilchrist, Jr., is to be seen in "The Girl and the News," with a subtle light effect and well painted drapery. The "Negro Children" of W. R. Leigh are funny, as the artist intended them to be. Gari Melchers's "The Smithy" is a sturdy composition. Schofield's "Early Morning, Boulogne Harbor," and Ernest Lawson's "Early Moonlight, Harlem River," are familiar. So are Marion Power's bizarre "Encore" and W. M. Chase's "Literary Critics." We have seen and admired C. C. Campbell's "Grand Central Station," and William Sartain's "On the Campagna." What brilliant still life is that of I. M. Gaugengigl of Boston. But there are in this gallery some pictures that are negligible. In Gallery F we did not fall in love with Robert MacCameron's portrait of President Taft, which is essentially a commonplace conception and performance. Augustus Vincent Tack shows a portrait of the late John La Farge, Gari Melchers a very human "Mother," Morris Molarsky a "Gray Gown," and Elliot Daingerfield an explosive view of solar phenomena. Mr. Molarsky is also in Gallery G, represented by "A Woman in Black," containing distinctive blacks and grays. The portrait of Mrs. Anthony Hope Hawkins is by Maurice Fromkes. The red coronal of hair is very well done. "In the Foothills" is an E. W. Redfield offering. The names of Cecilia Beaux, Paul Dougherty, John W. Alexander—"Sunlight"—Flagg, Ochtman, A. A. Wigand, J. Francis Murphy, J. F. Carlson, Emil Carlsen, Garber, W. L. Lathrop, F. D. Millet, Irving Wiles, Kendall, Dufner, Arthur Wesley Dow and Paul Cornoyer are to be found here. "The Student," by Irving R. Wiles, portrays a charming girl, brush and palette in hand, finely modelled, though the color scheme is not so satisfactory. It is attracting much comment and is already the property of the Corcoran Gallery. Charles Reiffel has painted an atmospheric scene, "Railway Yards of a Winter Evening." "Alison," by Sergeant Kendall, is glaring, green; Adolphe Borl shows "The White Hat," and Paul Cornoyer his "Afternoon in Madison Square."

Robert Reid's "The Hill Top," brilliant and luminous; Edward W. Redfield's "Hill Country," a snow effect, and his "Brook in Sunlight," both masterly efforts; Matilda Browne, Thomas Eakins and Irving Wiles are in Gallery H. The "Garden Parasol" by Frederick Carl Frieseke is one of his detonating affairs; Japanese in spirit, neo-impressionistic in technique. It resembles in style the same subject by him now on view at the Madison Art Gallery. Henry Salem Hubbell's "The Departure" is a decorative scheme, a lady about to leave a room; she wears a green veil. Mr. Hubbell is thus far this season nothing if not distinguished. The Gardner Symons landscape is rather empty of content. We singled out the work of Arthur Clifton Goodwin, Elizabeth Sparhawk Jones, whose point of view is charming; Breckenridge, Philip L. Hale, a gay "Garden Party"; Myron Barlow and Mary Fairchild Low for special commendation. In the atrium is a picture by Will H. Low, "The Sylvan Swing," in which he attempts with indifferent results flesh tones dappled by sun, the pet scheme of Lillian Genth, Louis Kronberg, Henry Reuterdahl, J. Campbell Phillips, MacCameron's "Jour de Fête," Waugh, Gilchrist, Johannson, George H. Hallowell, who makes you sit up with his vivid light contrasts; Ballin, Steichen, Keith, Charles Rosen, Dewey, Arthur Hoeber, a delicately conceived landscape; Charles Vezin, W. A. Coffin's "June Evening," a poetic nocturne; and Jerome Myers's "Wharf at Sunset," are among those in the corridor and easily seen. Altogether an exhibition that demonstrates the increasing authority and versatility of American art, and one which lovers of good pictures should not miss.

The Art Club on South Broad street, Philadelphia, is holding its second special exhibition of eminent living American painters, forty canvases in all, out of which at least three dozen are of prime quality. The few specimens of the "Tonalist" school which are present serve but to accentuate the clear, resonant color and virile style of such a master as E. W. Redfield and others. Mr. John H. McFadden, to whose taste and initiative the assemblage of the pictures is due, was associated on the hanging committee with Messrs. Bailey Westcott, H. G. Hetherington and W. H. Morris. Needless to say the general arrangement is effective despite the artificial lighting. There are some pictures on the walls of this gallery that we could endure the sight of each day in the year. There is "The Life Line" by the late Winslow Homer (lent by George W. Elkins), one of those compositions that grip your sensibilities without missing the note of elemental grandeur. A "Boy's Head" by George de Forest Brush in treatment evokes the delicate directness and grave placement of the Florentines, yet the subject is a sturdy young chap of to-day in a red sweater. Cecilia Beaux has again struck twelve in her portrait of the late J. Dickinson Sergeant, who was one time librarian of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. The sweet reasonableness of the man has been trapped by the brush of the accomplished Miss Beaux.

Another stately portrait is that of the late A. J. Cassatt, lent by Mrs. A. J. Cassatt and painted by Julian Story. William M. Paxton's "Déjeuner" is in the key of Vermeer, a cooler key, one that sounds more in unison with Tarbell and the Back Bay of Boston; but paint and draughtsmanship of a superior order. The still life is accurately and sympathetically delineated, and a neat little linear problem solved in the view of a looped tassel of a balustrade cord seen through the open curled handle of a copper milk jug. Paul King's "Hauling Seaweed" is in his accustomed vein; the "Factory Town" of Paul Dougherty is not a novelty to us, yet always a picture to be reseen. Gilchrist's "Lady Lynx" is as ever decorative, and Lathrop's "The Canal" is Lathrop at his most atmospheric. "The Road Near Fontainebleau" is Sartain's landscape; the "Rehearsal in the Studio" Tarbell's. It is splendid Tarbell. Walter E. P. Palmer has excelled himself in his "Twilight in the Adirondacks." Breckenridge is again out of doors in "Winding Stream," and the "Study" by President John W. Alexander is full of subtle tonal discriminations. Benson shows to better advantage at the Corcoran Gallery, while Anschutz is particularly happy in his "Passing Glance." "Homage to the Ocean" by Arthur B. Davies is the poetic canvas charged with mystic beauty we praised when it was first displayed at the Macbeth Gallery. Philip L. Hale has a fascinating "Pot Pourri," Robert Henri his brilliantly audacious "Dancer." The "Nocturne" of J. Alden Weir is a view of East Fifty-eighth street looking east from Park avenue. The Queensboro Bridge mysteriously crouches above the lighted thoroughfare, and the big educational building at the corner of Fifty-ninth street and Park avenue may be seen at the side. A true nocturne. Schofield's "Canal at Bruges" with canal boats is in his best vein; the same may be said of Redfield's "Old Bridge," one of the most striking Redfields we have seen in a long time. "The Girl Sewing" by Gari Melchers, a Holland "Interior" and the "Provincetown" of Childe Hassam are interesting canvases. The Art Club is to be felicitated upon its very notable exhibition of American art.

The eighth annual exhibition of the Philadelphia Water Color Club, which closed last week at the Pennsylvania Academy, was a representative one, the work shown of a high order. There were thirteen Winslow Homers hung, lent by Dr. Alexander C. Humphreys, W. H. Arnold, G. R. Andrews, the Worcester Museum and the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Choosing a Chief Justice and a Chancellor on the Direct Primary Principle.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Suppose that there was a primary law of this State giving to either political party the right to vote at a primary for men as their choice for Chief Justice or for Chancellor (the highest judicial offices of this State), would Governor-elect Wilson feel himself justified in appointing the men having the highest vote irrespective of their relative ability? Why not, if his position is right as to the Senatorship? What would be the difference between such a condition and the present Senatorial situation?

After all the only question that should be entertained is the proper qualification of the man. The public at large has some rights in this question outside of the very small fraction of the public who so voted. The credit and standing of our State are at stake, and it is not a question of the vote of a few at a primary, but the ability of the man seeking the office. This should be considered, as the Senator so to be elected will be a member of the highest lawmaking body of our country. There is an eternal fitness in all things, even in selecting United States Senators. The Constitution has vested this right in our Legislature, and it is a constitutional right that should not be lost sight of or be tamely surrendered to claptrap clamor or to poor selection at primaries. If the primary has made an unwise and injudicial selection, it should have no other binding effect than a mere recommendation. The duty of the Legislature is clear, as would be the Governor's duty in case a primary had selected an improper person to be Chief Justice or Chancellor of our State.

If Mr. Martine is fitted in learning, training and capacity for this high office, then by this primary selection he should have first choice with the Democratic members of the Legislature. If he is not so fitted, then their duty is clear to reject him and select a man for the office that will reflect credit and not discredit on the State of New Jersey. More brains and not less is what we need in our national Senate. J. W. B.

PERTH AMBOY, N. J., December 23.

Dates Wanted.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have been greatly interested and pleased in reading the letters you have recently published relating to the date of President McKinley's birth. In following daily biographical chronology for years the chief differences noticed in the line of Presidents of the United States are those of Presidents Fillmore and Tyler. Our biographers seem to be at sea with reference to the date of President Fillmore's birth. It is placed by reliable authorities as of January 7, February 7, and June 7, 1800. This should not be.

President Tyler's death, often given as January 17, should be January 18, 1862. My comparative tables, 1732-1900, usually secure accurate results, but are sometimes puzzling. If you can favor me with the true date of President Fillmore's birth and also that of the death of George Frederick Cooke, the great actor who was buried in St. Paul's churchyard, New York, and a monument erected to his memory by Edmund Kean, the information would be highly appreciated.

ALBANY, December 23. JOHN H. SILBY.

No Friend of Nightcaps.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* If I had a boarder who persisted in wearing a nightcap day and night I should consider it my duty to have him removed to a lunatic asylum or to an idiotic institution. "An Old One's" New England landlady must have been a very forbearing sort of person. But I suspect that he had a nightcap "built" for the protection of his elongated ears against the cold rather than to protect any surplus of brains. His communication has all the "ear marks" of that kind of crank. I respect age when it is deserving of respect.

A NEW YORK LANDLADY.

NEW YORK, December 23.

Prehistoric Mexican Mirrors.

From the Mexican Herald.

A collection of several remarkable prehistoric mirrors made by the Tarascans who once inhabited the now ruined cities of Guerrero has been received here. The largest of the mirrors presents a circular face about two inches in diameter and is about one and a half inches thick. The smallest one of the collection is about half this size. They are made of a sigle lump of a globular crystallization of marcasite, rounded on the back, with holes for carrying strings, but are polished on the face until they make really good mirrors.

The January issue of *Harper's Magazine* contains Mark Twain's reflections on the death of his daughter. Professor George Hempl tells how he deciphered the Phaestos disk. Mary Heaton Vorse describes Italian and other meridional hotels, and E. J. Swift the modern treatment of dull pupils. There is an account of an Englishman's talk with Napoleon I. The number is above all a fiction number, with seven short stories of liberal proportions and the continuation of Mrs. Deland's serial. Seven authors contribute verse.

The *Rosary*, edited by the Dominican fathers at Somerset, Ohio, has come to us for years. We have always regarded it as a good example of the magazine with a distinct religious purpose which succeeds in maintaining general interest. It is modestly and intelligently made.

BROOKLYN GEOGRAPHY.

Proposed Lines of Transportation Said Not to Compete With B. R. T.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The writer of the editorial article in to-day's SUN "A Competitor That Is Worth While" cannot have studied Brooklyn geography. The lines laid out have been planned so as to compete as little as possible with those of the B. R. T. The curtailed Lafayette avenue route would injure the independent De Kalb avenue line, which now furnishes the only competent trolley service in the city. It stops at the point where it could begin to affect the B. R. T.

The Eastern Parkway route runs for the most part through or alongside of unbuilt territory. It would boom a very poor lot of real estate, but it would not relieve Brooklyn or compete with the B. R. T. Indeed, it stops at Buffalo avenue, leaving the Brownsville congestion safely in B. R. T. hands. The Fourth avenue route is building, but it is in much the same class as the Parkway line so far as relief is concerned.

The real line of relief would be a subway through Gates avenue, connected with both Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges and reaching East New York and Jamaica through Bushwick avenue after leaving Gates. This idea would really "compete" with B. R. T. Consents were ready four years ago, and were before the Rapid Transit Commission, which accepted them, but no power has ever been able to get the idea into the dull heads of the Willcoxians.

BROOKLYN, December 23. D. C. S.

A SIMPLER NEW YORK.

Pleasures Arising From the Study of the First City Directory.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The first New York City Directory, published in 1786, tells a very interesting and true story of older Manhattan. Some time ago the Trow Directory Company printed a facsimile edition of that volume, and I think that no fiction can picture the New York of old in contrast to our modern city in a more striking manner than the simple compilation of names attempted for the first time so long ago.

While the present directory contains nearly 550,000 names (Manhattan and The Bronx boroughs only), and while we often grow impatient when we have to wade through the pages and pages of Smiths, Cohens, Millers, Levys, Murphys, &c., that first volume boasts only some 800 names.

Just think of a Manhattan without a single Cohn or Cohen! Only one Murphy appears in the book, and that a woman, Mrs. Mary Murphy, tavern keeper, Maiden lane. The tribe of Levys is represented by just one name.

There too we can see Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton printed close together under the heading "lawyers," at that time both still unconscious of the fearful drama in which they were to be the chief actors. We can also study the times in much later editions of the City Directory. For instance, the issues after the civil war give after the names of colored people the abbreviation "col."

Thus even so dry a book as the City Directory can be interesting to those who can read between the names. ALFRED EHRMAN.

NEW YORK, December 22.

Brady the Photographer.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Will some of your correspondents think back to old New York for me? Is it true that Mathew Brady was the finest photographer in New York in the '50s and '60s, and that it was the fashion to go to his studio at Fulton street and Broadway to have your picture taken, if you could afford it?

I have a delightful sketch of his studio in a copy of *Leslie's Weekly* of 1861. I have been told also that Brady took several thousand photographs