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The Guarantee of Bank Deposits.

The germ of the idea that it is the function of the Federal Government to guarantee bank deposits is purely socialistic. Mr. BRYAN grasped at it in 1908 and had this plank inserted in the platform on which he made his third unsuccessful campaign for election as President of the United States:

"We pledge ourselves to legislation under which the national banks shall be required to establish a guarantee fund for the prompt payment of the depositors of any insolvent national bank under an equitable system which shall be available to all State banking institutions which wish to use it. We favor a postal savings bank if the guaranteed bank cannot be secured."

The postal savings bank has been established, but the guarantee of national bank deposits nevertheless reappears now in the legislation projected by the Glass sub-committee on banking and currency reform.

Whether in the form of a guarantee fund directly administered by the Federal Government or in the form of the compulsory assessment of one national bank to pay the debts of another the scheme is pernicious, unjust and irrational from any point of view of sound business. It would put a premium on inefficient banking methods and a burden on good management. The safeguard against loss which Federal supervision and examination afford to the depositor is all that the Government can legitimately undertake. Any plan of financial insurance is beyond its province.

THE SUN is utterly opposed to this new step toward perfect socialism, and so, we believe, will be an overwhelming majority of the intelligent business men of the country.

Count Ten, Governor.

Despite the considerate reticence of some of the reporters near the capital of WOODROW WILSON, there is evidence that on Monday he allowed his vexation to overcome his good temper and expressed his annoyance by the use of the violent expletive "damn." This incident is symptomatic of a state of mind most unsatisfactory.

To-day enjoying the comparative freedom and liberty of the Governorship of New Jersey, the Hon. WOODROW WILSON should now be in a relatively untroubled state of mind. His problems are of minor consequence. His difficulties are simple when judged by those he is about to assume. How disquieting it is, therefore, to find him, in his period of rest and quiet, stirred to bad language and unable to restrain his impulse to strong words.

We earnestly counsel Governor WILSON to put a guard upon his tongue, not because of this isolated "damn" but because of the deplorable tendency on his part that it implies. If a month before he becomes President he uses the big D, what will he do when he has dwelt a month in the White House?

Governor WILSON should count ten before he uses profanity. This would have a most excellent effect. Should it restrain him from violent words, no particular harm would be done; should it not, he would have opportunity to invest his curses with the finer touches of rhetoric, and thus to produce something of permanent interest and value.

The Second Stage of the War.

Military experts of high standing were wrong about the issue of the campaign in Manchuria, failing to give the Japanese credit for their organization, training and the excellence of the general staff, and they were wrong again about the respective merits of the Turks and the Allies before the Montenegrins opened the war in the Balkans. The Turks had easily overwhelmed the Servians before the conflict with Russia in 1877; in the latter struggle the Turks at Plevna and in the Shipka Pass had behaved with great gallantry and stubbornness; and Greece in 1897 proved a feeble opponent in Thessaly. As the Turks were supposed to have had the benefit of scientific German training under the eye of VON DER GOLTZ, some experts were not disposed to hold the Balkan Allies in high esteem on the eve of the collision of 1912, although it was well known that the Servians and Bulgarians had modern organizations, a good magazine rifle and as fine field guns as were to be found in Europe.

It was argued that as the campaign progressed the mettle of the Turks and their lust for battle would turn the tide though they suffered reverses in the first assaults of the Allies. However, the prophets were confounded utterly. Before the headlong retreat to the Tchataldja lines the Turks had not a friend left in Europe among the military men, not even at Berlin. Now that the war has been resumed there is probably not a staff officer in England or on the Continent who believes that IZZET Pasha has a fighting chance to force either wing of the allied army back and relieve Adrianople. There seems to be no difference of opinion among the specialists in this case.

The line held by the Turks west of Constantinople is about sixty miles from Adrianople, and it may be taken for granted that during the armistice the Allies have entrenched themselves on every intervening hill. In the war of 1877 the Turks showed neither skill nor persistence in their forward movements in the Shipka Pass; they made many assaults on the Russian front, but never pressed them, while their losses were enormous. In this war they have developed no such General as OSMAN Pasha or SULEIMAN Pasha. Their transport system is so inefficient that an offensive campaign seems to be impossible. They are outnumbered by troops that have never known defeat. Cooped up at the neck of a peninsula, they cannot make a wide flanking movement. A Napoleon would despair of victory under such conditions. The relief of Adrianople is not to be seriously entertained, nor does SHUKRI Pasha expect to be relieved.

The only rational explanation of the Turkish attitude is that honor will be satisfied if Adrianople is taken by the enemy, and nothing will then remain but to make peace.

The O'Gorman Doctrine and the Single Term.

Our lifelong friend, as Governor SULZER would say, and beloved old subscriber "Vox Populi" has this to offer about the will of the Democratic plurality of citizens as to a second term for President WILSON:

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: By an overwhelming vote of the people WOODROW WILSON has been elected President of the United States, the first Democratic President since GROVER CLEVELAND.

"Before he enters upon the duties of his office an effort is made to prevent his election or reelection four years hence.

"The people who elected him claim or will claim that if he makes a good President he should have another term, if their votes can effect it.

"In the face of this natural expectation and rightful claim on their part the attempt to prevent its realization or head it off will be severely criticised by both friends and foes.

"Not to exempt the President-elect from the provisions of the bill under consideration is so undemocratic, unfair and repellent that it will necessarily lower the supporters of the bill in the estimation of all mankind. VOX POPULI.

"WASHINGTON, D. C., February 4."

Does not our venerable philosopher understand that he is butting his head against the O'Gorman Doctrine? Senator O'GORMAN must perceive that fact if "Vox Populi" does not.

The single term principle is Democratic doctrine until the next national convention of the party revokes it. The single term principle is binding upon the consciences and acts of all Democratic legislators. It is binding upon the Democrats who voted for Governor WILSON, because they voted at the same time for this declaration and pledge in the Baltimore platform:

"We favor a single Presidential term, and to that end urge the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution making the President of the United States ineligible for reelection, and we pledge the candidate of this convention to this principle."

Such is the supreme law of Democracy for the next three years and a half, and it overrules any other consideration or policy. Such it is and does, according to the O'Gorman Doctrine.

How is "Vox Populi" going to get around it?

How extraordinary it is, and what a commentary on patriotic disinterestedness of contemporary politics, that the most active opponents of the single term amendment at this time should be the followers of THEODORE ROOSEVELT, who has had two terms and solemnly pledged himself to respect the wise custom which limited Presidential service to two terms, and the immediate friends of WOODROW WILSON, who was elected on a platform declaring for a single term and pledging him to the single term principle!

The Expensive Frank.

That the free mail privilege is grossly abused every registered voter knows. In each campaign he receives under the frank of some Member of Congress precious documents, extracts from the *Congressional Record* and the like. The public treasury has furnished envelopes and transportation free for these; the documents themselves have been sold at cost by the Public Printer. How much this free service costs in transportation alone Postmaster-General HITCHCOCK shows in his annual report. During the fiscal year 1912 more than 300,000,000 pieces of mail, weighing 61,000,000 pounds, were carried free, which at the usual rates would have brought in a revenue of $20,000,000. Much of this could be saved, and certainly the post office deserves credit for the work it does, even though that work is done for another servant of a common employer.

Free mail service is given under the frank of Members of Congress, in the "penalty envelopes" used by the executive and judicial departments in public business, to newspapers and periodicals in the non-carrier sections of the counties in which they are published; to certain educational institutions, to literature for the blind, to mail relating to the census, and to three ladies, widows of Presidents. These ladies alone have a general franking privilege, and their contribution to the post is negligible, and the matter which may be sent free by others is carefully defined by law. At the recent fifteenth annual convention of the National Association of Postmasters of the First Class Mr. JAMES J. BRITT, Third Assistant Postmaster-General, pointed out that the franking privilege has always been abused and that in 1875 all free matter was barred from the mails. Of the situation now existing he said:

"Mailings in excess of lawful right are now relatively few and are confined chiefly to the legislative branch of the Government, not because of any superior morality in executive and judicial officers as compared with Senators and Representatives, but because the law governing free official mail is more definite in its terms than that controlling legislative frank mail, and furthermore, because the latitude left to judgment and discretion is far greater in the latter than in the former.

"The great majority of Senators and Representatives not only scrupulously observe the franking privilege but also earnestly cooperate with the department in its administration.

"But, I am sorry to have to say, there are a few who, either themselves or their secretaries, are more or less indifferent as to the use of their frank and who do not take it kindly when it is brought to their attention. However, this number is so small as to be almost negligible. It must be said that the improper uses of the franking privilege arise more from the indefiniteness of the term 'official business' than from wrongful intent."

One Senator innocently included with a speech properly frankable a photogravure of himself, on which he promptly paid postage when his attention was called to this misuse of his privilege. Secretaries to Senators and Representatives frequently ask to mail their small office furniture, not from corrupt motives, but in honest belief that it comes under the rule. How can these abuses be prevented? Mr. BRITT does not consider the problem difficult. He would have a clear definition of the term "official business," with strict limitation of Congressional franking to such business, a limitation of the privilege to documents printed by order of Congress, and not on private order of members of Congress, a prohibition of the insertion in the *Congressional Record* of letters, speeches and the like of executive and judicial officers except in the discharge of their official duties, the use of stamps in place of franks, repeal of the free registration provision for the benefit of those who send currency to Washington for redemption, and the preparation by a commission of a list of public, historical and other documents that should be published by Congress and rules under which they should be distributed.

At the head and front of all the offending stands that hoary old fraud the *Congressional Record*, distended almost to the bursting point with foreign, irrelevant and meaningless matter. Were it reduced to what it should be a great part of the matter now franked would not be available. We hope that the Post Office Department may be able to reform this old offender, which long ago became notorious.

Under One Head.

At present four city departments have a hand in the business of regulating moving picture theatres, the most popular entertainment enterprises in the town. Inevitably such a division of authority and duties must result in failure to enforce whatever rules may be enacted for the government of these resorts. The best of codes could not credibly survive the ministrations of four coordinate executives, none without other matters of grave importance to occupy their time.

It was incredible that the fatalities of Sunday should not result in the passage of an ordinance for the inspection and licensing of motion picture theatres. If that ordinance does not provide squarely and finally for its enforcement by one department or officer it will fail measurably to achieve its object, for with divided authority there can be no centralization of responsibility, and if nobody can be held to account for the manner in which the work is done nobody will put any particular enthusiasm into his task.

Meanwhile let the question of a censorship for films rest. The films are pretty well censored now by an intelligent and right living public. The first thing to be done is to protect that public physically by every measure the community can devise.

A Victory for Women in England.

It has been the policy of some distinguished British societies to exclude women from membership. The Alpine Club, for example, has no women among its many hundreds of members, though several women of British or foreign origin are more famous as Alpinists than any except a handful of the club members. No woman is permitted to speak from the Alpine Club platform. Mrs. FANNY BULLOCK WORKMAN, who holds the woman's record for high ascents that very few men have equalled, is most cordially received on the platform of the Paris Alpine Club, while her husband is addressing the London club; but she is not permitted to speak there.

The Royal Geographical Society of London has existed for eighty-three years without a woman in its membership. A considerable number of women have been notable in exploration and in the advancement of geographical science, but they were not wanted in that society, though any respectable man with the requisite fee was eligible. The society's custom has been to exclude women from its platform except on holiday occasions arranged for children. The three or four exceptions to this policy of exclusion have included Miss ELLEN C. SEMPLE, the distinguished American geographer of international reputation.

In practice this policy has not always worked out well. For example, when the Duke of YORK, now King GEORGE, opened the Sixth International Congress, organized in London by the Royal Geographical Society, after the opening exercises the Duke was told that six or seven women delegates from foreign societies had been excluded from the room in which he had received the foreign delegates. He ordered that they should at once be presented to him in special audience, which was done. They were escorted to the Duke's pavilion in the garden of the Imperial Institute, and after he had given each a cordial handshake he invited all to be seated in the chairs around him and listen to the music.

Now the unexpected has happened. The president of the Royal Geographical Society, Lord CURZON of Kedleston, has been agitating the question of admitting women as fellows of the society. The council referred the question to the general body of fellows and the vote was canvassed at a special meeting on January 15. The society decided, by a vote of 2,189 to 678, to admit women as fellows on the same terms as men.

The Royal Geographical Society leads all other societies of that nature in influence and activity. It is gratifying that it has given up one other claim to distinction, that of being the only geographical society which excluded women from membership.

"Strength," says Dr. LYMAN ABBOTT, "comes from silence, not noise."—*Waco News.*

Whom can the Doctor be driving at?

By resuming their war at 7 o'clock sharp, that is, exactly at the timetable hour, the Balkan States have again proved their right to be reckoned of the West rather than the East.

The rapidly increasing number of Legislatures in this country which are undertaking to free Ireland by resolution suggests that the Irish vote has not quite vanished from the registration books as yet.

McCall must sound unpleasantly like Recall to certain industrious patriots.

Looking at the matter from the standpoint of a Southerner, the writer believes the action of a Northern Commonwealth in allowing a gallant defender of its principles and institutions and the hero of Gettysburg to suffer public disgrace and humiliation to be a great show of ingratitude, to say the least.—*A son of General* BRAXTON BRAGG.

Our emotional Southern friends have perhaps not heard that General SICKLES retired from the regular army with the rank of Major-General as long ago as April 14, 1869, and that he is receiving the retired pay of that rank.

As the headquarters of the Northwestern Army in 1812 and the home of SIMON KENTON, the famous Indian fighter, Urbana, Ohio, wanted something more warlike as a relic of the Maine than Admiral SIGSBEE'S bathtub. Representative WILLIS will never hear the last of his remarkable influence with the Navy Department.

We read to-day of a great reunion at Timbuktu of the Europeans who live within convenient reach of that famous town; we hear that horse racing is an established exhilaration there, that golf and lawn tennis are thoroughly acclimated, that the club is flourishing and the arrival of Niger steamboats is now a matter of mere routine and not of wonderment.

Twenty years ago, when a small party of French and Senegalese dared to enter Timbuktu, eighteen of them were killed, and the rest, taking refuge in a strong walled house, kept the enemy at bay with their guns. When Col BONNIER and a hundred men marched to their relief he and most of his soldiers were massacred. Every step toward the complete establishment of the French in Timbuktu was marked by tragedy.

Four houses in the town are marked by tablets to denote that they once sheltered four daring men whose thirst for new facts led them to creep in disguise into the forbidden city. These men were Major LAING, who was murdered a little north of the city; CAILLIÉ, BARTH, who played the part of a learned Mohammedan, and LENZ, who pretended to be a Moroccan physician. These three men supplied nearly all the information about Timbuktu that was available before the French occupancy.

No phase of African development is more remarkable than the transformation of Timbuktu, yesterday the foe of all mankind outside the pale of Islam, now talked of as the terminus of a trans-Saharan railroad.

A Tribute to Mr. Gompers.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The way Sam Gompers struts up and down the platform makes me laugh. He talks and raves about the rights of laboring men as though he meant it. He will not consent to any enactment of laws that will limit the rights to which workmen are entitled by God.

At the American Federation of Labor convention he and his subjects, the Executive Board, punished the International Association of Steamfitters, composed of as good a body of union men as there is in the United States, for the reason that they could not make them join any organization Sam wanted them to.

The past week some of the trouble makers of the building trade section came to this city, but the easy money getters got the cold shoulder. The men who pay their hotel bills have enough on their hands. Let them keep away from this city. We want no building trade department here.

NEW YORK, February 4. R. O.

American Athletics.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The scandalmongers have chosen the propitious time to assail the amateur status of the American athletes. The attacks are the aftermath of the much regretted Thorpe case, and therefore they were not unexpected. However, it is obvious to all those who have the good of the country's amateur standing at heart that nothing is to be gained by casting aspersions on some other prominent athletes, names not mentioned to date. Would it not be better for the critics to praise their country's athletes instead of denouncing them? If necessary the A. A. U. could purge its ranks and clean out the doubtful "amateurs" without the aid of the hipsters. AMERICAN.

NEW YORK, February 4.

A Sheaf of Poets.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: In the interesting description in Sunday's SUN, pictorial, poetical and otherwise, of the recent meeting of the poets at the National Arts Club I miss the names of some famous bards.

Where are the sweet songsters of Alamo, Acushnet, Java and Pawtucket? Where is that soulful warbler of Raleigh and Blowing Rock, N. C.?

MUSOPHILUS.

NEW HAVEN, Conn., February 4.

The Outcome of Taxing the Income.

For many years we've all been proud,
And most of us have boasted loud,
Of these United States—
Our annual incomes are so large
Their load our wives can scarce discharge—
So wealth accumulates.

But if the income tax must come
And lay its burden on our home
Why then, farewell to wealth
Fortune will be no longer kind,
For nearly every one, we'll find,
Is working for his health!

GEORGE B. MORSWOOD.

THE HOLDUP IN THE SENATE.

An Inspiring Spectacle for Dr. Wilson and the Goddess of Reform.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: It is a noble and inspiring spectacle which Senators of the United States are presenting to an admiring people, one well calculated to add glory and renown to that great body already held in such reverence and respect. No pettifogging, place hunting politicians they, but brave and reverend seigniors, men of renown and respect, statesmen of high degree chosen to represent the sovereignty of their States, to dissolve themselves in the great questions of the welfare of the republic, to take broad and patriotic views of legislative proposals, to deliberate wisely upon them and to bear themselves with the dignity which the title Senator imports. No petty trifle, no selfish interests, no sordid office seeking can engage their minds or divert them from the duties of their high calling.

And what is it they behold that so thrills all observers with reverent appreciation? Down through the history of the republic the theory has been thoughtlessly, perhaps even culpably held that the time there was a vacancy in an office was the proper time to fill it. John Marshall was appointed and confirmed just at the close of an administration, and the practice has been for outgoing Presidents to fill all vacancies occurring during their terms, and for the Senate, whether with with them politically or not, to confirm their appointments. But we had not learned what true progress and the real rule of the people meant in those days. We did not know that who should bestow and who should fill a handful of offices was of vastly more importance and more pressing than supplying the wants of the Government or bringing to completion any of the needed legislation which has been so long delayed. How blind we have been; we see it now, of course. Let the wheels of Government cease to go round, but let no Taft postmaster slip through. There speaks true unflinching principle, there shines forth Spartan courage.

And how proud and glad and grateful the incoming President must be. It is well known that he is too progressive not to have caught on to the new point of view. Was he not constantly saying on the stump, "To the victor belong the spoils"? Has he not always been known to be against the sham civil service?

How exultant he will be that what under the new doctrine clearly belongs to him, though still a private citizen, is being so resolutely fought for by a band of devoted followers ready to sacrifice everything to the great cause.

What a joy it will be to him to know that the country has come to realize the comparative insignificance of paltry questions of governmental policy and administration, and will be perfectly content that they shall wait while he bends his great intellect and gives up his hours of toil to aid Senators in peddling patronage.

Let the country rise up in gratitude and salute its Senators. Let their States say to them: "Worthy and great that you are, we admire and fully appreciate what you have done for us, and when your term expires we will convince you of it."

In thus commending the noble stand taken by the true patriots and statesmen of the Senate of course a commensurate condemnation must fall upon the misguided and unreasonable partisans who are trying to carry out the hitherto unbroken but now wholly discredited policy of filling vacancies when they occur and confirming appointments when they are made. ONLOOKER.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 4.

New York's First Railroad Station.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The record will be wrong if a statement in THE SUN'S absorbingly interesting story of the opening of the Grand Central Terminal be permitted to stand uncorrected. In the reminiscential chapter the writer's information is that New York city's first railroad station was built by the New York and Harlem Railroad in 1832.

The New York and Harlem Railroad was chartered by the Legislature April 25, 1831, with authority to construct a single or double track railway from any point on the north bounds of Twenty-third street to any point on the Harlem River, between the east bounds of the Third avenue and the west bounds of the Eighth avenue, with a branch to Hudson River, between 129th street and the north bounds of 129th street. April 6, 1832, the charter was amended to authorize the company, with permission of the authorities of New York city, to extend its railroad "along the Fourth avenue to Fourteenth street." It was not until May, 1836, that the company was granted by the Legislature the concession of right of way from Fourteenth street to a terminal at City Hall. October 6, 1841, the president of the company, Samuel B. Brooks, in a letter to a committee of the Legislature, pertaining to a matter of importance to the Harlem Railroad, informed the committee that "the road is already complete, and in daily use, twelve and one-half miles from the City Hall."

So the first railroad station in New York city, as must unmistakably appear, was not built by the New York and Harlem Railroad in 1832. There was no railroad station in the city in 1832, nor in New York State, as a matter of fact, unless the slight and open sheds at the Albany and Schenectady terminals of the Mohawk and Hudson Railroad and at Ithaca and Owego, the terminals of the Ithaca and Owego Railroad, may be dignified by that name, the twenty-nine miles of the latter road and the fifteen miles of the Mohawk and Hudson being the total of railroad mileage in New York in 1832.

COSHEN, February 4. E. H. MOTT.

A Psalm for Insomnia.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I was afflicted for years with sleeplessness, trying every known remedy.

The idea of concentration presented itself. I began to repeat the Twenty-third Psalm, imagining the Good Shepherd, the green pastures, the still waters, &c., throughout the psalm. It was so peaceful, restful and comforting that before I had finished the third repetition I would be lost in the most delightful slumber; would not awake until morning. H. W. S.

HARTFORD, Conn., February 4.

A Brooklyn Stenographer.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: "Shorthand" in his interesting reminiscences of those highly skilled in the art thirty or forty years ago omitted mention of William Walton, perhaps the most proficient of all. Employed on the Brooklyn *Eagle* for more than thirty years, and subsequently elected to the office of Sheriff of Kings county, he still lives on the Park Slope, robust in body, mind and finances. F. T.

BROOKLYN, February 4.

The Skater and the Thermometer.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Why is it that we don't have as much ice skating nowadays as we have had in former years? I can remember as many as six years back when we have had weeks and weeks of skating in the parks.

I have been a lover of the sport for a good many years and am wondering, along with many others, what is the cause of it. J. D.

BROOKLYN, February 4.

A Stranger in Boston.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: They know their Ancient and Honorables here in Boston and they read their SUN. I told the cabman (there were no taxis) to take me to "Fort Parker" and he drove me right there. B. O. STONE.

BOSTON, February 4.

IN AN ELEVATOR.

Serious Business!

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: It is serious business to travel in an elevator. I pushed the button at the landing on the eighth floor of the Manhattan Arms on my way to the street. A few seconds later the plunging cage checked its overleap and pulled itself back true to the hall level. The glass door slid open. I entered gingerly yet jauntily. To feel jaunty or be even one's unconscious self in a New York elevator is bad form. I felt it then, I've felt it since. There were three persons in the car when I entered; four more came aboard before finally landing. Two were women, five men, and all stiffened against a combat with the world or stood crushed with melancholy. They all had seemed at least carefree if not positively happy before they crossed the line between the fixed and the moving floor. On shore their manner suggested "carpe diem"; afloat it became "morituori salutamus." The gloom grew thicker. Pain and the effort of sudden thinking lined the faces of the women. One man, plainly an engine of cruelty, glowered through his glasses. Five seconds before his face was all sunshine and good fellowship. The others, less ferocious, looked on life grimly and desperately, as though the merest sign of lightheartedness among strangers was a misdemeanor and to be manly one must seem miserable if not malign.

Suddenly I found them all, men, women, glaring at me. In the brief instants that remained I made sure that my tie was correctly tied and my coat free from stains. But my hat was on! It was cold and draughty in the elevator. One man sneezed violently, another was bald; all five hats were off.

They still withered me as we landed at the bottom. Forced somehow by the others against the door, I naturally backed myself out first into the main hall. In doing so I just escaped the commotion of politeness among the other men. I could see, however, out of the tail of my eye, as I made for the street entrance, that they were adjusting themselves to that social convention which requires the women to leave an elevator before the men. In this case the women were wedged in a narrow seat up against the back of the car. That made no difference. Some principle was evidently at stake. The men, already interlocked to the point of acute dislocation in trying to keep their hats from crushing, now did the triple trick of saving their own balance off their neighbors' feet, holding their hats safely above their heads and marshalling into a formation that would let the women out first without shattering the dignity of the men. They actually succeeded. Solemn to the end they remained, and stilted and foolish.

It is serious business to travel in an elevator. M. H. C.

NEW YORK, February 4.

AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS.

Drivers Defended. Carelessness of the Public Rebuked.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I read to-day the unqualified assertion of a statistician that of all automobile accidents in New York city 75 per cent. were due to the carelessness of the drivers of motors. My personal observations are exclusively those of a passenger, yet they are sufficiently comprehensive to make me feel justified in speaking of many nerve destroying experiences in which nothing but the almost superhuman skill of the driver has avoided a fatal accident. Pedestrians drop off the New York pavements into the street at any and all points between crossings with the same amiable insouciance with which apples fall from the tree in a country road, and it is equally impossible to make allowances for either.

While busy politicians are framing speed ordinances to mulct the already impoverished motorist, would it not be a good amendment to curb the gallinaceous proclivities of the proletariat by making it a misdemeanor to cross thoroughfares anywhere except at specified crossings?

Also the noble and downtrodden American boy might be reminded that the pavement is a less dangerous environment from which to hurl obscenities and banana skins at the occupants of cars than is the territory immediately in front of the engine, while the opportunities offered in either place to carry out these laudable purposes are equally propitious. Then perhaps a few less of these pitiful and oppressed objects of public sympathy would cheat the penitentiary.

A BORED PEDESTRIAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., February 3.

Pensions.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: The American pension system is about as absurd and lopsided a scheme as one could very well conceive unless he mixed his drinks a little and then stood on his head. The strain is all one way and growing all the time, and it is bound finally to break and fall to the ground.

If a pension is a good thing it is so only when it takes in every worthy workingman and woman in the country. All of them are necessary to the nation, and legions of them have to do the best they can at more or less precarious jobs, while legions again follow occupations that destroy their health and endanger their lives.

They are the great majority, and nobody has any right to take from them and give to the more favored of their kind simply because they themselves are unorganized and slow to act and protest. It is a true democracy that observes the square deal idea and plays no favorites. There should be no favored classes at the expense of the masses. The American pension system is built upon the sands of inequality and favoritism and cannot endure. It is bound to sink out of sight or get off the perpendicular and fall to pieces. Better get a good foundation by taking in all the people—or let it alone entirely. C.

NEW HAVEN, Conn., February 4.

The Star Spangled Banner.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I want to say a word of objection to your article regarding the bill introduced in Congress by Representative Levy of New York regarding "The Star Spangled Banner." I am sure Mr. Levy feels, as do all patriotic people, that "The Star Spangled Banner" should be held so sacred and dignified that people instead of "undergoing the nuisance of rising when it is played," as you say, would feel honored at being able to stand when it is played.

Patriotic people want "The Star Spangled Banner" to be officially the hymn of the United States, only to be played on proper and recognized occasions, as a set piece of music by itself, and not as part of a medley, not in an opera while the hero takes a drink of whiskey, and not after a play. KATHERINE BOGERT ROE.

NEW YORK, February 4.

If our correspondent will read THE SUN'S article she will recognize the injustice she does us in believing that we referred to rising during the rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" as a "nuisance." That word we reserved for the ordeal inflicted by the company in which some rise for "America," others for "The Red, White and Blue," others for "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again," and others for "The Stars and Stripes Forever." Many additions might be made to the list.

Feminine Logic.

Suffragette, suffragette, what have you done?
I've smashed plate glass windows, gee whiz, it was fun!

Suffragette, suffragette, how did you dare?
I wanted to give Mr. Asquith a scare.

Suffragette, suffragette, what's the aim of your fight?
To prove to the world that two wrongs make a right.

Suffragette, suffragette, what's the hope of your cause?
By violence to show we are ripe to make laws.

GRANTHER GREEN.

PRESIDENT VETOES HARBOR BOARD BILL

Finds Joker in Measure Which Might Have Given Longer Piers in Hudson.

QUESTION IS SETTLED

Taft Was One of Four War Secretaries to Oppose Narrowing the River Here.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4.—President Taft to-day vetoed and returned to Congress the bill providing that a United States army officer be appointed to the joint New York and New Jersey harbor board. The bill was vetoed because it was discovered that the joint commission was authorized by the measure to investigate and report on the "extension of pierhead lines."

In view of the sharp disagreements which have recently arisen between the New York and New Jersey authorities on the one side and the Federal Government on the other over the question of pier extensions in New York harbor it was decided by the President that it would be unwise to give Federal sanction to a proposal which might prove an opening wedge to the impairment of the control of the United States over the harbor line of New York.

The President was the more firmly convinced of this when it was discovered that the commission to which it was proposed he should appoint an army engineer as the seventh member, consists of the six Representatives of the States of New York and New Jersey who are now fighting the War Department in an effort to get permission for further encroachments upon the fairway of New York harbor.

The President suggested that the bill be amended so as to strike out the clauses giving authority to the joint commission to investigate and report on questions of pier extension. The President declared that he was heartily in favor of cooperation between the Federal and State authorities on the other subjects named in the measure, such as the relief of traffic congestion, distribution of freight and general port conditions.

It became known to-day that the President would have signed the bill had not one of the New York members became so jubilant over the prospect as to disclose the fact that it was hoped by the enactment of this measure to obtain the desired pier extension, despite the objections of the War Department. An interview given to a New York newspaper by one of the most prominent members of the New York delegation on the joint commission was brought to the attention of War Department officials and resulted in a rereading of the measure. Then the clause giving the commission authority to report on pier extensions was discovered, it having been overlooked when the bill was first approved nearly a year ago by Secretary of War Stimson.

Secretary Stimson took up the case with the President and found that this New York member of the commission had recently urged the President to approve the measure and had obtained his promise to do so. This decision was reversed, however, when Mr. Stimson pointed out the possible consequences of such a course.

In his message of disapproval President Taft said:

"Since this resolution was first introduced and since my attention was first called to the subject there has arisen a sharp difference of opinion as to the location of the pierhead line in the Hudson River between those Federal authorities and the local authorities of that neighborhood, including the very members of the two State commissions of New Jersey and New York, who constitute six of the proposed seven members of the joint board above mentioned.

"These local authorities and these State commissioners have urged the adoption of a pierhead line which would materially narrow the existing fairway of the Hudson River at its narrowest point, and their application has been denied by the Federal authorities. The proposal to narrow the Hudson River at that point has been passed upon by four successive Secretaries of War, including myself when I held that office. They have uniformly decided against the proposition.

"I regard the question as one which, in the light of these successive decisions, ought to be considered as finally and irrevocably settled."

BENSEL PRAISES BARGE CANAL.

Rivals Panama Project in Engineering Feats, He Says.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4.—State Engineer John A. Bensel of New York told the members of the Washington Association of Engineers to-night about New York's $101,000,000 barge canal in an address illustrated by moving pictures taken along the route of the canal.

Comparing the barge canal with the Panama Canal Mr. Bensel said that in some respects New York's waterway outranks the other as an engineering feat. In part he said:

"It is interesting to note that while the total quantities of construction items on the barge canal are equal to about three-fourths of those on the Panama Canal, the barge canal, including terminals, is being built for little more than a third of the cost of the Panama Canal, and furthermore, that 9,000,000 citizens are paying for New York's canal while the cost of the Government canal is distributed among 90,000,000.

"For the fame of the barge canal it unfortunate perhaps that the two canals are being built at the same time, for we of the barge canal think our project is entitled to rival or possibly outrank the Panama Canal in many respects from an engineering standpoint. There are six pairs of locks along the Panama Canal, as against 350 to 400 structures on the barge canal; the Panama Canal is fifty miles long, the barge canal 540 miles."

Mr. Bensel said that 96 per cent. of the length of the barge canal is under contract, and for this work the cost will be about $77,000,000. The value of the work done is $53,500,000. More than 60 per cent. of all construction work has been completed. The Champlain Canal will be opened in 1914, as will also the Oswego Canal, giving transportation from Lake Ontario to the ocean. In 1915 the entire canal will be completed.