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In the House Committee on Ways and Means the chairman and six of the thirteen other majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Appropriations seven of the thirteen majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Flood Control the chairman and five of the eight other majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Post Office and Post Roads the chairman and six of the other twelve members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds the chairman, FRANK CLARK of Florida, and six of the other ten majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Rivers and Harbors the chairman and six of the other twelve majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on Roads the chairman and seven of the other twelve majority members are Southern Democrats.

In the Committee on War Claims the chairman and six of the other eight majority members are Southern Democrats.

And in the Committee on Rules, the arbiter of the machine, the chairman and four of the six other majority members are Southern Democrats.

Be good enough to overlook the monotony of phrase and the generally statistical aspect of the foregoing paragraphs. They disclose the truth of a situation that is menacing the public funds in the Treasury and the pockets of the taxpayers.

There is no use in blinking the fact that the Southern Democracy is in the saddle and is riding like the devil in a fierce raid for pork. There is no disguising the circumstance that the Southern Democratic machinery for getting and spending other people's money is at this moment perhaps the most powerful organization of the sort that the Capitol ever saw.

There is no knowing what eclipse of opportunity will occur when the Sixty-fourth Congress goes out of existence next March and the Sixty-fifth comes in. This is perhaps the last call for the meal that is swiftly attaining the dimensions of a grand gorge.

The conviction is growing among the hungry that perhaps it is now or never. The nation is just now beginning to perceive how grandly the Southern Democracy rises to the occasion.

And there are Northern Democrats with the same greed of appetite! From day to day THE SUN has been calling attention, both in these editorial columns and in our illuminating news despatches from Washington, to the miserable, sordid, disheartening details of the programme of grab and graft, the earlier numbers of which are now being executed in the rooms of the committees constituted as aforesaid. The Public Buildings bill is just at present most in evidence for the impudence of its unreckoning voracity. We have exhibited the scheme of granite palaces for cranberries hamlets and grandiose Indiana limestone temples for obscure Southern villages which has been developed by the mastery activities of the Hon. FRANK CLARK of Florida. Nearly forty millions for Federal buildings, mostly unnecessary, at the time when we need subsidies for the preservation of the republic's very life! Pile upon graft and selfish local avarice when patriotism is silent! Turn again to the list in our Washington despatch of yesterday and study the shameless enterprise, of these mounted and spurred pork chasers.

That is but one number of the meretricious programme of gluttony. Right after it comes the so-called flood reclamation project, rounded out to forty-five millions under the able supervision of the Hon. BEN HUMPHREYS'S Flood Control Committee. Right after that the Rivers and Harbors bill, wrought into gigantic shape under the superintendence of the Hon. STEVE SPARKMAN of Florida and largely fashioned on the good old plan of dumping Treasury cash into the Chesapeake creeks of both North and South—particularly South—in this year of the saddle. And behind the Public Building hog, the Flood

Control hog, the River and Harbor hog, loom the yet vaguely portentous forms of certain claims measures of Southern origin, of which we may or may not have more definite vision as the ideas of March approach and the urgency of the graft raid increases. It is not a single porker the country now beholds marching toward the Treasury; it is a whole swinery let loose upon the taxpayers.

What is the country to do? Remind the responsible leaders of platform promises pledging the Democracy to economical expenditure and the removal of oppressive taxes? They are long since calloused to such appeals to good faith, to party principle, to ordinary political common sense. Point to the imminent deficiency of a hundred and fifty million or so, which the men in the saddle cheerfully purpose to double for the benefit of themselves and their districts? Why, the cynical answer is already on their lips: What the Nick of the Woods do we or our constituents care about the deficiency, if Hazard crossroads gets its lucky chance in the shape of a \$40,000 Federal building and Akatcho Bayou inlet is put in the same class as the Panama Canal or New York Harbor? Attempt to show by arithmetical demonstration that the Federal tax system, already on a war basis in time of peace, cannot stand the additional burden? Again the answer is on the tip of the tongue of the man in the saddle: Double the income tax once more; the other fellows pay it and we get the pork.

We confess we see little hope of restraining these raiders and defeating these plunderers short of a general and powerful reawakening of public sentiment in favor of common honesty in the disposition of the public money. Make odious the legislative hog. Make the acquisition of pork money personally shameful to the men originating the transaction, and specifically so to the men adding and abetting or locally or politically profiting by it. Make it a thing to be ashamed of, even in the presence of the pork hunters' own constituents. It is a big job, but it has been done several times in the history of our republic. Even the salary grabbers of the Forty-second Congress were whipped by the lashes of public indignation into such a state of contrition that many of them went whimpering back to the Treasury door to restore their stolen dollars. It can be done again by the same salutary if unpleasant process; and THE SUN invites the honest newspapers of the United States, without distinction of party nomenclature, to act in concert and to act promptly and to act mercilessly, if need be, as a Vigilance Committee.

The Reply From Berlin. In a polite way the German Government refrains from disclosing to President Wilson his idea of the terms upon which peace might be had; and in lieu of specifications it proposes an immediate conference of belligerents. The attitude of the Allies toward such a proposition has already been made sufficiently apparent. They might consider terms definitely stated; they do not seem ready to go into conference with Germany at this stage of the war.

In a polite way Germany expresses her willingness to join the United States, at some date after the termination of the present hostilities, in "the exalted task" of preventing future wars by the league process. Germany, of course, does not mention the Monroe Doctrine. It is left to the imagination whether her proposal includes cooperation in the prevention of wars in Mexico.

It is well to keep clearly in mind the fact that in volunteering the participation of the United States in an international league to enforce peace on earth, the President spoke without warrant from the only body which can constitutionally involve us in such an arrangement; the Senate, with its sole power to ratify treaties.

It is also well to remember that Mr. Wilson spoke without warrant from the party of which he is the leader. In the platform on which he was elected less than two months ago occurs this declaration: "The Monroe Doctrine is reasserted as a principle of Democratic faith."

The Wheat Shortage. The earlier reports of a shortage in the wheat crop of Argentina, which caused one of the signally rapid advances in the price of the grain this fall in the American market, is confirmed by the estimate just issued by the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome. Drought has reduced the Argentine crop to about 70,000,000 bushels, or one-half the yield of last year.

The principal consideration in the United States regarding the Argentine crop was the expectation that it would cut down the foreign demand on our wheat. But at the estimate given it cannot furnish such a relief to the consumer in this country. Australia alone of the wheat producing countries makes a gain in yield. The estimate places the crop at 4 per cent above the yearly average. Of the remainder of the producing countries, in which are included the United States, Canada and all of Europe, the estimate of the Institute is placed at 25 per cent, less than last year.

Of the grain that was stored in Rumania considerable was destroyed; the remainder is in the hands of the Central Powers and will be entirely used to meet their demands. Another great storage supply is held in the Black Earth provinces of Russia and the bulk of this will not enter the channels of commerce until the Bosporus and Dardanelles are again

open to Russian shipping. In few of the European countries will the yield be up to that of normal years on account of the scarcity of labor and a reduction of the acreage.

Despite the high price of wheat the area planted in the United States is not so large as in some other years. Perhaps the most satisfactory explanation for this is the scarcity of farm labor. On account of the high development of machinery in this country we produce more foodstuff for the men employed than does any European country. But, on the other hand, we do not produce as much to the acre, neither do we utilize to the same extent all of our cultivable acres. Recently published reports by most of the Eastern States show large tracts capable of yielding good crops under intelligent management remaining idle and undeveloped near great consuming markets. The present shortage in crops and the accompanying high prices emphasize the necessity not only of more thorough cultivation, but also of making useful more of our great wealth of productive soil.

The Eugenics of Texas. Commenting on the statement that the Interborough lines in ten years have carried a number of passengers equal to three times the population of the earth, the World cautiously remarks: "It has been said that all the people in the world could find standing room in Texas."

This conservatism is unjust to a State as loyal to the World's hero as the World itself. "It has been said," indeed! Every child in Texas knows that the statement is utterly inadequate as a description of the size of the Lone Star State. The population of the earth is small. Even if it were 1,858,500,000, which probably it is not, all hands could stand on Lake Champlain if that little sheet were safely frozen over and each human would have a square yard of space. All could stand, with nearly three square yards for each, on Long Island. There is one county in Texas—El Paso—that is more than five times as large as our little Texas Island.

Texas is almost too big to be true. Its square yardage is 823 billions. Divide the State among the world's population and each would have 500 square yards. If the families were of five persons each, every family would have half an acre of ground. It is well known that an industrious family can keep 2,192 hogs on half an acre and make at least a dollar a hen, particularly in Texas.

For the present, therefore, Texas alone is sufficient for all the needs of the world. It has size, an international border, and Colonel Horse.

College Made Diplomats. New York University is going to teach diplomacy. The prospectus of the new course is attractive, but owing to the recognized tendency of the academic mind to indulge in obfuscatory reticulations of a simple "subject" we venture to suggest a few fundamental principles for the guidance of the students:

Compulsory agents must study to be "dis-serving." Some Secretaries of State make this the supreme qualification. (For definition consult newspaper files.)

Diplomats of this country are commissioned to the Service of Humanity, and are not expected to be narrowly American. The diplomats of other nations are competent and sometimes willing to manipulate the international destiny of America.

In the dictionary of diplomacy Washington's definition of "entangling alliance" has been superseded by a formula less elementary. We advance:

There is no room in diplomacy for the prompting of sentiment which places upon the life or liberties of an American citizen beyond our boundaries a value equal to that of his property.

It is expensive to demand salutes to the flag from barbarians who would rather be shot than bullied.

Equality may be conserved by reflection that it is only makers of political capital who renege intermittent embargoes on shipment of arms over the border and stock market leaks on notes to European belligerents.

Between friends there can be no last word; every diplomatic document may have a postscript, and that can carry a post-postscriptum.

The true concern of diplomacy is with the motives rather than the results of the acts of statesmen.

The New Diplomacy is the child of the Executive. Do not worry about the Senate. It will be heard from when it has stood all it can.

Bearing in mind these simple truths and others which each candidate for the degree in diplomacy may easily codify for himself, students may prepare themselves for a straight march to the highest goal, selection as Personal Representative. With simple reliance upon their own energies and the kind Providence which traditionally presides over our fates and fortunes, they may enter the service and progress through the successive stages of emancipation from the natural law of cause and effect to the ultimate possibilities of the New Freedom. And there are fifty months more of opportunity for its agents!

Mr. Mann's Leadership. The insurrection of Captain A. F. Gardner against the authority and leadership of the Hon. JAMES H. MANN, the oracle of the Republicans in the House of Representatives, will surprise no one who remembers how misadroit Mr. MANN has been in controlling his party while shaping its parliamentary policy, and how restrictive the member from the old Emex district has been in harness. His practice was strained almost to the

breaking point by Mr. MANN'S peculiar handling of the McLemore resolution, which put his party on the defensive.

The minority leader's fulsome and suspicious praise of Mr. Wilson's peace note to the European belligerents was the last straw. Captain Gardner saw no sincerity in it. In one of those foolish political diversions for which Mr. MANN has gained an unpleasant notoriety. He may or may not stand for "Prussia and Prussianism," as Captain Gardner says, but in every controversy growing out of the war Mr. MANN has been found on the side of his German constituents in Chicago while professing a pure and lofty patriotism. Such tactics do not enhance his reputation as the Republican leader. In fact cast a doubt upon his ability to lead and inspire his party.

When Mr. GARDNER proposes a conference to discuss policies for the future his purpose plainly is to displace the Hon. JAMES H. MANN as the Republican candidate for Speaker in the Sixty-fifth Congress. What the response to the appeal will be remains to be seen, but if Mr. MANN has alienated some of his supporters by his erratic and arbitrary methods as leader of the minority he has only himself to blame and must face the music.

Ways of Acquiring Ships. In talking about the task confronting the United States Shipping Board, the members of which were recently nominated by President Wilson, Mr. JOHN A. DONALD, one of the President's nominees, says:

"I shall devote myself to the removal of all obstacles that keep American shipping from holding its own with that of foreign countries. We need to remove all the disabilities, to enable our shipping to compete on even terms."

The principal disability under which American shipping is conducted is the cost of labor and the cost of material, which make the expense of building and operating American ships much greater than the expense of building and operating ships of any other competing nation.

There are certain well recognized ways of meeting such a condition, but they are not to be found in details of marine insurance and scientific classification of vessels, which Mr. DONALD mentions. Nor do they reside in the "more general shipping atmosphere" which, he opines, "would be stimulating." They can, however, be found in the acts and agreements of all principal maritime nations, not including the United States. Government subsidies, import duties discriminating in favor of national ships, Government loans at low interest to finance ship building and Government mail and shipping contracts are the principal features of European policies in regard to the merchant marine. We may add that Government competition with private enterprise in the shipping industry is a policy conspicuous by its absence.

GEORGE DREWRY at seventy-nine has the port of an Admiral, and as head of the General Board he is still one of the most useful of our naval officers. It must be gratifying to him that he lived until the building programme of the General Board was no longer thwarted by the disarray of the Secretary of the Navy and ignored by Congress.

Nothing could be more thoroughly efficient than Germany's rapidity in rounding up her allies for the peace answer.

The mail is hurriedly the output of the half dollar, a coin now used for the purchase of the discs that used to cost a quarter.

The stations of the Liverpool tramways are to be announced by gramophones in the cars. If the scheme is adopted in our subway, the gramophone should not be permitted to make the records. Let CARTER or McCORMACK sing the arrivals at Brooklyn Bridge and Grand Central.

New York University has announced its course in diplomacy, but it is not stated whether there will be lectures on explanations and explanations of explanations.

DOM PEDRO AT NIAGARA. Assisted by an Irish Adventurer. He Autographed the Falls.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—It was with regret that I read of the death of J. J. O'Kelly, Irish Member of Parliament, who was a clever man. He spoke Spanish fluently and the last time I saw him he was touring this country with the Emperor of Brazil, his wife and son-in-law. He told me they treated him like one of the family and he was having a royal good time.

One Sunday afternoon Dom Pedro and the men of his party, with O'Kelly, were under the Falls of Niagara on the Canadian side, and I accompanied them. Dom Pedro was like a good natured boy who wanted to see everything. He was anxious to write his name on the rocks behind the falling water, but though a tall man he could not reach the spot on which he wished to write; so O'Kelly grasped him round the waist, holding him up about a foot, and I lent him a pencil and he gleefully wrote. In his old skin suit, dripping with water and with two feet missing, Dom Pedro looked like the "lone fiddler."

He was so democratic that I always wondered why it was necessary to de-throne him. It would seem as if he would have been content to be President instead of Emperor if they had given him a chance. A. C. D. BEMMIS, N. J., December 26.

Gloomy Decline Accelerated by the Date Line. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I recall a fairly long life and many varied experiences I have come to the conclusion that the only dead men and shut thing in this world is the grave. MELAN COLBY, Rte. December 26.

Three Hags of a Diplomatic Note. Explain. Explain. Explain. HUNTINGTON, December 26.

WHO PAYS? Would Lower Canal Tolls Not Help American Ship Owners? To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I am rather surprised that Charles M. Schwab should suggest that American steamers should pass through the Panama Canal at lower rates than foreign steamers to thus lower to the highest wages, they could more easily compete with said foreigners.

The lower rate of tolls would not help the American steamers, as the canal tolls are paid by the ultimate consumer, be said ultimate consumer in China, Japan, the Philippines or Australia. The tolls are either figured in the freight rate or they appear separate in the bill of lading. No matter how one calculates the price of a commodity, the freight is added to the original cost, if prepaid, and if not prepaid Mr. Ultimate Consumer pays at the other end.

German rights in the canal, then, the merchant renders his invoice that way; if cost and freight, that way; and if cost, insurance and freight, he does it that way. Then he goes to the bank and gets his draft cashed against documents and the matter ends, unless there is a strike at the other end, when he has to make good.

Every shipper—thoroughbred American or otherwise—goes the rounds to get his freight shipped the cheapest way, and there is no lump in his throat when he finds that the steamer he has shipped on is a Norwegian.

It is hard to encounter any American who will pay \$30 for an article when he can get it for \$28. We had a concrete example the other day. Our own Government refused to pay \$4.70 for American made colors for greenbacks when they could get the German made colors for \$3. The color men of the Ink Makers Association, kicked like thunder. It did them no good.

Why refuse to "assist" the color men and "assist" those who think well of shipping investments? JAMES MCIL BROWN, NEW YORK, December 25.

A FAMOUS MEAL. General Marion's Feast of Sweet Potatoes Lives in History. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—In your article on "America's Most Famous Meals," I am surprised that you do not mention the baked sweet potatoes given at a dinner by General Francis Marion during the Revolutionary war to the British officer who visited him under a flag of truce at his camp in the Santee River swamps of South Carolina. It is related that the British officer reported to Major Tarleton, his commanding officer, on his return to the British camp, that it was impossible to conquer this Colonist, because while they had nothing but sweet potatoes to eat they would still refuse to surrender and would continue to fight. GRENVILLE S. C., December 25.

THE STEWART PORTRAIT. Counterfeit Presentments of the Great Merchant a Core of Mythology. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—The portrait of A. T. Stewart spoken of by J. Y. Cadymer will be the one painted by Thomas Le Clear. It hangs, or did when we lived in Garden City, in the reception room of St. Paul's School. There, also, is or was the set of parlor furniture which Mr. and Mrs. Stewart set up housekeeping with in Bleecker street.

I feel confident the only portrait of Mr. Stewart is this one painted by Mr. Le Clear. My father was intimate friend of his and I remember hearing a good deal about this painting, which was finished, or perhaps painted, entirely after Mr. Stewart's death.

Judge Hilton objected to paying for it and Albert Bierstadt acted as mediator. SOUTHPORT, Conn., December 25.

In the Chamber of Commerce. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—A portrait of the late A. T. Stewart was stored for many years prior to about 1905 in the basement under the sidewalk in the Park Avenue Hotel, New York.

In 1906, I think, I talked with John Wannamaker about it in Eden Beach, Fla., and he expressed much surprise that it had been so long in storage. I requested my own return to New York to see if he could in any way get possession of it.

On my return I went to the hotel, where I had been connected for many years prior to 1897, and learned that the portrait had very recently been presented to the Chamber of Commerce by Mr. Prescott Hall Butler. I advised Mr. Wannamaker and he asked in return if I would visit the hall of the chamber and identify the portrait, which I did, and so informed him.

I do not recall the artist's name. G. E. HOFFMAN, Manager Continental Hotel, Philadelphia, December 25.

A "Parlor Table Companion" Picture. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I have a picture of A. T. Stewart, a steel engraving, in a book, "The Parlor Table Companion," published by G. W. Carleton & Co. in 1877.

This has no "high hair," full beard, a pleasant face, high full forehead, hair brushed from the left, standing collar, flat top hat with studs and waistcoat with velvet collar. RAILWAY, N. J., December 25.

The Drawing on the Card. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I have in my possession a card, measuring 2 1/2 by 3 1/2 inches, of the late A. T. Stewart as reproduced in THE SUN of December 6. It was given to me by either John J. Luke or James A. Smith about 1875 or 1876, at that time employed in the store, and it was considered a fine likeness of his dress and walk in the Broadway entrance and walk down to the rotunda with his glasses in his hand and his hat on his head.

I was then told that the picture was drawn by one of the employees and reproduced by photograph. I would be glad to know when it was drawn. It may be the best likeness so far as the time of receiving the card. HURBERT P. MAIN, NEW YORK, December 25.

The Test of Lucidity. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I recall a fairly long life and many varied experiences I have come to the conclusion that the only dead men and shut thing in this world is the grave. MELAN COLBY, Rte. December 26.

TERMS OF PEACE. The World Knows What the Allies Are Fighting For. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—The peace proposal of President Wilson, coming in between the German note asking for peace and the reply of the Allies, is distinctly unneutral and apparently designed to help and pacify Germany.

It is, moreover, a positive insult to the Allies in its suggestion that they tell the world what they are fighting for. Any schoolboy who doesn't know why the Allies are fighting or what for would be a proper subject for an asylum of imbeciles.

You might as well ask a man who is struggling with a burglar who has entered his house for the purpose of robbery what he is fighting about.

This putting in of Mr. Wilson at a most inopportune time is likely to do more harm than good, and it certainly will be regarded by the Allies, and justly so, as a decidedly unfriendly act. NEW YORK, December 26. M. T. H.

Has President Wilson Been Tricked by Teutonic Diplomacy? To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—It looks to me as if President Wilson had fallen into the trap that the cunning Germans have laid for him. Germany took forty years to prepare for this war of frightfulness. She has measured this as the psychological moment to set the best she can in settlement of her acts, which are responsible for the slaughter of millions of men. A time when she has placed the victims of her disregard for treaty rights in a bondage of slavery, is no time to pause; it is the time to inflict upon the perpetrators of this unparalleled crime a just retribution, which is the only way to prevent a recurrence of it.

The Allies should say "Hands off!" BROOKLYN, December 26. JOERGER.

The Enlightenment of the German Nation. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—Will you be kind enough to grant me a little space in reference to your editorial article "The Main Point" of last Sunday? Referring to the President's recent diplomatic note to the peace, you say: "If the result of the President's move is to make it plain to the millions of homes, sensible and peace loving Teutons that the Allies do not purpose to stop short of full reparation to the innocent victims of the military policy of Germany's ruling class, and adequate guarantees for the future, then certainly the cause of the Allies will be promoted in signal degree; for nations will not keep on flinching hopelessly to avoid mistakes and crimes of dynastic origin."

And you add that the real cause of the Teuton peoples will in like manner be advanced, if they can but pause for consideration of the truth and "unholy moral forces long inactive" and "if the way is opened for increasing acquiescence in the idea of terms of peace, honorable because they are just terms, however hard at first they may appear."

To those who have followed the course of the war step by step, who have seen its dark and criminal origin emphasized and confirmed by repeated acts of unspeakable cruelty and wrong on the part of the aggressors, it cannot be surprising, as it nevertheless appears to be, that the sane and sane point of view expressed by you in the above paragraphs "has not commended itself to the British critics of President Wilson's action."

Their adversary is still too dangerous to make a near approach advisable. That the German nation should see this matter in all its naked truth were indeed a commendation devoutly to be wished, but such enlightenment hardly seems possible, judging from the past, until that nation has been forced into the truth, tragic as that course may seem. FREDERICK SCHWARTZ, BOSTON, Mass., December 25.

Modest Programme Proposed in Behalf of the Allies. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—I venture to tell you what the Allies will demand before peace is declared. Our President could have the same information if he would do a little more reading and a little less writing.

The Allies demand the return and complete restoration of Belgium; also that portion of France now occupied by the Germans, together with Alsace and Lorraine; complete disarmament of both the German army and navy; and the execution of perhaps 100,000 men as patrol and police and about ten ships as patrol and light-house tenders; the surrender of all ships in neutral ports, the replacing of ton and bottom for bottom of all ships sunk by their enemies; an indemnity of \$20,000,000,000, together with the surrender of all colonies at existence previous to August, 1914; a conference as to the future division and settlement of the Balkans, though all of Trentino shall be ceded to Italy and Constantinople and all Turkey in Europe to Russia; other minor divisions and settlements to be made in conference.

In return for the above I feel confident that England will cede Ireland to Germany as a colony, but the Irish now in the United States must not be required to give allegiance to Germany. CASPAR W. WILLIAMS, PHILADELPHIA, December 25.

Stars of Christmas. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—Three weeks before Christmas I put a large cloth in a bowl and kept it in a dark closet for three days, watering it daily. Then I placed it in a west window, and on December 23 one of the stalks had grown fourteen inches above its bulb and the tip took on the shape of a pod. On the 24th the pod changed its color from pale green to yellow, and when I looked at it Christmas morning the pod was open, disclosing on hand some green waxlike discs two six point six in diameter.

My Christmas presents consist of a pair of gloves, a necktie, an affectionate letter from a dear relative, the usual Merry Christmas cards from a host of friends, all of which are fully appreciated; but the best that came to me was the two pure white petal-like stars.

They seem to give me inspiration and courage to face the New Year with its uncertainties. It is a good omen, and I doubt if any one in New York received a finer gift. That I have returned thanks to that One above whose wondrous works are on every hand you have my solemn word. WILLIAM FRANCIS, NEW YORK, December 26.

Free Verse. 'Twas the night before Christmas, And all through the house Rang the snore of the dog tired Department store delivery man.

A BATTLE OF WILL POWER AGAINST WEARINESS.

When a Man Who Worked Hard All Day Had to Do Extra Work at Night He Learned Life.

What do people do when they're tired? I don't mean that kind of half way tired that is part laziness and part sluggishness; but really tired, 11 o'clock at night tired. There is only one word for the feeling I mean, and that is "weary."

I used to think that the most thing in the world would be to be able to give way to weariness when I felt utterly drowsy and spent, to throw myself under and sleep and sleep and sleep. I can remember the time when after a long day's work I used to tumble onto my bed in the old attic room in the boarding house, roll up in a comforting shabby steamer rug and sleep my fill. I used to do so right after supper very often, and I shall never forget the absolute bliss of that surrender to weariness. There is no physical sensation that can equal it.

I was a clerk in a big bookstore in those days. I had to get to the store before 8:30 o'clock in the morning. I was on my feet all day, with rarely more than forty minutes out for lunch. The store closed to customers at 6 o'clock, but my work always kept me there until nearly 8 o'clock, arranging window displays, checking up stock, attending to the order books, and out of town. I was ambitious and anxious to get on, and seized every opportunity to learn all sides of the business. It used to be exactly twelve hours from the time I left my room in the morning until I got back at night. And as I am of the quick blooded temperament that does not husband nervous energy I was "all in" by 9 o'clock.

I was getting \$20 a week, and as a man can live very happily and comfortably on that in New York, I saw no reason why I shouldn't enjoy my ten hours sleep a night. For solid comfort and happiness, no period of my life could not have done that. After a dash and coffee at a little restaurant on Fourth avenue I would climb up to my fourth floor flat, light a pipeful of "Mellow Moments," and read Dickens or Carlyle or Tolstoy for an hour. And then that sublime, delicious drowsiness would steal across my brain, fogging the thought, dissolving the will, numbing all my faculties. And without a pang I would knock out my pipe and turn in. Oh, those glorious ten hours of youthful sleep!

I must not make a long story of it. Interesting though it is to me to think about. From this easygoing, happy-go-lucky life I was suddenly and unexpectedly started in the common fashion of the store books, which really does sometimes happen in real life. My father died suddenly, leaving my mother practically unprovided, shortly after I myself had become engaged to be married. All at once I found myself not only with the desire but with the necessity of earning more money, not some time in the future, but immediately.

Now my old friend delicious drowsiness turned out to be my bitterest enemy. Wherever once I had no thought but to yield to his poppied charms I now had to arouse myself awake and work on into the unknown hours of a long walk after midnight. It was a long walk of sleep, had to toil at my table when my limbs ached with fatigue and I could feel every essence of energy, ambition and power ebbing from my spirit. It was a rude awakening.

I used to think then, and still do, that no one has ever more vividly described the subtle degradation of utter weariness. It undermines the very root of being. It literally dejects you into life, robs life of taste, color and savor. To plod at the task on hand by sheer strength of will, beating down the waves of the unknown, is a very different thing to live with weariness. I have slept a night where one could sleep ten; to turn the work table so that you will not see the bed, lest moral weakness prevail—does this sound exaggerated? I know that the battle

was a severe one for me, and turned the problem into a kind of philosophy of life. I grew to estimate men by their attitude toward weariness. Those who could conquer it and fling themselves to work against all the promptings of ease I found were the successful ones. Those who went through life as drifters, the ability to conceive a task by the stark austerity of will seemed to me the mark that distinguished man from the beasts and great men from failures. I found a sentence in Carlyle which I copied out and gave to my desk: "Rest? Rest? I shall have all eternity to rest!"

Of course the thing can be carried too far. But I was under the spur of necessity. I had earned a few dollars in spare moments by writing jocular paragraphs for the newspapers, and now I tried to eke out my wages as a book seller by the use of my pen. Book selling is a business grossly undervalued, and my employer absolutely refused to raise me above \$25 a week. I was 24 years old, and a college graduate, a very competent book salesman, if I do offend modestly by saying so. I thought, and perhaps rightly, that I deserved more. I would not throw up my job on my mother's account. And I was furiously anxious to get married, and that was how I became acquainted with the gray hours after midnight.

"My, how I used to ponder over the problem of weariness! I would creep back along the streets at night, my mind ailed and humbly lit with shining ideas. And then I would climb the stairs and not to my room, but to a tiny attic where I would drop away and there was the old battle to be fought out. The old kitchen table where my battered typewriter stood was a victim that nauseated me to look upon. I would stare at it for hours, even for a moment, and know that I did the same was over. I would never be able to get up again. I used to nurse my head in the basin and sit down at the machine automatically. And then somehow a kind of spring would click in my head and some personal sense of pride would knock through me, and in a minute I would be patterning away for dear life.

I used to think then that if I could earn \$15 a week regularly by writing, thus bringing my income up to \$40 a week, my problems would be solved. I did manage that after a while, but the \$50 a week I had found that I needed to live on was still a long way off. I was approaching \$20 the last week and I must have \$50. And if I got to \$60 there will be some other cause for worry. So I can see now that this problem of working in spite of myself is one I shall have to face all my life.

Probably the matter has grown to disproportionate importance in my mind. Men more gifted or more lucky undoubtedly do not have the same problem of face. But in my case this fight against weariness has been the growing strength of my life. It seems almost as if my life were some famous poem, sleep, Keats and Sir Philip Sidney, for instance, that I can hardly read without tears to think of all the good sleep I have lost in my life! Are there not more touching words in the English language than these: "He averted his beloved sleep."

I have read a verse of St. Nicholas that one of the secrets of his success was the ability to "beat off a mountain of sleep." Yet all the efficiency and health books tell us to get eight hours a night. My contribution to the "beat and grow thin" type of literature will be a little book called "Dogs and I." For I honestly believe that the man who will not succumb to weariness without a struggle will win. I cannot say that I have whipped the devil of weariness, but