

THE JOURNAL

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AN INVITATION is extended to all to visit the Press Room, which is the finest in the west. The Press Room is located on the fourth floor of the Journal Building.

The Charter Problem.

There appears to be renewed interest in the question of a home rule charter for Minneapolis. The Commercial Club public affairs committee is taking the subject up, we believe, and friends of a new charter are showing signs of returning interest.

Those who are now considering the subject of ways and means of getting a home rule charter for Minneapolis, under the legislative enabling act of 1899, find themselves confronted by two propositions.

One is that the present city charter be submitted with substantially no alterations except one providing for separate municipal elections.

The other is that the charter commission be called upon to give us a new charter, on the same general lines, probably as the one that was rejected in 1900.

The argument for the first proposition is that the people have shown themselves so conservative, that the first step should be merely a change from legislative to home rule government under the present charter, and next remodel the charter by successive amendments.

Since the suggestion of home rule with the present charter to start with was made, there have been some changes in local conditions and public opinion that make it advisable to consider whether the time is not now ripe for a brand new charter. The Ames scandal has vivified public interest in municipal affairs, and such opposition as he and his gang offered to improved city government is no longer existent.

It is no longer an impossibility to get the council to call a special election on the question of adopting a charter, a power that was given by the legislature of 1901. The principal objection from members of the council will be the absence of an election expense fund provided by the board of tax levy.

We have little doubt that a special election would result favorably to a new charter. If, however, the result should be adverse, then the old charter can be offered to the people at the general election of 1904.

As to the manner of getting the subject before the people, the best legal opinion agrees that the charter commission that framed the last rejected charter is still in office.

At this time The Journal does not wish to be understood as committed to a new charter or to the old charter with amendments as the preferable manner of reforming our local constitution.

IN A NUTSHELL....

France Making a Better Showing as a Colonial Nation—Successful Administration.

According to Robert P. Skinner, United States consul general at Marseilles, French colonial prospects are greatly improving. From what he says it appears that if France had a profligate population instead of one that is almost stationary, the other great colonial nations might have reason to fear her development.

In the year 1900 the total foreign commerce of France amounted to \$2,211,430,000, and of the French colonies to \$135,086,850, of which \$184,894,000 represented the movement with France. The value of France's share of Africa is to be seen in the fact that the trade of the French part is only second to that of the British colonies, being \$144,760,000, while

the British colonial trade is \$193,000,000, and the German only \$8,650,000.

In West Africa French colonial trade is greater than British, the figures being respectively \$2,850,000 and \$25,069,000.

After Russia and England France is the greatest European power in Asia. In this part of the world the annual commerce of Great Britain with all the countries other than her own colonies amounts to \$115,800,000, a commerce attained by France with all the regions of Asia other than her own colonies. The Indo-Chinese colony is making rapid progress, and is cited as proof of the French administrative capacity. The total commerce of French Indo-China is \$71,736,000, an increase of 65 per cent in four years, a gain that has a decidedly American aspect.

Bowen and the Allies.

Germany and Great Britain are not finding Mr. Bowen, Venezuela's representative, with whom they have to deal, either pliable or plastic, and so, yesterday, in a gusty mood, they declared they would have no more to do with Bowen, and it is reported that they are desirous of having President Roosevelt act as arbitrator of the demand for preferential treatment and everything else.

The president has already declined to perform this service, and the country has commended his determination. It is to be hoped that he will not yield to another campaign of impunity. Both Germany and Great Britain have an idea that they will fare better under the judgment of the president than they will before the international tribunal at The Hague.

Secretly they think that by involving our government as a determining power in the matter, they will be able to make it responsible for the payment in Venezuela's behalf of some of the exaggerated claims, like that of Germany based on the guarantee of Venezuela for the construction of the Caracas & Valencia railway by German capitalists, who enormously inflated the construction account.

Our government will insist upon its interest in this matter and insure the safety of that interest. Germany, Great Britain and Italy consented in December to submit to arbitration the questions in dispute between them and Venezuela, and, at the time, the press of this country heartily commended such consent as a triumph for the cause of international amity.

While they are furiously waving their claims over their heads they continue the blockade, which is paralyzing business in Venezuela, where Castro is doing his part in minimizing the republic's resources by levying forced loans on the merchants, whose resources have been already greatly attenuated by the protracted revolution against Castro.

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An Attempt at Settlement.

The Washington legislature is against the treaty referring the Alaska question to a mixed commission of jurists, because, it holds, to do so is merely to place in jeopardy something that now unquestionably belongs to the United States and is in its possession.

But international irritation will keep up just as long as the Canadians continue to claim something we have, no matter how good our title. The Hay-Herbert treaty provides a possible method of getting out of the unpleasantness. Our position is so impregnable that it is not conceivable that at least one of the impartial British jurists to be appointed will not interpret the treaty as we do.

There is little doubt that the plan, adopted by the lower house of the legislature, to print constitutional amendments on a separate ballot, yellow in color, will greatly contribute to the probability of securing the adoption hereafter of desirable amendments.

The New York Post says that one of the United States senators from that state is loathed and the other despised by his fellow senators. Which do you prefer, Mr. Depew; and which do you prefer, Mr. Platt?

AMUSEMENTS

David Warfield in "The Auctioneer" at the Metropolitan.

Several years ago New York suddenly discovered that an entirely new type of character had been added to the gallery of stage portraits by a comedian hitherto unknown. In an unpretentious little vaudeville sketch, David Warfield had successfully transplanted to the stage from Gotham's Ghetto the small and thrifty Hebrew merchant, who plods along his way, the effort to make a living and sometimes a fortune. Although stress was naturally laid on the comedy side of the character, the portrait was recognized as in the main true to life and aptly to New Yorkers with special force. With popularity came the demand for a play in which Mr. Warfield should have greater opportunity to develop the character.

The professor's process makes a ton of compressed peat produce 16,000 units of heat as compared with 14,200 units of heat produced by a ton of anthracite coal. The peat is reduced to carbon and the by-product saved are worth \$5. He asserts that the British Isles have enough peat to supply fuel for 2,000 years. If that is the case, we probably have peat in our numerous deep peat bogs to supply this country with fuel for double that period.

In Minnesota, the experiments made by Dr. Williams thirty years ago with the native peat as fuel, showed conclusively its value as an economic producer of heat. A test was made on the St. Paul & Pacific (now the Great Northern) between St. Paul and St. Cloud, eighty-two miles, with very satisfactory results, 750 pounds of peat being burned on the trip. The peat was moulded into bricks, and if the locomotive had been constructed for the use of peat in the firebox and with proper drafts, the result would have been still more satisfactory.

It is true much of the Minnesota peat is surcharged with iron, which impairs its value as a combustible, but there are thousands of acres of it as soft as butter. There were people in Minnesota at the time of these experiments who became very enthusiastic on the subject of peat and believed that a distinctive "Age of Peat" was about to be ushered in, and the excitement passed away, as at that time wood was comparatively cheap.

General O. O. Howard, a retired army officer, who is well known throughout the United States for his activity in Christian work, was in St. Paul yesterday on his way to the Pacific coast, where he will attend a normal school convention.—Minneapolis Journal.

Such is fame, General Howard was a distinguished commander of the army of the Tennessee during the closing half year of the civil war—the army that gave Sherman and Sherman to the country and rendered General McPherson conspicuous until he went to a soldier's grave before Atlanta. In those days General Howard was accounted a great soldier, winning an empty sleeve by personal prowess. Now he is distinguished for his services in the army of the Lord and the sanguinary heroism of his earlier manhood is lost to memory among the purveyors of current news.—St. Paul Globe.

There is the greatest interest in the coming of Kyrie Bellow in the thrilling romance, "A Gentleman of France," at the Metropolitan, beginning Sunday evening.

"The Gay Lord Quex" by Arthur W. Pinero, proved its right to a long life by making an initial run of 600 nights at the Garrick theatre, London. This amazing play, with Sylvia Lynden and her company of New York players, will be presented at the Metropolitan on next Thursday.

There will be two more performances of the Ferris production of "Man From Mexico," to-night and to-morrow afternoon at the Lyceum. To-morrow evening the much-talked-of Hon. Will make their first appearance in the new religious drama, "The Prince of The World."

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Books and Authors

BJORNSON.

The Critic for January has some fine portraits of Bjornstjerne Bjornson, accompanying a critical biography of the Norwegian poet, dramatist and novelist. His biography is by John Laurvik, Bjornson, at 70, is evidently still in the prime of his genius, and his countrymen are justified in their pride around him for the genius who has shown such diversity of operation and has done well in all the fields he has entered. A little too radical, he was at one time, perhaps, when he went to the front as a political leader, but as a poet, novelist, playwright and orator, he occupied the exalted position. Born and nurtured among the great mountains of Norway, Bjornson's nature partook of the strength of nature's forces around him and yet in the depths of his poet nature, there is a tenderness which suggests the flowers which cling in the crevices of the mountain heights of Vestlandet. His biography, however, is by Bjornson with doing more than any other man to foster Norwegian national life, independent of foreign influence in art, literature and science. Bjornson lives most of the time on his large farm in Gudbrandsdalen, which is managed by one of his sons and has the satisfaction of knowing that he has accomplished work which will live after he is gone.

MAURVS JOKAL.

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NEW BOOKS.

THE COMING CITY. By R. T. Ely, Ph. D., LL. D., University of Wisconsin. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. Price, 60 cents.

Prof. Ely has in some years been a conspicuous leader in the municipal and social reform movement and in this volume, he portrays the city of the present and the city of the future, embodying all the best features of material and aesthetic improvement possible in the conception of champions of rational reform to-day. The professor cautions against all extravagant and utopian anticipations, while he believes social progress in the right direction is assured. He estimates that soon, half our population will be found in the cities and towns, and shows the urgent importance is the movement to solve the problem of the city, which in the future will control, by its vote, the destinies of the nation. He outlines a program for the past and future reform measures of the city, and too little upon a tentative and experimental program. In these pages he gives his views as to what the features of that positive program well-ordered household, a work of art, and a religious institution in the truest sense of the word "religious."

AROUND THE CAPITAL WITH UNCLE HANK. Illustrated by Thomas Fleming. New York: The Nutshell Publishing Company, Price, 50 cents.

The author has succeeded pretty well in his avowed object of portraying the humorous side of life at Washington, the conditions in which the people live, and showing them very decidedly. His word-pictures of members of house and senate are excellent, hitting hard at times, and he pays his attention to the department of the nation, the play of the statesman, and the military element, who need to have the conceit taken out of them. Uncle Hank was injected into this cosmopolitan, up-to-date community with no little shock to himself, and his experiences and observations upon what he saw and heard are interestingly recorded. His notes on the senate and house proceedings are full of genuine humor.

THE ROY. HOW TO HELP HIM SUCCEED. By Nathaniel C. Fowler, Jr. Edited by S. H. American Men of Marked Accomplishment. Boston: The Oakwood Publishing Company, Price, 25 cents.

The keynote of Mr. Fowler's study is this: "Without the start there can be no finish." The final independent of the start. The germ of the beginning is present at the ending. There is much good common sense advice in the book, and it is a very readable volume. The responses to the question: "Do you consider honesty necessary to business success?" There are 214 positive answers, and 17 negative. This positive affirmation, if you do not consider honesty essential and 27 agree with the seven, but with some qualifications. It is a very good book, and in the multitude of opinions expressed, a large percentage refer to the restraints of religion and religious convictions as an essential element in giving a boy his start. As Prince Albert said: "This is the plan of God in your generation and do not cross it, but fall into your own place in that plan."

THE BOOK OF NATURE MYTHS. By Florence Holbrook. Principal of Forestville School, Houghton, Minn. & Co. No. 4 Park street, Minneapolis. N. M. Carter.

This volume of folk-lore from the primitive races, is designed by the author to follow the Hiawatha primer as to vocabulary. The simple form of narrative in these treasures of folk-lore is pleasing to the young mind, especially as the narratives are flavored with mystery. Good examples are the "Story of the First Hummingbird," "The Grasshopper," "Why the Bear Has a Short Tail," "Why There is a Man in the Moon." There are over fifty stories in the book which is illustrated.

SISTERS OF REPARATION. By Lucia Gray Sweet. Boston: Lee & Shepard. Price, 50 cents.

This is a very daintily made book, attractive within and without, the cover design being the work of the author and the title on dark gray silk cloth. The title poem is a tribute to the Italian singer, Donatello, prima donna, who, forbidden by Archbishop of Bologna, had entered a convent of the Sisters of Reparation. One of the other poems relates to an old brocade dress which was once worn by Mrs. Sweet's great grandmother at a ball given in honor of Washington in Boston. It is entitled "The Old Brocade."

LOVE SONNETS OF AN OFFICE BOY. By Samuel E. Kiser. Illustrated by Metcalf. Boston: Forbes & Co. Price, 50 cents.

The office boy's romantic moments and periods like any other human, and Mr. Kiser has given us the true inwardness, so to speak, of such juvenile emotion in his little volume, which is well illustrated. This, of B. fell in love with the young lady who manipulates a typewriter. That he was badly "mashed" is evident from these "sonnets."

New Year Book—The New York American and Journal has commenced the publication of an almanac year book, encyclopaedia and atlas which is a very complete and exhaustive work. It is an octavo volume of over 900 pages and contains a good deal of information not found in other publications of this character. Not the least interesting feature is the illustrations. These illustrations include not only portraits of prominent men and women, but pictures of places and events. For instance, St. Pierre, Martinique, is shown after the eruption of Mt. Pelee. Another timely illustration is of the stockade around a breaker during the coal strike. The sporting columns are also liberally illustrated, new discoveries in the field of the sciences and discovery of new planets and stars are also represented in half-tones. There are colored maps of countries and states and an immense amount of information on nearly all conceivable subjects.

THE PROFESSOR. Chicago Tribune.

"As nearly as I can make out his racial type," said the doctor, looking at the dusky stranger with the foreign air, "he seems to be part Indian and part Malay." "Why, then," observed the professor, "he's probably a blend of Mohi and Java."

The Nonpareil Man.

Casually Observed.

Cole Younger is prohibited by the board of pardons from starting as Little Eva in an Uncle Tomming tour of the south. This is cruelty.

J. P. Morgan promises Chicago to spend \$70,000,000 on the traction lines if he gets them. If Chicago agrees to let him have them Mr. Morgan will find the capital standing idle to take the job off his hands at \$80,000,000. Profit to "Morg." \$10,000,000. This is what is called Finn-anceering a deal.

King Edward's doctor says that he eats too much! That's the way! When a man gets where he can afford pie for breakfast, he can't have anything but toasted door mat.

Rockefeller has a grandson. Lay in your oil now before the price advances. Grandpa may want to give the child a coal mounded rattle.

The Great Northern road saves about \$4,000 a day on imported coal. The taking off the duty was a great thing for the poor.

Admiral Crowninshield, the naval hero, has been given a small cruiser instead of battleship on which to entertain his relatives. This is the ingratitude of republic!

Hope is expressed that England, Germany and Herbert Bowen will not quarrel.

Senator Scott of West Virginia never did a thing in the senate last week but burst into a variety of resplendent oratory that made the eyes of the senate bulge and their jaws drop in their sockets with astonishment. Mr. Scott has been, heretofore, a silent, modest man, known as an organizer and a worker, but nobody for an instant supposed he was a verger of the silver-tongued variety. But last week the pent up fires broke out and to the surprise of the senate the gentleman from West Virginia suddenly exploded into this canary song:

Mr. President: I realize that in this rapid transit age, in this era of commercialism, when the wheels of industry sparkle with their rapid revolution, it is hard for those charged with the ship's destiny to steer from breakers lashed by so strong a current, and anchor for a moment on the crest of patriotism.

The senate was willing to overlook the difficulty of anchoring "on the crest" and Mr. Scott went on:

It is well to listen to the still, small voice that says to us, "It is not all of life to live." If, in living, the nobler and sweeter sentiments are to be blasted by the cold winds of greed, or the flowers to fade by the winter's wind of avarice.

Here the senator took a drink of ice water and the rest of the deliberative body seized the opportunity to draw a long breath. Mr. Scott went on:

I want to see my country, the "land of the free and the home of the brave," whose flag is ever unfurled to shelter the oppressed; whose great hand reached forth and touched the harp that sent the songs of liberty playing upon the waves of the Caribbean sea; that gathered the broken fragments of the Americas and rest them in the coronet of nations; unfurled the lone-star banner of a new-born republic, and erected the temple of human liberty upon the ruins of monarchical tyranny, whose stars now shelter the bleaching bones of her heroes from the tropical skies, be just and liberal to those who gave this arm its strength, and but for whom this giant, if at all, would be dismembered and disembowelled.

At this point Senator Beveridge was seen standing on his hands and waving his feet frantically in the air, while the venerable senator from Massachusetts was doing a double shuffle in the space before the speaker's desk. It was a great day at the club when Senator Scott unbosomed himself.

BOWSER THE BACKSLIDER

He Sets Out to Be an Angel, but Is Downed by a Bedstead

Copied, 1903, by C. B. Lewis.

Mr. Bowser had come home with a "good streak" on. All husbands get them at intervals. They get to thinking things over and decide that it is time to make a change for the better, and they come home with a more or less angelic look on their faces. Mr. Bowser's look on this occasion was soft and ripe and balmy, and even before he had taken off his overcoat he gave Mrs. Bowser a kiss and embraced her.

"Well, dear, I hope you haven't been lonesome to-day. I hurried home as fast as I could."

Mrs. Bowser was not unbumbed. She knew all his moods, and was prepared for anything between the angelic and the desperate. She returned his kiss and said it was good of him, and when he put his arm around her to go down to dinner, she giggled a bit to remind him of his courtship days. The cook had had trouble with the stove, and the butcher and grocer had been late, and the dinner "deserved no praise. Nevertheless, Mr. Bowser was pleased to say that Delmonico couldn't have furnished a better one, and his words so frustrated the cook that she cut her thumb and decided to strike for a raise of wages. When dinner was over Mr. Bowser sat down to his cigar and looked around the room in a tender way and remarked:

"If there is anything more pleasant than this I would like to see it. My pity goes out to the man without a home."

"I am glad you like your home," replied Mrs. Bowser, though at the same time she wondered if he would hold out during the evening.

"Of course, I like my home, and what makes it the home it is? It is my little wife, and I want to give you a big kiss for being the angel you are."

Mrs. Bowser blushed and looked shy, and performed the hugging act, and the pentent Mr. Bowser continued:

"I was thinking things over to-day. I'm an old kicker, and I know it, and I want you to forgive me. Nobody but a wretch would rail at you as I do at times and threaten to go out and get a divorce and all that. At such times you ought to hire a man to kick me around the block."

"I have no fault to find with you. All husbands get out of temper at times."

"It is good of you to say that, my dear, and you hear me when I say that if I ever act up again, I hope the town will turn out and ride me on a rail. Is there any work I can do around the house this evening?"

"I hardly think so. There is a bedstead up stairs I'd like taken down, but I was going to ask you to send up a man from the furniture store."

"What's the matter with me doing the work? I haven't anything particular to do for the next few minutes. It's no use in fooling around a week to get somebody up here and pay him \$2 for a quarter of an hour's work. I'll do it and give you the \$2."

"You are real good, Mr. Bowser, but it's hard work lugging bedsteads around, and you'll—"

"I'll get mad and blame you, you mean?"

"Yes—"

"Never made a bigger mistake in your life. You haven't seen me mad in ten years, and I'm not the sort of husband to blame my wife for what I do myself. What put such an absurd notion into your head?"

"Eh—no, you just as soon send up a man?"

"Not if the court knows herself. I feel just like wrestling with something heavy, and I'll make the change before you can count a hundred."

"And you ever blame me?"

"Blame you, my dear? When did I ever blame you for anything? And what can I blame you for, even if I was that sort of a hyena? You bet I won't blame you nor anybody else, and you'll be \$2 ahead of the game."

Mr. Bowser whistled a merry air as he took off his coat and cuffs and proceeded upstairs. It does not require any great art to flop a mattress off a bed. A farmer's hired man can do it after two or three lessons. Mr. Bowser had removed a hundred mattresses in his time, and after looking at this one from all sides he suddenly seized it by the roots, as it were, gave it a flip and a twist and landed it on the floor.

"The idea of sending up a man!" he exclaimed as he pushed up his sleeves and reached out for the springs. "And the idea of my getting mad about—"

The two foot slats fell down, the springs made a sudden dive and Mr. Bowser's shins fought up against something hard. It was not a railroad sandwich. He stepped back and was about to begin a speech when Mrs. Bowser looked in and queried:

"How are you getting along, dear?"

"Beautifully, and you can't help any," he replied, as the red spread clear back to his collar button, and he looked at Mrs. Bowser with a very different expression. It finally and suddenly occurred to him to drop the other slats and let the springs fall to the floor, and he was rubbing his hands when Mrs. Bowser looked in again.

"Just a little scheme of my own," chuckled Mr. Bowser. "I think I could give some of these furniture men a pointer or two on handling bedsteads. You needn't do any worrying, my dear."

"Well, don't get all heated up, and don't lose your temper."

There were seventeen different ways to take down a bedstead. It was some time before Mr. Bowser discovered any of these ways. He suddenly flashed upon him that the ends of the rails lifted up. He lifted; no go. He tugged; something wobbled. He kicked; both ends of the rail came out at once, and, without any particular object in view, Mr. Bowser plunged forward and sprawled on the mattress.

It was a wooden bedstead. A brass bedstead is a passive piece of machinery unless aroused, while a wooden one is always maliciously aggressive and waiting to cripple somebody for life. Mr. Bowser hauled off and gave the footboard a kick. It wasn't any such kick as a male with a hind leg fourteen feet long could give, but just an ordinary fat man's kick, with a good deal of man behind it. The intention was to smash the whole bedstead into toothpicks and knock down the hall partition, but it didn't pan out. Mr. Bowser was leaning against the wall holding his kicking foot high in the air and gasping for breath, when Mrs. Bowser looked in and kindly inquired:

"Are you getting along all right, dear?"

He looked at her a long time in silence. His face had a chloride of lime color, and it was evident that he was being within.

"Mrs. Bowser," he whispered as he limped over and glared into her eyes like a long suffering animal brought to bay, "you know how this thing would result, and you deliberately put up a job to get revenge on me."

"Why, Mr. Bowser, I warned you at the outset not—"

"Never did—never. You had the thing all planned before I got home. If you want to murder me, and it seems that you do, why not shoot me in my sleep?"

"How can you talk so? I told you you'd get mad and—"

"I'm not mad, Mrs. Bowser. I've simply got my eyes opened at last. No further words are necessary. The limit has been reached. I am now going to the library to look over certain papers and arrange matters as quietly as possible, and I must not be disturbed. My lawyer will probably consult with your lawyer to-morrow and the divorce will be arranged for without scandal. Good night, woman—good night!"