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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1906.

Southern Immigration.

It will afford gratification to all good Americans to know that the South Carolina plan of securing desirable immigrants is not in conflict with the Federal immigration law. That law, it appears from the opinion of Solicitor Earl, of the Department of Commerce and Labor, does not forbid the procurement of immigration by State agencies. The action of the State immigration agent of South Carolina was, in fact, entirely within the bounds of the law, and no legal ground of complaint lies against him.

As a number of Southern States are about to follow the example of South Carolina, the decision of Solicitor Earl is of great importance to the South, where the need of labor is great, and where the social purposes which may be subserved by inducing a high grade of white immigration are of vital consequence. It is curious that the law should not have been more fully understood not only by the Southern immigration agents, but also by those who made formal complaint that their action was in contravention of the statute. But all's well that ends well, and the Southern people may now go ahead with their immigration schemes without fear of the Federal big stick. There are still some State rights left.

A little figuring might demonstrate to Congress how it could increase the purchasing power of its present salary by a judicious tinkering with the tariff.

Downfall of the Cuban Government.

That portion of Secretary Taft's report dealing with Cuba is an illuminating exposition of the causes leading to the scuttle of the Palma government and of the methods employed by the Moderate party to bring about the intervention of the United States. Mr. Taft's mission to Cuba was one of conciliation. He was an almoner of peace, not an agent of intervention. President Roosevelt's policy, up to the very last moment, was the avoidance of intervention. Both the President and the Secretary of War labored unceasingly to bring the warring Cuban factions together, so that the Cuban government might continue its existence under the provisions of its constitution. A strong attempt was made to keep President Palma in office and induce the Moderates to agree to the electoral reforms demanded by the Liberals, then under arms against the government. The negotiations conducted by Secretary Taft with those ends in view came to nothing. President Palma resigned, the Cuban Congress refused to meet to accept his resignation and provide his successor according to constitutional methods, the fabric of the government fell to pieces, and nothing remained but intervention and the institution of the provisional government which now exists.

Why was it impossible for Secretary Taft to carry out his original policy of mediation and peaceful termination of the differences between the government and the revolutionists? The answer is that the mission undertaken by Mr. Taft under the instructions of President Roosevelt was not the form of intervention anticipated and desired by President Palma and the Moderate party. That party had carried the election of 1905 by fraud and coercion for the purpose of insuring unanimous support in the Cuban Congress of the Palma regime, under which Cuba had been prospering. In other words, the Palma party endeavored to maintain what they considered a stable government capable of upholding the continuity of national policy. Such a government, they seemed to think, would be entitled to the support of the United States should any forcible attempt be made to overturn it. Should an uprising follow their coercion of the electorate, it was thought, as Mr. Taft says there was reason to suspect, "that the Platt amendment and the intervention of the United States would supply the force needed to suppress any such uprising."

Neither President Roosevelt nor his astute Secretary of War fell into the trap laid by the Palma government. It became evident very soon after Mr. Taft's arrival that the plan of the Palma government was to force armed intervention. Palma and his cabinet advised Mr. Taft that the only course to pursue was to make war on the insurgents. The Moderates evidently wanted intervention for the purpose, among other things, of placing the revolutionists in an attitude of revolt against the United States, and shifting to our shoulders the responsibility of suppressing the insurrection. Palma's warlike advice, fortunately, was disregarded. Mr. Taft clearly saw that the Liberals had a reasonable grievance. He quickly found that they were willing to assent to a compromise, and to lay down their arms under promise of general amnesty. The compromise proposed that new congressional elections be held under a fair electoral law, and that Palma serve out his term as President. It was Mr. Taft's belief that such an election would have returned a Congress composed of a fairly balanced representation of the two parties.

But President Palma and his friends would have nothing to do with the compromise plan. They declared it impracticable and useless. Palma accused Taft of harboring prejudice against the Moderates. Then the policy of scuttle was executed. The Moderates, to use Mr. Taft's humorous phrase, took away their dolls and refused to play. They deliberately set about to wreck the government, so as to secure our intervention. Palma sent his resignation to Congress, but that body did not accept it. Palma was asked to withdraw it and adjournment was taken to a later date. When that date arrived there was no quorum. Congress refused to perform its functions, the President had abdicated, and the government was at an end. Intervention then came, but not in the manner hoped for by the Moderates. They had courted it in order to secure the suppression of the insurrection and the maintenance of their party in power. Failing that, they sunk the ship of state and skedaddled.

The desertion of the Cuban government by the Moderates placed the United States in a position with respect to the Liberals that was not to the liking of either the President or Mr. Taft. It gave us the appearance of encouraging violent methods of redressing political wrongs and established what Mr. Taft regards as the "dangerous precedent of temporizing and compromising with rebels," but the pusillanimous conduct of the Palma government made no other course possible, save that of making war on the insurgents, a course which the President was anxious to avoid. It may be observed, however, that the precedent established by the United States is no more dangerous than that set by the Moderate party, which went to the extreme length of wrecking the government in order to checkmate the opposition. In both these precedents lies the germ of future trouble in Cuba should a new government be set up under the Cuban constitution, though Secretary Taft hopes for better things.

Santa Claus is a faithful and effective ally of the President in the matter of reducing swollen fortunes.

The President vs. P. Bigelow.

Upon the placid bosom of an alleged mythical lake in Panama there floats a boat—a real boat. "And thereby hangs a tale."

That mighty encyclopedia of statistical lore, Mr. Poultney Bigelow, declared in a recent magazine article that the alleged lake from which the drinking water was supposed to be drawn for use in Panama did not exist—except in the minds of boosters for the government's pet scheme and in the fancy of overcredulous people. Mr. Bigelow searched for it in vain. Such water as he could find was very bad; not at all to his taste nor conducive to his health, happiness, or religious meditation.

Mr. Roosevelt went to the isthmus for a personal inspection of the work on the canal and the surrounding conditions generally. One of his first discoveries was the lake which Mr. Bigelow's eagle eye had failed to locate. There it was, a sure enough lake; and the water was all right, for, in his Panama message, the President says: "I drank some of it, and it was excellent." Perhaps the President's somewhat hasty analysis may not conclusively fix its quality, but his physical senses could not be mistaken as to the existence of the lake itself.

And that is not all. Upon the placid bosom of the waters, as aforesaid, there floated a lone but beautiful boat. And the name of the same was the "Poultney Bigelow."

Was ever vindication in this humor wooed; was every victory in this humor won? Mr. Bigelow is clearly "hoist by his own petard." Not only is the lake not mythical, but even the name and fame of Poultney Bigelow has reached it, and no one will deny that that fixes its status among the real and glorious things that are.

It is quite clear that the first round in the bout between these two eminent canal authorities must be awarded to the President. He says the canal is "all right." Bigelow says it is "all wrong." We accept the President's word. We'll stand by him to the last ditch, or till the ditch is dug.

The "foreword" in Tom Watson's new magazine consists of only about twenty-six pages. We shudder to think what would be happening had Tom been elected President.

Increased Pay for Officers.

The Herald indorses most heartily the movement initiated by an officer of the pay corps of the navy for a 20 per cent increase in the pay of officers and enlisted men of the army, the navy, and the Marine Corps. It is hoped that the Military Committees of both Houses of Congress will include in their estimates for the support of the military establishment the proposed increase. The present pay of both officers and men was fixed soon after the close of the civil war, when a dollar went nearly twice as far as it does now. The general wage scale of the country has been greatly raised in the forty years that have passed since the schedule of compensation of the nation's defenders was arranged. The reason of its remaining stationary belongs to that category of things controlled by Congress that can neither be explained nor defended.

Whenever the subject of increasing the pay of our soldiers, sailors, and marines is discussed the stock argument is presented that our rate of compensation exceeds greatly that of Europe. So does our general wage scale. But the conditions of military service in Europe and the United States are entirely different. Officers in the European armies or navies must be independently rich or they are practically barred by the established customs of those countries from holding commissions. But although their pay is less than that of the military officers in the United States, the European officers have allowances which make up in large part for the smallness of their regular salaries. The allowances to our officers are virtually nil. In the case of the enlisted men they are little better. In point of fact, the enlisted man in our army, navy, or Marine Corps receives allowances in lieu of money which to his brother in Europe seem big. But even this does not afford a proper and adequate compensation for his services to the country. The basic pay of the enlisted man in this country is $13 a month. As things go in the United States that amount of monthly pay is too small to attract to the military service the right sort of men. It represents to the average American fit for military duty very little of enjoyment.

But the situation as to the officers is rapidly becoming desperate. So necessary is it for them to stint and economize in order to live within their incomes that so experienced and able an officer of the army as Maj. Gen. Corbin, retired, seriously advocated while he was adjutant general of the army that young lieutenants be discouraged from marrying. Things have already come to such a pass that officers of the army, navy, and Marine Corps who have no other income than their pay are debarred from serving in important capacities on detached duty because of their poverty. The great bulk of our military officers are poor men. The result is that the few who are rich by inheritance or marriage receive assignments to important duties merely because they have the necessary incomes to meet the extra expenses incurred and not because of special fitness.

The Herald sincerely hopes that Congress at this session will provide for increased pay. The country understands the situation very well and would indorse the giving of more pay to the nation's defenders, rank and file.

London papers are telling of a man with a beard sixteen feet long. Evidently he has not yet heard of the sad demise of the Populist party.

Children in the Streets.

The wide and smooth asphalt surfaces of the streets of Washington afford an excellent playground to thousands of children, especially those who are the happy possessors of roller skates. In fact, the number of these skaters has so increased during the past year or two that it is now a serious question whether roller skating on the public highways ought not to be forbidden by police regulation. The interest in the question is indicated by the letters which the authorities have received, and especially by the space which is devoted to the subject in Maj. Sylvester's report.

It is the opinon of Maj. Sylvester that roller skating ought to be prohibited, and he cites a number of accidents to children in the streets in support of his position. Other people want the children banished from the sidewalks, claiming that many persons are injured by colliding with the fast-moving skaters. On the other hand the claim is made that roller skates afford a medium of innocent and healthy exercise, and that to suppress them would be to deprive the children of proper recreation. It is difficult, therefore, to determine just what course ought to be pursued. Generally speaking, however, the authorities ought to go slow in the adoption of regulations of the character now proposed. If roller skating in the streets is dangerous, it is the duty of parents to look after their children and keep them from indulging in sport that may result in injury. The authorities can hardly be expected to exercise paternal care over all the children in the District, nor does it seem necessary to place a ban upon all these children simply because an accident infrequently happens.

It is a pity that there are not playgrounds enough to provide places where the children can have their necessary amount of recreation. If these playgrounds could be provided, the number of children in the streets would materially decrease. In the meantime, however, there does not seem to be a pressing need to regulate roller skating—unless, indeed, we are to extend the caretaking of the authorities to an almost absurd degree.

Senator Hansbrough says "we are threatened with national nervous prostration." Now some enterprising financier should proceed to syndicate the sanatoriums.

Mrs. George Gould and all the little Goulds have the whooping cough. In fact, everybody whoops but father.

An automobile bumped into an elephant at Coney Island and was badly damaged. Wouldn't it be fine to have a few elephants roaming the streets?

Messrs. Charlie Yip Yen and Chin Gee Hee are promoting a great railway scheme in China. It is presumed that Chin will do the talking while Yen relieves the innocent bystanders of their coin.

Gen. Nogi, Japan's greatest military figure, was thrown from his horse and seriously injured. That shows the fatal mistake he made in not including broncho busting in his repertoire of accomplishments.

Blowing a cornet is said to be healthy exercise, unless the blower lives in a flat.

Of course, the President didn't exactly flinch, nor did he exactly foul, but he failed to hit the California line quite as hard as the advance notices indicated.

Maxim Gorky has left another country "in disgust." This is getting monotonous. Maxim need not mention his travels again, unless he should happen to leave some country in another state of mind.

A champagne famine is predicted. This will seriously affect the man suffering from an exaggerated drought.

Russia accuses Japan of "inexactitude." That is a little longer and more inconvenient word than "liar," but it is much more polite—and Russia has learned to be real polite to Japan.

Perhaps Uncle Joe Cannon's persistent indulgence in egg sandwiches explains why Congress considered it necessary to raise his salary.

If Mr. Roosevelt keeps this thing up he will hopelessly alienate the votes of the telegraph operators, the copy editors, and the proofreaders.

"Exercising Federal authority strictly inside the limits of the Constitution" is what might be termed a proper and healthy "constitutional" for the body politic.

Somehow it seems to be only the unsalaried offices that make a habit of seeking their victims.

Mr. Roosevelt does not mention names in his Panama message, but one P. Bigelow knows just who he refers to when he speaks of "Doubting Thomases."

All those long messages will be forgiven, however, if Senator Morgan does not take them as personal matters and commence discussing them.

"Nearly every man that gets married these days wears spectacles," says the New York Press. A result, doubtless, of all this Mrs. Parsons' talk concerning the present short-sighted methods employed.

The Savannah Press bravely upholds Mr. Roosevelt's simplified spelling ideas. The Press cannot forget that the President is one-half Georgian and entitled to the support, right or wrong, of every Georgia colonel.

One considerate and happy diversion is noticeable in the Kaiser's advice on the subject of cooking. He does not insist upon unwinding a lot of yarns about the extraordinary fine biscuits his mother used to make.

A Nebraska coal dealer has been given the extreme sentence for entering into a conspiracy in restraint of trade. Juries and judges are not disposed to look leniently upon transgressions of the coal man, with present prices and weather both prevailing.

"I never knew a fiddler who amounted to a hill of beans," says Judge Wofford, of Kansas City. Senator Carmack could cite the judge to one.

The reason why so many people refuse to accept Uncle Andy Carnegie's ideas of reform is that he is not a candidate for anything, and therefore cannot be a true reformer.

Masculine Meanness.

From the Charleston News and Courier.

A reader asks us what we think of the young man who will have a "falling out" with his "best girl" just before Christmas to avoid giving her a present. We think he is just the sort of a fellow who would, were he married, present his wife with a handsome safety razor or a meerschaum pipe.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

Fair Warning.

I merely wish
To briefly say
That Christmas is
Upon its way.
In fact, I'd state
In accents bland
That Christmas now
Is near at hand.
I would remark,
If you'll not scoff,
That Christmas day
Is not far off.
Oh, readers all,
I pray, give ear,
Christmas, my friends,
Is almost here.

Mutual.

"You and Jinks seem to be wary of each other."

"Yes; I'm afraid of fool friends.

"That's what he says."

Frankly Answered.

"Cholly!"

"Well, dear?"

"Am I the only girl you ever loved?"

"This near Christmas, yes."

'Tis True.

Without Time's aid,
I'm much afraid,
Some people age their booze.
It gets that way
In single day
If one knows what to use.

The First Question.

"I need work."

"I can give you a job. Good pay. Hours, 11:30 to 1:30. Do you accept?"

"Well, I dunno. How much time off for lunch?"

This Is a Bad One.

"Christmas has busted me. Where will I eat until January?"

"I'll stand good for your meals."

"Ah, my dear friend! Then yule tide me over?"

A Little Doing.

"Do the farms often change hands in this section?"

"No; but the farmers do."

THE INNOCENT BYSTANDER.

THE GAME OF LIFE.

Life is a game we play
With cards that are not of our choosing;
Grimly intent, or gay,
Winning a hand, or losing;
Fate is the dealer, old,
Who has neither mercy nor feeling—
Cautious, or overbold,
We must abide by the dealing.

Sometimes the trumps are hearts,
And sometimes the diamonds rue us;
Clubs leave their aching smarts,
Spades at the end may fool us;
But in the game of life
Reckless we are on beginning,
Eager for stress and strife,
Heedless of losing or winning.

It is a game, all through,
A risk and a chance and a gamble,
Whether we work or woo
Or swagger or lazily shamble;
You, he, and I—we all
Finger the cards we are playing,
Blunder, or else forestall
Rivals, their chances outweighing.

Life is a game we play.
And sometimes the luck may be bitter;
We in the game must stay—
Nothing is worse than a quitter.
When we have played the game
We still may wonder who made it—
Losing, or winning, the same—
All we may know is we've played it.

OLD MAN GIDDLES OBSERVES.

It is aggravating to notice how cheerfully people accept your apology for having made a fool of yourself.

Possibly some women select the kind of Christmas neckties they do to see if their husbands really love them.

I don't know but I would rather hear a man brag about his smart children than about how many great men he knows.

A man will boast about his ability in any line except lying.

Some folks think being patient with you consists of waiting for a good chance to get even.

Analyzing it closely, I have concluded that most of us fiddle more than we dance.

Eli Timmons' son has lost his job again because he neglected his duties. He is always neglecting his duties to telephone to a young woman who thinks she is his guiding star.

I often wonder what the people who make fireworks and the people who make gimcrack toys that break in two hours think of the people who buy them.

Don't stand up for your rights; get hold of them and sit on them.

In the family it may be called a sensitive child, but outside it is referred to as a spoiled kid.

WILBUR NESBIT.

For Consultation.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The magnate faced St. Peter.

"What sort of life have you led?" inquired the keeper of the gates.

The face of the magnate grew dull and stolid.

"By advice of counsel," he replied, "I refuse to answer."

The gatekeeper slowly nodded.

"In that case," he said, "you had better consult your counsel before this goes any farther. He is waiting for you in the ante-room below."

Whereupon the saint pressed the button and the elevator platform upon which the magnate was standing dropped into the sulphurous depths.

Hit Something.

From the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

The book had been described as boldly advocating making the family a temporary affair, subject to dissolution on the motion of either party to adjourn sine die.

"And did it make a hit?" asked a listener.

"Hit? I should say so."

"Struck a popular chord, then?"

"No. Struck a snag."

Dr. Blank's Golden Discovery.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer.

"Doctor, I want to thank you for your valuable medicine."

"It helped you, did it?" asked the doctor, very much pleased.

"It helped me wonderfully."

"How many bottles did you find it necessary to take?"

"Oh, I didn't take any of it. My uncle took one bottle, and I am his sole heir."

A Regular Cut-up.

From the Augusta Chronicle.

Mark Twain's attack of bronchitis, which prevented him from attending the Watterson dinner, was perhaps due to a little too much caper sauce dressing.

Or Any in Chicago.

From Punch.

Another statue has been stolen from the Louvre. Some cities have all the luck. No one steals any of our London statues.

Old Time Yule Song.

There are no embers
Like crisp December's
When the green ivy and red holly rule;
And of a verriment,
There is no merriment
Like that which tingles through the halls of Yule.
Quick quip and laughter
Mount to the rafter;
Song rings and rises in the ingle-glow;
While low bells chiming
Keep tuneful timing
Ho the upbanging of the mistletoe.
Without white spaces;
Within bright faces,
Masking of mummers and the posset bowl;
Fie, Melancholy!
Hail, gleesome Folly,
Leading the revels till the midnight toll!

—Clinton Scollard, in Housekeeper.

CAPITOL GOSSIP.

Too Much Christmas.

The statesmen on the Hill were overcome by the Christmas spirit yesterday, and the result was a dull day in Congress. The House frankly gave itself up to the prevailing feeling of the season and did not even attempt to transact any business. To-day is the date agreed upon for adjournment for the holidays, but too many members of the House desire to get back home to spend Christmas with their families and neighbors to enable Speaker Cannon to hold a quorum. The absence of a quorum was called to Uncle Joe's attention soon after the Chaplain delivered prayer at noon yesterday, and he unhesitatingly admitted that the point was well taken. Ordinarily when there is not a quorum present nobody pays any attention to it unless somebody is filibustering, but the Christmas feeling was too strong for Uncle Joe's boys to resist yesterday, and so they agreed without a murmur to knock off work early under the fiction that not enough of them were present to transact the public business. In the Senate it was different. In that tribunal Mr. Foraker displayed early in the proceedings a disposition to stir up some excitement over the President's summary discharge without honor of the negro troops, and the Conscript Fathers pricked up their ears for an interesting row. But for this the Senate probably would have given in just as the House did to the Christmas spirit and knocked off work early. But, then, one difference between the House and Senate is that most of the Senators have permanent residences in Washington and their families are here instead of being "back home." Thus it happens that the Senate does not care to take advantage of the parliamentary technicalities on such occasions and adjourn because of the absence of a quorum. At scarcely any hour during its full day's proceedings yesterday was there a quorum of the Senate present.

Gaines a Hard Worker.

The introduction of a bill by the Hon. John Wesley Gaines, of Tennessee, to "dock" the members of both houses of Congress a day's pay for every day they are absent from their seats as revealed by roll calls, unless on account of sickness or other similar causes, has called attention to the regularity with which Mr. Gaines attends every session of the House. No member of that body, except, of course, the Speaker, is absent as little as is the representative of the Nashville district. Because of Mr. Gaines' volubility and his apparently unconscious humor a good deal of fun is poked at him by the newspapers, but it is a fact worthy of notice that he is one of the most attentive members to his public duties. No member of either house keeps a closer watch on legislation than does Mr. Gaines, and no member of either house is more minutely informed of the character of every pending measure. Since the introduction of the Tennesseean's penalty bill it has been discovered that since 1856, or thereabout, there has been a law upon the statutes prescribing the fine for absenteeism which he proposes. Like many another law, it has been more honored in the breach than in its observance. Usually in every house there are twenty or more members who seldom are in their seats, and some of this number spend very little time in Washington.

Landis on Proof Reading.

Representative Charles B. Landis, of Indiana, who between the sessions of Congress is an enterprising newspaper man at Delphi, was discussing yesterday with a group of correspondents the annoying experiences every newspaper writer has with printers and proof readers in handling his copy. A few years ago Mr. Landis was applied to by the inventor of a device for economizing soap bills to prepare for him an advertisement that would set forth the merits of his invention.

"I want something very fetching and flowery. The more foreign words you can ring in the better," said the inventor.

It was specially desired to bring out in the advertisement the claim that by using the device the soap bills of large establishments where a great amount of that article is used could be very greatly cut down.

"Suppose," said Mr. Landis, "that I state that by the use of your patent only a mere soupcon of soap will be necessary?"

He then explained that "soupcon" was a French word and meant a very small amount.

The inventor enthusiastically agreed to the use of the French word. The advertisement was written by Mr. Landis accordingly, "and," said he, "imagine, if you can, my horror and my client's wrath when those archconspirators, the intelligent compositor and the lynx-eyed proof reader, converted my fine French word 'soupcon' into the two words 'soup can,' so that the advertisement proclaimed that the new device would use 'only a soup can of soap.'"

Mr. Pettus Always Polite.

It is generally agreed among occupants of the galleries at the Capitol that the most polite and accommodating member of the Senate is Mr. Pettus, of Alabama, aged eighty-five. One of the most rigid rules pertaining to the running of the elevators at the Senate wing is that when a Senator is a passenger the car must not be stopped except when it arrives at the floor to which the Senatorial occupant desires to be carried. The rule is invariably enforced by the elevator conductors, who realize that their jobs depend upon how well they observe it. Numerous Senators even refuse to ride in the elevators with anybody but Members of Congress, Justices of the Supreme Court, Cabinet officers, &c., and frequently give other classes of occupants plainly to understand that they must get out when Senators enter. Not so with Senator Pettus, however. Whenever he enters one of the elevators he is careful to inquire of the conductor where the other occupants desire to be taken, and then instructs that obeisant functionary not to bother about him, but let the other passengers off at their floors just as though no member of the Senate were among his passengers. Frequently it happens that when other Senators are aboard an elevator the car is kept bobbing up and down between the floors for several minutes before the ordinary passengers can be landed at their destination.

Mr. Sims Knows.

The presence in Washington during the past week of E. W. Sims, the United States district attorney at Chicago, has occasioned considerable speculation among Congressmen as to the manner in which Mr. Sims will conduct the prosecution of the Standard Oil suits that have been brought in his district. Until about a year ago Mr. Sims was one of the chief law officers of the Department of Commerce and Labor, and it is known that in that capacity he had a great deal to do with conducting the investigation of the oil industry which the Bureau of Corporations was directed by the House to make. It is even said that he wrote a greater portion of that report than was written by either Commissioner Garfield or Mr. Garfield's chief factotum, E. Dana Durand, the statistician of the bureau. Mr. Sims is an old Chicago newspaper man, and was brought to the Department of Commerce and Labor by Mr. Cortelyou when the latter was at the head of the department. When he resigned from the department to accept the district attorneyship at Chicago he was its chief solicitor, but for two or three years he had been the principal law officer of the Bureau of Corporations. He is, therefore, supposed to have more intimate and detailed knowledge of the operations of the corporations that have been investigated by the bureau than any other district attorney in the country.

WHO WILL BE THE NOMINEE?

Discussion of Probabilities in the Republican Presidential Race.

From the Boston Transcript.

With the time for choosing delegates to the next Republican national convention, little more than a year away, and with the larger probability that the man whom it honors will be the next President of the United States, astonishingly little can be heard or seen that points with any seeming accuracy toward the probable choice. It is time the country was making up its mind. This extraordinary situation is due, as one of the leaders of Republican opinion in Iowa recently remarked, to the disinclination of the public to abandon the idea that some way may yet be found for getting another term of Roosevelt.

President Roosevelt has three substantial reasons for the position that he has taken, from which he does not purpose to be shaken. He is leading in certain popular reforms which he wants to have the country realize that he is espousing because he believes in them, and not to gain support in any future Presidential election. He wants no questioning of his sincerity in these affairs. He wants history to view his motives as disinterested, whether they were mistaken or not. Secondly, he believes strongly in the two-term limitation which has come down from the fathers. He thinks that the example of the United States in the South American countries and in Europe, wherever Republican institutions are regarded as still on trial, would be weakened by his accepting a nomination for a third term with the imputation which it would carry that popular government inevitably tended toward one-man power, in spite of all professions to the contrary.

A third reason for the President's position comes in the vexatious responsibility for party success which rests upon a chief executive. Mr. Roosevelt has now carried three elections, the Congressional of 1902, when his administration as the successor of Mr. McKinley went before the people for approval; the Presidential election of 1904, focusing about his candidacy; and the Congressional contest of 1906, when the issue of sustaining Roosevelt was put forward to save the House of Representatives.

A President who has maintained with success so many contests not only before the people, but in legislative halls, for important and far-reaching measures of national policy, may well rejoice when the time comes that he can refer his cause to history for its impartial verdict, without further effort or argument on his part.

The President makes no secret of his desire to see William H. Taft made the Republican standard bearer in 1908. But Mr. Taft is astonishingly reluctant to do anything for himself, or to take any steps which would contribute even indirectly toward his nomination, probably the most conspicuously so of any man seriously considered for the Presidency from the foundation of the government. It is an open secret in Washington that the President is almost out of patience with him on this score. Taft insists on believing that he could not be nominated, or, if nominated, that he could not be elected. He, moreover, has but a single thought in life, and that is to accomplish something substantial for the Philippine people.

But this does not give the full measure of Mr. Taft's reluctance. He pursues a course in public life which makes it very difficult even for friends to push him. There was a large chunk of truth in the Gridiron Club rejoinder on Saturday week, to the question why Taft had decided against the negroes in the Brownsville affair, that "He knew Fairbanks had already bagged the colored delegates." This little Brownsville episode, apart from everything else, would make it difficult to get colored delegates for Mr. Taft. A score of acts as Secretary of War seem to have been performed not only in disregard of all Presidential possibilities, but in defiance of all recognized rules of plain, ordinary policy.

Against such a candidate stands Charles W. Fairbanks, who is making a vigorous and thoroughgoing canvass for the nomination along old-fashioned organization lines. Most of the Senators want Fairbanks; most of the "standpatters," in the broadest extent of the term, want Fairbanks; most of the old Hanna organization people want Fairbanks; most of the conservative people who are crying for relief from the series of shocks and strains which Rooseveltism has given them, would be glad to take Fairbanks. He would, moreover, make a creditable nominee, and a safe and dignified President. He impresses people favorably wherever he speaks. But will he be nominated? The next year ought to afford a demonstration of the value of organization in a Presidential race as against disorganization, indifference, reluctance. On a popular vote most Republicans would doubtless prefer Taft to Fairbanks as their party nominee, but this device differs greatly from a national convention. Can the Roosevelt influence make up the difference?

Mice in Virginia Capitol.

From the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Capitol mice have come into real prominence of late, and their movements are now the subject of much public interest. After destroying practically all the State seals in the office of the secretary of the Commonwealth, the wise little creatures have discovered new and fruitful fields. They have invaded the sanctum of the Hon. Davis Bottom, superintendent of public printing, and are now feeding upon the record books in his office. These capitol mice are foxy little creatures, and the situation has about resolved itself into a question of placing traps in all the capitol offices, and it is believed such action will result in routing the entire breed. Mouse trap venders are now vying with one another in praise of their respective wares in the hope of landing a big contract.

Our Stay in Cuba.

From the Philadelphia Ledger.

Those who know the Cubans believe that they will plunge into disorder the instant they are left to their own devices, and therefore conservative Americans hope and trust that preparations will be made for the maintenance of an American provisional government for a long time in order that the necessary work of training may be done from this time forth. They wish this for the reason that they know that the Cubans are not fit to govern themselves, and are therefore not fit to become American citizens.

And on the Japanese, Too?

From the Boston Herald.

Our strenuous President has gracefully taken back water twice the past week, once on his premature nominations for the Cabinet, and once on simplified spelling. These should serve to soften the asperities for a time.

Even Grover Couldn't Do That.

From the Houston Post.

The Washington Herald says: "Mr. Grover Cleveland ought to be elected to the Senate if for no other reason than to hold the alphabet together." Grover was elected President with the idea that he would hold the Democratic party together, but he didn't do it.

Hunting Women's Manners.

From Madame.

The hunting woman often forgets the common courtesies of life, takes too much for granted, accepts every courtesy advanced, and gives naught in return—sometimes not even thanks.

War in Midst of Peace.

From the Providence Journal.

The Nobel peace prize was awarded to the President just as he had declared war on the Storers

HEARD AT HOTELS.

Two of the best known and most influential men in the State of Oregon are guests of the Shoreham—Col. Harvey W. Scott, editor of the Portland Oregonian, and the Senator-elect from that State, Hon. Jonathan Bourne. Col. Scott has been coming to Washington many years, and he has a host of friends at the Capitol. In a few days, accompanied by Mrs. Scott and their daughter, he will sail for Europe to spend the remainder of the winter along the shores of the Mediterranean.

Mr. Bourne, who will, on the 4th of March next, take the seat of Senator Gearin, is a gentleman of the highest repute at home, and his friends predict for him a career of great honor and usefulness. He is a native of New Bedford, Mass., and his father was owner of the biggest whaling fleet of that section. He is fifty-two years of age, and a graduate of Harvard, of the class of 1877. He migrated to the Pacific Coast thirty years ago, and has long been reckoned one of the leading men of Portland, and has always been an active Republican. A lawyer by profession, he has given but little attention to the practice, but has been better known for his operations as a miner.

"It is unquestionably a high honor to come to the United States Senate," said Mr. Bourne, "particularly after being chosen to that office by a direct vote of my people. Not a dollar was spent by me, nor a promise made to get the Senatorship. Oregon has adopted the system of electing its Senators by popular vote, and, though the legislature will formally elect me, it is merely ratifying the will of the voters as expressed in the primaries."

"A Denver friend of mine was the central figure in rather a funny episode lately," said Mr. C. W. Waterman, an able lawyer of the Colorado metropolis, at the New Willard.

"This friend was one of three occupants of the smoking compartment of a Pullman car, going West. The other two men were strangers, but they were sociably inclined, and the two got into friendly conversation, as Americans always do under such circumstances. It so happened that the conversation turned upon Senator Tillman, because it was the night he was billed to speak in Chicago, which city the travelers had just left. Turning to my Denver colleague one of the strangers said: 'What is your estimate of the Senator from South Carolina?'

"'I think,' was the reply, 'that Tillman is a courageous man, a statesman of principle and honor. He may be a trifle rough, but he is on the level. He is a genuine reformer and not a sham and imitation like Joe Folk, of Missouri, and Ben Lindsay, of Denver, who is running as an independent candidate for governor of Colorado.'

"To this frank statement there was no response from either of the others, and the conversation was presently shifted to other topics. Pretty soon Jefferson City was reached, and one of the men said good-by and left the train. As soon as he had gone the other, turning to the Colorado man said, 'Have you any idea as to who that gentleman was?'

"'No, sir; but I take him to be a gentleman of high standing.'

"'Well, he does stand pretty well. That was Gov. Folk.'"

"My belief is that the differences that have existed between Secretary Shaw and Gov. Cummins will be happily compromised, and that these honored sons of Iowa will soon be smoking the pipe of peace," said Mr. George D. Copeland, a prominent Iowa banker and member of the State Central Republican Committee, at the New Willard.

"It would not be at all surprising to see Gov. Cummins elected to the United States Senate in place of Senator Dolliver when the legislature proceeds to elect the successor of the latter in January. This would mean the healing of all factional troubles, and would signify that the friends of Cummins and Shaw would unite upon the Secretary as Iowa's candidate for the Presidency. Mr. Shaw is as good Presidential timber as there is in the nation, and from a 'sane and safe' standpoint is ideal.

"I think that if Senator Allison is in any sort of physical condition, he will be elected to succeed himself two years hence. If he could only be in the Senate one day in the week we would rather have him there than any other man that Iowa could send."

"What of affairs in your section of the Union?" asked a Herald reporter of one of Montana's foremost men, Mr. W. G. Conrad, who had just returned from seeing the launching of the new cruiser Montana, which his daughter, Miss Minnie Conrad, christened on the 15th inst. at Newport News.

"Well, it is hard to see how times could be better than they are in our Western country. In New York they seem to have prosperity but no money, but in Montana we have prosperity and money, too. Any amount of money can be had with us at 6 per cent, and the only trouble is that nobody wants to borrow.

"But there is one thing in contemporaneous history that is far more interesting than prosperity and a plentiful money supply. That is the personality of Theodore Roosevelt as an old-time Democrat and Southerner. I hail him as the greatest figure of the age, not because I am a hero worshiper, but because of what he is and what he has done. No President ever did as much to promote the general welfare, the interests of the masses, as the man who is now in the White House, and that is the reason that his countrymen swear by him and believe in him.

"The notion that he will take another term has been emphatically dispelled by the President himself, and we want no better authority. If I could have my way as to his future I would cause him to come to the United States Senate from the State of New York, which is sadly in need of some such man at the north end of the Capitol. He should be Senator and be given the head of a committee that dealt entirely with the Panama Canal, a sphere of usefulness that he would adorn because of pre-eminent fitness."

A young man of modest and unpretentious demeanor, who sat in the New Willard lobby last evening, was Hon. Julius Fleischmann, twice mayor of Cincinnati, and one of its most successful business men. Mr. Fleischmann is in Washington along with a dozen or more of the leading distillers in the United States, who are here to confer with the Secretary of Agriculture as to the construction of the pure-food law in its relation to whisky.

"If the Secretary should rule that spirits which enter into the manufacture of blended goods are not of similar nature to the other ingredients, then we should see wholesale ruin to distillers and wholesale dealers all over the United States," said Mr. Fleischmann. "In fact, it would mean virtual confiscation of millions of dollars' worth of property. The processes of manufacture now in vogue are the same that have existed from the foundation of the business in this country, and no change could be wrought in them that would not create widespread disaster."

Two prominent Virginians in the New Willard last evening were Hon. Henry Fairfax, former State senator from Loudoun County, and ex-Speaker Ryan, of the Virginia legislature. It is believed that the latter has Congressional aspirations, and his friends are talking of sending him to the House from the district now represented by Mr. Rixey.