HEARD AND SEEN HERE AND THERE

SOME members of Congress who favor a change in the date of the inaugural ceremonies from March 4 to some time around the latter part of April or the first part of May intend to make an effort to collect, as comprehensively and as accurately as possible, the statistics of deaths resulting directly from exposure during the ceremonies recently ended. The movement for a change of date is likely to meet with considerable opposition from those members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives who, when their feet get dry and they have fully recovered from colds and other ills contracted in Washington during the inaugural week, are inclined to say, "Oh, shucks; the inauguration comes only once every four years. It is hardly worth while amending the Constitution, which would involve a long and cumbersome proceeding, just for that. Perhaps we'll have a better day next time. Lightning and blizzards never strike twice in the same place."

Those members who are going to collect the mortality statistics think they can give these thoughtless folks just quoted something of a jolt if they spring the real figures on them and bring them face to face with the facts. It will be recalled that last Monday the contents of a letter received by Representative Peters of Massachusetts was printed in The Star, showing that out of 800 members of the Massachusetts Coast Artillery who attended the inaugural and marched in the parade—and who incidentally stood for nearly three hours in the howling blizzard before taking their places in line—101 developed pneumonia upon their return to their homes. At that time one had died and one was dying. Probably there have been other victims since then, although the actual figures are not at hand. And mind you, those figures were with respect to only 800 of the body of nearly 20,000 troops who were scheduled to march in the parade, irrespective of the thousands of men—many of them elderly and susceptible to disease—that made up the civic organizations contingent.

It would seem that when the returns from the various cities and states were all in that even the most thoughtless and careless members of Congress would have something pretty serious to think about with respect to the proposition to change the inaugural date.

* * *

A DISTINGUISHED member of the Senate, who lives at a hotel not many steps away from Franklin Park, received a letter a couple of weeks ago that stirred the spirit of romance within his breast. Oh, it was a perfectly proper letter and all that sort of thing and purported to be from a fair and youthful constituent of his—whose name he had never heard—who was temporarily sojourning in Washington—Washington city. She was so bashful, the modest little thing, that she didn't want to come to the senator's hotel to talk over the little matter of finding a job for her in the National capital, but she would like to meet the senator on the park corner.

The said distinguished senator put on his best bib and tucker and a fur overcoat—for 'twas a coldish night—and sallied forth, with a red carnation, for recognition, in his buttonhole. He hung around the park for upward of an hour and then, cross and plumb disgusted with human nature, blew back to his hotel, where he found a reception committee waiting for him. Some fair friends of his in the hotel, thinking the senator a bit too serious-minded and outwardly distinguished for everyday use, had put up the job on him with grand success. They all turned out to welcome him, too, about fifty strong, and the distinguished senator, pretty cross at first, warmed up and everybody was happy. As the reporter on the Podunk Yelp of Freedom would say, "A good time was had by all."

* * *

REPRESENTATIVE BARTHOLDT of Missouri, whose accent is rich and who is an intimate friend of the dove, appeared at the Capitol a day or so after the session closed, clad in a fur overcoat and considerable gloom. He used handkerchiefs in relays and all his Bs and Ds and Vs sounded alike. In other words he had a peacherino of a cold.

"Where in the world did you pick up that choice bit of influenza?" queried a colleague who noticed the woe of the Missourian.

"I took ob my subber underwear doo zoon," responded Mr. Bartholdt, his hands full of menthol inhalers and nose balm.

"What did you do that for?" asked the other member with a grin.

"Begause," replied Mr. Bartholdt, with a flash of rage, "id is impossible do dell the seazons ady more. I zaw a bock beer sign id a window. How could I know de spring had nod come?"

* * *

OH, the thoughtless feminine! They sigh when they should laugh; they laugh when they should cry. Things fall heedlessly from their lips that, if the lips were masculine, would incite to battle, murder and sudden death. Some of them are cattish, but only some. The rest are just plumb careless with language.

A friend of mine was taken away from Washington some months ago. He was in a bad way, with many things the matter with him, and, after a consultation, a bunch of learned doctors informed his wife that, barring miracles, he was booked for a nice little trip in Uncle Charon's seeing-the-Styx motor boat.

Mrs. Wife, just before following her husband, the very sick person, to the sanitarium which had been picked out as a pleasant place for him to die in, went down town with a very deaf friend to buy some of the necessities for the trip, and while there, remembering the absolutely positive prediction that followed the consultation of learned physicians, couldn't help but think of black gloves and black veils and other mourning paraphernalia.

"Oh," she said to her friend, with great distress, almost with horror, "I simply can't anticipate anything like this. It makes me feel dreadfully to think of buying mourning things when the poor dear isn't dead yet. I just won't do it."

"You're right, my love," said the friend, deeply sympathetic; "I wouldn't either. When you buy black beforehand they never die."

And yet these two still speak!

* * *

NO better indication could be had of the manner in which Vice President Fairbanks had come to be regarded in Washington than the send-off he got when he was about ready to say good-bye to official Washington and to turn over his gavel as presiding officer of the Senate to his successor, Mr. Sherman. Folks went to see him and to shake hands with him and say farewell because they wanted to, because they liked him and admired him and respected him and because they were mighty sorry indeed to see him go. Mr. Fairbanks wouldn't know me from a side of sole leather, and yet I expect to cherish for some time a poignant regret that I was unable to go to the Senate at the time he had fixed for saying adios to the members of the Senate and House press galleries, just to have the chance of rubbing his knuckles together in a good grip and adding my widow's mite to the treasure of sincere "I'm awfully sorry you're goings" that were his that day.

Mr. Fairbanks may be chilly in his manner and frosty in his exterior, but I'm willing to bet that way down deep inside he is and has always been as warm and cozy as an eiderdown comforter. His manner was objectionable to some people. Personally I think that's to his credit. The type of politician who puts his arm around your shoulders and runs one hand through your hair and tells you how well you're looking, and then pats your back and squeezes your hand and says that you can have everything he's got, is very familiar around the Capitol. It is an old type, but is diminishing, praise heaven. That same pulse warmer, at the very time he is gazing into your eyes and complimenting your intellectuality and influence, is probably thinking all the time of some story you wrote about him back in the fall of 1883 and wondering how he can get hunks, with compound interest. And, too, after he has told you that he is yours to command, if you told him you hadn't had anything to eat in three weeks except a stale Maryland biscuit, and produced affidavits to prove it, he would freeze up like a duck pond in December and shake you in ten seconds. On the other hand, nine times out of ten it is the man who looks as if he had been cut out of marble and had a disposition like sour ketchup who is there with the come-across at the right and proper time.

After all, it is simply a question, with folks like Mr. Fairbanks, of not having the art of knowing people intimately within ten seconds after a formal introduction. They have to be acquainted with you for awhile before they think they know you. Perhaps they will like you, and perhaps they will not. If they don't 'tis no harm to you. If they do, all the knocks that ever were handed out couldn't make them change. They stay put, and you can always find them where you left them last.

Mr. Fairbanks had an unfortunate manner, had he? Then, gracious heaven, give us more, lots more, of the same brand.

* * *

THERE has been a dire lot of yowling from the direction of New York recently about the variety of plays that are being dished up to the highly moral residents of that delectable metropolis. I suppose some of them are bad and immoral and what not. But at the same time it does not excuse those last wordists who, basing their opinion on this noise from an exotic and unimportant place like New York, have uttered the finality that "the taste of the American people in amusements is fast degenerating."

Aside from the fact that New York, where they prefer lingerie to literature, is a bad standard by which to judge the rest of the country, the statement is ridiculous on itself. The world is better than it ever was; people are cleaner, mentally and physically, the standards along all lines are higher.

Back yonder a bit a Roman dame, meeting a friend on the Appian way, might say with propriety: "Say, Gladys, I ain't got a blamed thing to do. Let's take the kids out to see the lions fed." Nowadays a Washington matron, meeting a neighbor on Pennsylvania avenue, might suggest the same thing. But back yonder the lions were fed on live Christians, and now they are fed on dead cow. That's the difference. The form is the same, but the substance has changed.

Some of our amusements are not what they should be. Many of them, I take it, are throw-backs, century skips, inexplicable recrudescences. But we are getting there. Every now and then a rung on the ladder turns or breaks and we get a jolt. And we think we have fallen about a mile and a half. But it's not so. And we go on climbing, hopefully faithfully, optimistically, knowing that the top rung is not for us, that it is a far distance dim ahead, but believing with all the faith that is in us that it will be reached some day.

Whenever national retrogression—if ever there should be such a thing—should develop 'twould be indicated by the amusements of the people as much as anything else.

Even then everything would not be lost; the case would not be hopeless. I venture to say that in the crisis another Old Noll would step to the front to sweep away the fraud and trumpery and, laying us over his stalwart knee, spank us with his hard, clean hand.

* * *

I NEVER had advantages when I was
a growin' kid;
My folks was good to me, of course, but
'twasn't much they did;
For they was poor and tried to farm this
piece of land out west—
It wasn't much to start with and they
never got its best.
Dad, he was crippled, hand and feet, with
rheumatiz and such
And ma was always poorly and she never
could do much;
And so when I grew up I stayed right on
the farm and worked;
I didn't get no schoolin' but they couldn't
say I shirked.
And when they died I buried them, right
yonder on the hill;
They seemed so sort of lonesome-like I
just stayed on, until
I'm right here yet, alone again—my wife's
been dead twelve year,
And son, he's gone in business and is
doing well, I hear.
Don't see him much, but 'taint his fault—
you know how boys are;
I'd visit him, 'cept that he says "The
city's awful far."
'Taint natural he should recollect how
close we used to be,
When he was just a little chap and
climbed up on my knee.
And snuggled 'gainst my old blue shirt
and said, "When I am big,
Why, daddy, you won't have to hoe and
plow and sow and dig,
But just can sit here on the porch, as if
your work was through,
'Cause, daddy, when I'm big and strong,
I'll do your work for you."
And he don't know that when he grew
and finished out his school
I put a mortgage on the place—folks said
I was a fool—
And sent him east to college. Lord—how
lonesome it did seem;
Those memories of his childhood were
just like a happy dream.
Well, he's working now and married and
he's been back once since then;
He didn't stay long, nuther, and he's
never come again;
Nor nothin' seemed to intrust him, for all
the time he's here,
Though the wheat was in the yellow and
the corn was in the ear.
And he said somethin' 'bout my clothes—
but that was just the least—
And told me of the rich men that he'd
met back in the east.
Well, then he went away again, 'thout
kissin' me good-bye,
And I came home and—and—oh shucks,
a man he just can't cry.
But nowadays I don't care much; I guess
I'm gettin' old.
The sun don't shine the way it did; the
world seems sort of cold.
And after all my work is done, I sit here
by the fire,
And evenin's now I sort of dream and
never seem to tire
Of 'maginin' that I'm young again and
thinking that I see
That little chap as used to come and
climb up on my knee
To snuggle 'gainst my old blue shirt and
say, "When I am big,
Why, daddy, you won't have to hoe and
plow and sow and dig,
But just can sit here on the porch as if
your work was through—
'Cause, daddy, when I'm big and strong,
I'll do your work for you."

JOBSON ORDERS WIFE TO BUY EMPIRE GOWN

MR. JOBSON croaked satirically.

He does this often. Frequently the evocative occasion of Mr. Jobson's satirical croaks is something that he sees—text or picture—in the newspapers.

It was a picture that he saw in the Stah-pape a couple of Sundays ago that pulled from him the particular satirical croak that now is under review.

The picture portrayed, fancifully, and yet according to the Paris model, a lady in an empire gown.

"Huh!" snorted Mr. Jobson, just that-way. "Huh!"

Then he held the picture of the lady in the empire gown a little farther from him and studied it some more.

"What bedinged humbug!" he snorted some more. "Woman that 'ud climb into a dress—if you'd call it a dress—like that must be crazy. If I had an eighty-seventh female cousin who'd wear a fool gunnysack like that I'd have her arrested and held for the lunacy commission, or change my name if she had the same name as mine, or something. That's what I would."

All this, of course, was by way of preliminaries to drag Mrs. Jobson into the situation. And so, Mrs. Jobson had to get into the situation.

"What is it, my dear?" she asked in her regular Mrs. Jobson tone.

"Well, just take a peek, that's all," said Mr. Jobson, passing the paper over to Mrs. Jobson. "Get a focus on that picture of the maniac woman in that near-dress that's all bunched up between her shoulder blades. That's what gets my goat. Whatcha think of that?"

"Why," replied Mrs. Jobson, glad to seize an opportunity that she had been wistfully waiting for, "this is a model empire gown, you know. It's perfectly lovely, don't you think? I've been perfectly mad for one for ever so long."

Mr. Jobson bounced to his feet and took up a loomful position, confronting Mrs. Jobson, with his back to the brightly burning latrobe.

"Mad for one?" he said, hoarsely, to Mrs. Jobson. "You're mad for one of those things?"

He mussed up his hair ominously with both hands, while he glared at her. Mrs. Jobson sat serene.

"Yes," she replied. "Yes, indeedy. Ever since they came out—those empire gowns, I mean—I've been simply mad, crazy, wild for one, really."

Mr. Jobson looked so dazed, stupefied, benumbed, that it appeared for a fleeting instant as if he might fall backward on to the brightly burning latrobe.

"You—er—you say—I may have misunderstood you—I hope I have misunderstood you—but you—did I understand you to say that you—YOU, madam—were mad, crazy, wild for one of those—er—um—for one of those insane messes of togs that you call empire gowns?"

Mr. Jobson's voice was very hoarse, indeed, as he submitted this fateful question.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Jobson with the greatest imaginable placidity. "I've just been dying for an empire gown. It fairly makes my mouth water to look at an empire gown in a shop window or even to see a picture of one like this," and she gazed with rapture at the picture of the empire gown in the Stah-pape.

Mr. Jobson resumed his seat. Plainly he was too weak to stand up. Obviously his pins were giving way beneath him. He simply had to sit down. He passed his hand dazedly in front of his face four or five times, and then he slowly turned his head and regarded Mrs. Jobson balefully.

"Say, look a-here," said he. "Regard me. I want to get this thing straightened out. It may be, you know, that I am the one who is mad, crazy and wild. There's never any telling. Anyhow, I want to find out. Am I to infer from your observations that you—er—that you would really WEAR one of those dresses if you had it to wear?"

"Well, I should say I would wear it," agreeably chirped Mrs. Jobson. "'Deed, wouldn't I wear it, though. Well, I should remark! I want an empire gown so badly that sometimes the mere thought of having one fairly makes me ache all over."

Mr. Jobson remained silent for fully fifteen seconds. During that space of time the wheels of his mental machinery could almost be heard revolving in the quiet room. Then he turned his accusatory regard once more upon Mrs. Jobson.

"Wait a minute," said he. "I'm going to get at the bottom of this thing or know the reason why. Er—have you nourished any secret ambition of late, permit me to inquire, to exhibit yourself as the main figurante in the 'Salome' dance?"

"Oh, not at all," replied Mrs. Jobson, laughing merrily. "'Deed not! Nothing like it! But I should certainly love to have an empire gown."

"Have you," went on Mr. Jobson, utilizing his best brand of solemnity, "cherished any recent idea of—er—well, let's see—of, say, joining 'The Innocent Buds' or 'The Parisian Widows' burlesque show, or anything like that?"

"I never even heard of those two companies that you mention," replied Mrs. Jobson, offhandedly. "But, mercy me, how I have been longing and longing and longing for an empire gown!"

"Well, then," said Mr. Jobson, as if to himself, "it is as I thought—as I feared, I should say. It's a case of acute mania on the part of this once estimable woman with whom I have been living in more or less conjugal content for quite a number of years. Case of acute mania, or, perhaps, softening of the brain, or dementia bughouseologia, or something like that. Must be something like that. Only way I can dope it out. Only charitable way to dope it out. Can't think of any other way. Woman's gone stark, staring, staving mad, just as she says. Oh, well, I always feared it. Always felt that sooner or later she was doomed to a strait jacket. Durn my pelt, I don't think it was coming so soon, though!"

"But," pleasantly inquired Mrs. Jobson, "you don't mean to say that you yourself don't like those perfectly lovely empire gowns?"

Mr. Jobson turned a reproach-furrowed face upon her.

"Like 'em," he said, with unspeakable derision lurking in his tone. "Do I like 'em? Why don't you ask me if I like Gila monsters, hooded cobras, puff adders and things like that? Why don't you inquire if I like a breakfast consisting of liver and milk? Why don't you request me to inform you I would like to be buried alive?"

"But," said Mrs. Jobson, in her best agreeable hard-as-steel, I'm-going-to-get-away-with-it-or-die tone, "The empire gown is so very, very pretty and attractive, you know."

"Oh, it is, hey?" said Mr. Jobson, sitting bolt upright in his chair. "Well, that'll be ay-bout all from you on that topic, madam. There'll be no further conversation under this vine and figtree on that topic. I've heard enough. But let me insert just one little word or two for your guidance now and hereafter: You want to be pretty durned careful, madam—mighty parlous careful, I'm a-telling you—or one of these days—and it may not be so far off as you frivolously imagine—there'll be a queer-looking wagon backing up in front of this house, and four or five husky male persons built like lumberjacks will be walking up the steps here and before you know where you are they'll be grabbing you and depositing you in that peculiar-looking vehicle, and for the rest of your life you'll be over yonder on the yon shore of the Eastern branch, imagining yourself to be Catherine the Great or Queen Semiramis or somebody like that. I'm only warning you. You'd better take heed. I've been watching your kinky mental operations for a long time and you're pretty close to the verge. Remember what I'm saying to you, that's all."

That settled the empire gown thing for then, of course. But three evenings ago Mr. Jobson came home just a trifle late for dinner. He was preoccupied as he took his seat at the dinner table.

"Did you stop to get shaved, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Jobson, just to make a little talk while the maid was serving the dinner.

"Nope," replied Mr. Jobson. "Just mooched around the hotels a little looking 'em over. Say, look a-here, I saw some infernally fine-looking women getting on and off the elevator at the Hotel Degilt," naming the hostelry correctly. "That is to say, they weren't so all-fired good looking, any of 'em, but they were got up in a swagger way that sure did make a hit with me. Dressed so simply—that's what took my eye."

Mrs. Jobson felt the ichor of victory pulsing through her, but she didn't let on.

"Had on clothes the like of which I don't remember having seen before these women that I'm talking about," went on Mr. Jobson, plainly interested in his theme. "Their clothes weren't exactly what you could call loose, you know, but they were—er—well, they sort o' fell straight from the shoulders, and the waist line in the back was 'way up from where the waist usually is, you see, and the dresses gave the women a sort of graceful, floaty, swish-through-the-air effect—kind of zephry, y' know—oh, I can't exactly describe it, but, b'jing, they sure did look fine, and I made up my mind that you were going to have some togs like those or I'd ascertain the reason why and wherefore."

The moment for Mrs. Jobson had come. "Those gowns that you speak of," said she, pretending to gaze with great earnestness into the depths of the platter loaded with chicken potpie, "are empire gowns, you know."

Mr. Jobson darted her a quick, searching look.

"Well, I don't care what the dickens they're called," he rebated right back, game as a pebble in the trap. "What the deuce is the difference what name's tacked on to them? They're all to the candy, anyhow, and I want you to beat it downtown tomorrow and buy some togs like those. I should think you'd think of these things without my having to hammer away at you all the time. Should think you'd smoke up and stake yourself to the right kind of feminine gear without my camping on your trail every hour of the day and night. Anyhow, I don't care whether you like those dresses that I'm talking about or not, I want you to hike down and get one or two of 'em tomorrow, and not another word of protest, if you please—I've had a hard day at the office and I'm in no mood to hear your complainings—but you get those dresses, that's all!"

"HE MUSSED UP HIS HAIR OMINOUSLY WHILE HE GLARED AT HER."

RATHER CHEESEPARING.

SECRETARY CROWLEY of the Cattle Raisers' Association praised the other day in Galveston the cowboy automobile.

"The cowboy automobile has come to stay," he said. "A cowboy at the wheel can handle a hundred times as many steers as a cowboy in the saddle."

"But the expense!" said an English rancher.

"It's cheaper in the long run," said Col. Crowley. "I don't believe in cheeseparing on these western plains of ours. Cheeseparing out here, amid this bounteous nature, looks as ridiculous as the tactics of the St. Joseph miser.

"There are, you know, two famous misers in St. Joseph—two old bachelors, of course. The older miser called on the younger the other night and found him sitting in the dark. He lit up, however, when he found there was a mortgage paper to be examined. Yes, he lit up a small candle. But as soon as the paper was read through he blew out the candle again.

"'Why did you do that?' his guest, a little offended, asked.

"'Now, my dear sir,' said the host, 'can't we talk just as well in the dark? Of course we can, and think how it saves the candle.'

"So they talked on. Money, money, money. But the host noticed strange sounds coming from his guest's chair—strange creaks and rustlings—and at last he said:

"'What are you doing there, anyway?'

"'Why,' said the other, 'it's dark and nobody can see me, so I thought I'd take off my trousers and save wear and tear.'"

LOST HIS JOB ONE INAUGURATION DAY

A FORMER member of the Washington correspondents' corps, who now is a prosperous business man in a western city, uncoiled this one apropos of inauguration weather and things:

"I was Washington correspondent of a Chicago afternoon newspaper up to the time that Benjamin Harrison was inaugurated in 1889," said he, "but my term of office ceased then, and I'll tell you why.

"I don't know how the thing is done now, but at that time a lot of the Washington correspondents, if not all of them, used to write a good part of the inauguration story in advance. This was because their managing editors wanted, demanded, what's known as 'early copy.' The big papers, even then, of course, maintained regular staffs of correspondents here to cover the entire Washington end of things, but the ordinary papers had only one man on the Washington job, and my paper, while a good one, was in the ordinary class.

"A couple of weeks before the Harrison inaugural I received a letter from my managing editor, in which he told me that he wanted me to get busy right away with the inauguration story.

"'I want to get the paper on the street, with a complete advance story of the inauguration, just a few minutes after the new President takes the oath of office,' said the managing editor in his letter to me, 'and this, of course, will require that we have your story in type, ready to spring, just as soon as we get the flash that the oath has been taken by Mr. Harrison. We'll use your story exclusively in the first edition, and run the Associated Press story in the later editions. So get on the job. Of course, you can't forecast the weather conditions, but we want your introduction to the story all the same. To this end you'll have to write two introductions, marking them "No. 1" and "No. 2." No. 1 will be fair-weather story and No. 2 a bum weather story. On the forenoon of the inauguration you can hand us a flash as to whether we shall use introduction No. 1 or No. 2. Now get down to this thing, for we must have EARLY COPY—I mean EARLY ADVANCE COPY—for this inauguration.'

"That was quite a lot of a letter for a managing editor to write to a correspondent, and so, of course, I took off my coat and let my gallusses down from my shoulders, so to speak, and waded right into the business of writing up a complete inauguration story.

"I got the files of the Washington newspapers for a couple of previous inaugurations and just wrote the account of the Capitol proceedings—the taking of the oath and all that sort of thing—as easy as anything, with one hand tied behind my back.

"Then, with the helpful assistance of some people I knew on the inaugural committees, I got together a fine mass or mess of junk about the parade—the chief military and civic features, the names of the governors of states who'd be riding a-horseback, and all that sort of thing, and, fixing up the line of march, I described scenes and incidents of the parade, sticking in the 'wild cheers' and things in appropriate spots, and so on.

"When I got through with this portion of it—the parade and the scenes and incidents along the line of march end of it, and the things that happened—were going to happen, I mean—on the reviewing scene, and so on—why, it was some story, if I do say so myself, as shouldn't.

"We were all right as to the inaugural address, for the Associated Press got that from Mr. Harrison some days before the inauguration and sent it out on release conditions to all of the papers in its service.

"Then came the job of writing the introduction. I wanted to be fine and splurgy and fine-writey and stuff like that in the introduction, because it was plain that my managing editor was taking a profound personal interest in the inauguration story and I wanted to make a hit with him.

"So, firstly, I wrote the beautifulest fair weather inauguration story that you ever read or heard of in all the days of your bright young life. It was a perfect babe of a fair weather story—banners and gonfalons waving and flapping in the mellow sunshine, the skies of azure or turquoise or mazarine or sapphire—I forget exactly which—and the men shedding their overcoats and the women their wraps under the influence of the lovely balminess, and the President standing on the east portico with his hat off and the warm zephyrs from the southland toying softly with his locks, and all that kind of stuff. I labeled that boy No. 1 and put it aside when finished to write No. 2.

"No. 2 was all the bonbons by way of a rotten weather inaugural introduction, too. I just piled it on thick in making it as miserable and bedraggled and uncomfortable and hellish as possible. Told of how the colors of all the decorations had run, so that none of the flags of nations could be recognized, and how the asphaltum streets were wet and punk underfoot, and of how the leaden skies exuded moisture, and of how the bitter, biting blasts careered and whooped through the cheerless streets of the Capital city, and how the stands along the line of march were all but uninhabited because the folks couldn't stand the vile weather, and of how everybody on the President's reviewing stand looked sad and dreary and gloomy, and of how it was probable that scores of people would lose their lives owing to the exposure they had to—or were going to—endure; and all that sort of dismal stuff. When I got through that No. 2 punk weather introduction and read it over to correct the copy it looked to me like the finest little argument in the world why the date of the inauguration should be changed to some time in the latter part of April, and I was proud of it.

"Was proud of both my introductions, when it comes to that. They were both fine, and the whole story was fine, and I sat down, after finishing, secure in the belief that if my managing editor wasn't tickled something ridiculous over the way I'd covered the inauguration for him in advance, why, he'd be a mighty difficult sort of a proposition to please.

"Well, I sent the inauguration story—both introductions along with the mass of stuff—by mail about five days before the inauguration. The fair weather introduction was, as I say, labeled No. 1 and the punk weather introduction was labeled No. 2.

"Well, that numbering thing on the two introductions was the cause of my downfall.

"By the time inauguration day arrived I'd got sort of mixed in my mind as to whether No. 1 was the fair weather or the bum weather introduction. Five days had passed since I'd fired the stuff into the home office, you see, and I'd been pretty busy in the meantime, and so I got a little hazy about that numbering of the introduction business. My impression was, however, when I woke up on inauguration morning and found the weather to be perfectly vile that No. 1 was the bum weather introduction. I was some shaky about this as I began to think it over, but the more I thought about it the more convinced I became that No. 1 really was the horrible weather introduction. Now, the thing that I should have done was to send a query to the managing editor asking him about that point. But I was twenty years younger then than I am now and kind o' youthfully vain, and I hated to have the M. E. think that I was such a pinhead that I couldn't remember a little point like that for such a piffling space of time as five little days.

"Another thing that I could have done if I hadn't been rattled was to have scribbled a few lines to the effect that the inauguration weather was something hideous, and all that sort of thing, and that would have served as a tip to the folks at the home office to use the correct introduction to the story.

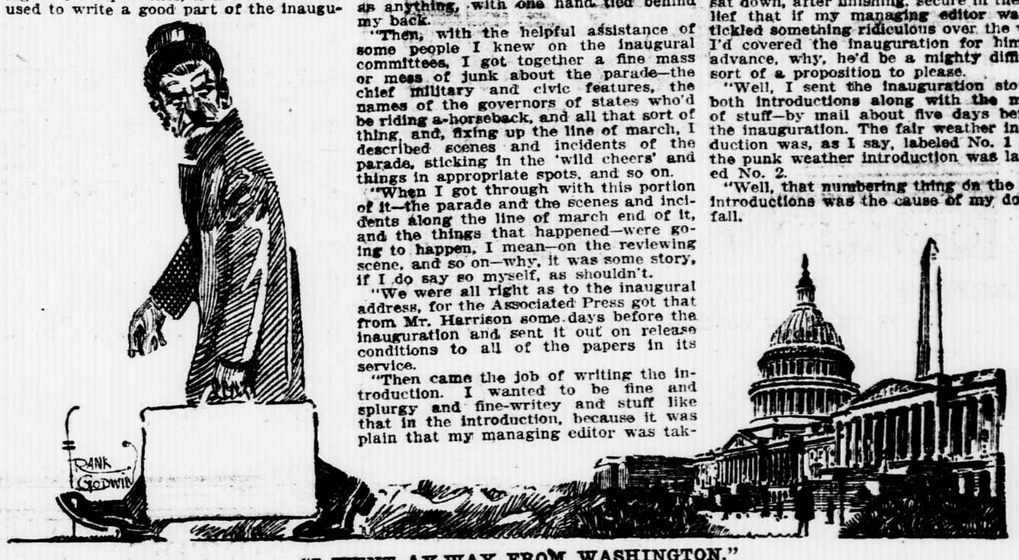
"But, as I say, I was rattled. Moreover, the more I doped on it the more convinced I became that No. 2 was the fair-weather introduction and No. 1 the bad-weather introduction.

"The essence of the telegram from my managing editor, however, was that I, me, myself, the Washington correspondent of the Chicago newspaper aforesaid, was a pinhead, a mollusc, a muttonconk, a rummy, a crumb of Camembert, a fatlid, a clown, a bing-bang incompetent, a 'longshoreman, a roustabout, a coal heaver, a piano mover—oh, well, I don't remember all of 'em, you know, at this distance of twenty years, and I didn't save the telegram. You bet I didn't save the telegram.

"Y'see, No. 1 really was the fair weather introduction to the inauguration story, and my paper had appeared gally on the streets of Chicago telling of how Mr. Harrison, beneath sapphire skies, and with balmy breezes ablowing, and the folks in lightweight spring clothes, had—etc., etc., etc.

"That's all. The Associated Press story, giving the real weather conditions, hadn't sifted into my Chicago paper's office until it was too late—until the paper with my fair weather story was on the street and in the hands of thousands. And all of the other Chicago papers, of course, that appeared on the streets of Chicago at virtually the same time had the rotten weather conditions down pat. In such circumstances—let us be charitable—d'ye really think a managing editor of a newspaper would have been blamed for sending his Washington correspondent a telegram over a private wire that would have caused his arrest and imprisonment if he had submitted it to a public telegraph company for transmission?

"Yes, I went ay-way from Washington on the following day, and I never returned as a correspondent. Never worked in the newspaper business at all after that, in fact. That's the only good part of it. I got a chance to quit the newspaper business and make a couple of dollars for myself in other directions. But, gee! I'd rather have quit the newspaper business without that telegram having been hurled at me!"



"I WENT AY-WAY FROM WASHINGTON."

THIS MAN HAS A COLD IN THE HEAD—HAS A TERRIBLE GROUCH

THE gloomy author of these few lines has a cold in his head.

Consequently the doctrine of hate seems to the aforesaid author the rightest and reasonablest little doctrine that ever came crawling slinkily down the ages.

Aren't those pansies in Lafayette Square disgusting? Pansies? Who cares for pansies? They're silly, that's what they are. They ought to be removed. The District authorities have no right to affront the eye of folks with the spectacle of pansies. Durn pansies!

Aren't these robin redbreasts that are alighting on the greenswards of the parks these days and listening for wums—aren't they perfectly devilish? What's the good of robin redbreasts, anyhow? Who wants 'em? Who ever asked for 'em? Who ever invented 'em, anyhow? And who brought 'em around here? They're nuisances, hopping around on their fool spindly feet. Their red breasts are ugly. They're ridiculous. They ought to be shot. Let's shoot 'em. Let's ask Congress to pass a special law permitting us to shoot all of the robin redbreasts found skipping around on the park grass. Hang robin redbreasts!

And the sparrows—say, can't something be done about these birds chirping around the eaves and things in the morning hours? Who wants infernal chirping birds fooling around on the outside of the house, anyhow? Who gave them the right to chirp? What license have they got to chirp? This thing ought to be looked into. Birds have got no business fizgigging around a city, anyhow. They ought to be kept out in the woods, where they belong. They make too much noise. And they're noisome to look at, too. People who like to watch birds are crazy and ought to be in the bughouse, that's what. Birds. They ought to be chloroformed!

Ugly building, that Corcoran Gallery of Art. Ugliest looking building on earth. Dinky looking. Nothing artistic about it. Ought to be torn down if they can't do any better than that. Nuisance. Eyesore. What do they build such fool buildings as that for anyhow?

That municipal building is another bum looking drum. Punk. Wonder who designed that ridiculous looking dump? Anyway, who wants marble buildings like that on a business street like Pennsylvania avenue? Lot of gingerbread ornamentation on it, too. Ought to've been built of brick. It was meant for people to work in and transact the District business in, wasn't it? Well, then, what did they have to go and put up an imbecile flossy looking shack like that for, anyhow? People that designed that building ought to be sent to St. Elizabeth's.

Capitol's a joke, too. More you see of that building the more insignificant it becomes. All this fluff about the Capitol being "majestic" and all like that is pure bunk. It's a great big pile o' rock, that's all, and it's all out of plumb, besides, and it doesn't fill the eye of anybody except Rubes and Zekes that come here on their wedding tours. Dome's a joke, that's what it is. It's big, of course, but what's the good of that? Can't use a big dome for anything, can you? Well, then!

Notice the sap is beginning to rise in the trees and that buds are swelling. Huh! Well, what of it? Who's going to rhapsodize like a driveling idiot over a lot of swelling buds? Of course, they're swelling. That's what they're here for, isn't it? You wouldn't expect 'em to sulk and not to swell, would you? Oh, don't work off that old stuff about soon the leaves'll be popping and all like that. What's the good of leaves? You can get leaves anywhere, can't you? Same old spring game, anyhow. What's the good of spring? Lot of fool leaves and plants and flowers and blossoms and things come around, regular old way, and folks look at 'em and pretend that they're tickled to death to see 'em, and all that, but they're just faking, that's what they are. They don't care a hooray in Hyattsville for flowers and blossoms and such stuff. They're just making believe.

Huh! Well, what if the grass is beginning to chirk up and look green? What's the difference? You wouldn't want grass to look blue or cerise or lavender or ecru or smoke-colored, would you? What's there in green grass to rave about? You've been seeing green grass all your life, haven't you? Anything remarkable about green grass? Don't go pretending that you take an esthetic delight in green grass, because you can't get away with that kind of bunk and humbug with me. I won't have it. I won't let people think they can hand that kind of tommyrot to me.

Beautiful blue skies, eh? Say, stop that! That kind of stuff gives me the lid-buzz. Who the dickens ever got any good out of what you call beautiful blue skies? I wouldn't care if they were the color of crab apples. It 'ud be all one to me. I'm not bothered by skies, no matter what color they are. Don't talk to me about skies. I haven't any time for such rot.

How's that? Do I like this lemon meringue pie? Well, it's just pie, isn't it? Oh, you took particular pains with it because you thought I'd like it, eh? Oh, well, let it go at that. All that I can see about it is that it's pie, but if you expect me to turn somersaults over it or stand on my head, why, just consider that I've done those things and let it go at that. Of course, I can't see why I should be required to run around in circles over a slab of pie, but if that's what's expected of me, why, all right. Consider that I've run around in circles.

What's the infernal use of—
Ker-choo! Kerchuff! Wow-ee!
Blade a code id the head, eddyhow!

"BLABE A CODE ID THE HEAD, EDDYHOW."

THE LONDON THEATERGOER

"NO wonder the musical comedy succeeds better than anything else in London," said a Detroit socialist. "At the labor conference in Portsmouth George Bernard Shaw explained it all to me.

"Mr. Shaw said that the typical Londoner, the night he is going to the theater, takes a light dinner at a fashionable restaurant and drinks a small bottle of champagne and a liqueur with his coffee. He isn't then, of course, in the mood for anything serious—for an Ibsen sermon or a Sudermann polemic. He wants something light and gay to hold him till the curtain falls, when he can get a good stiff whisky and soda. Something light and gay, with a whisky and soda at every curtain; and, to conclude the night, supper at the Savoy, more champagne and a final liqueur.

"In short, the Londoner's idea of going to the theater is really more a refined and decorous jag than anything else, and the play enters into it only incidentally.

"Mr. Shaw told me how, the first night of his last failure, 'Getting Married,' a friend said to him:

"'Well, how was your comedy received?'

"Mr. Shaw, smiling cynically, replied:

"'There wasn't a dry throat in the house.'"