The Times-Dispatch

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SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1908.

## THE WORK OF CONGRESS.

Comment on the first session of the Sixtieth Congress must be directed more on what was left undone than on what was done. Besides the current appropriation bills, only a few measures of general legislation were enacted.

In the five messages sent by President Roosevelt to Congress from the beginning of December to April 27th were twenty-three recommendations embodying what have become known as "my policies." To all but three or four of these, few in Congress save Senator Beveridge have given much heed. And for this firmness in ignoring many of the demands of the President—backed as they seemingly were by a wide popularity and clamor—Congress deserves only praise.

Inaction by Congress is frequently of incalculable service to the country, and this axiom of government has rarely had a better illustration of its truth than in the disregard this Congress has showed to Mr. Roosevelt's vehement insistence on extending the jurisdiction of the Federal power, particularly the increased authority asked for the executive department.

Notable has been the diversity of opinion, even dissension, developed among the Republican majority, yet equally notable was the discipline exercised to smother these differences when they threatened serious harm to the party.

The session has broken all records in the amount of appropriations; more than $1,000,000,000 having been deemed necessary to accomplish effectually the government's work.

While this stupendous sum was appropriated in the face of a certain deficit in the revenue, it can hardly be called extravagant when the increased demands and the extended activities of the departments are considered. When 30,000 bills are introduced and $2,000,000,000 asked for, care and moderation were not wholly disregarded by Congress: it was probably as economical as the circumstances permitted. If the nation desires to be magnificent and imperial it must pay the price.

Party politics, as usual, had their too predominating influence. Especially was this manifest in the treatment accorded the important subject of tariff reform. Nor can it be but flattery to call the motives that brought about the enactment of the emergency currency bill other than political. Both sides have used the session to lay down their strategetical lines for the presidential campaign, and the congressional controversies will now be transferred to the people.

And to sum it all up: President Roosevelt, despite his diatribes and lurid pictures, has not had it all his own way.

## MEMORIAL DAY.

In any Memorial Day parade may be seen a few gray-haired men and, more significant, a few gray-haired women. It is only for these that the day has its fulness of meaning, all of its glory, all of its grief. They knew and shared in the trials and triumphs and defeats of those whose memory they now are honoring.

For us of this generation there remains the rendering of respect and honor. In the degree that we can sincerely admire whatever of sacrifice and heroism was shown in those four terrible years, to just that extent should we be capable of heroism and self-sacrifice if the like should ever be required of us. In the passage of time the day has ceased to be one of mourning; yet even the remembrance of a "mighty nation" is no little thing

## PRESERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

No natural resource, as of forests or coal mines, has been more abused in Virginia than the oyster business. Benign nature, by means of the hardy and rapid growing old field pine, is seeking to repair in Piedmont and Eastern Virginia the ravages wrought by reckless lumbering, and there is this in favor of the old field pine, namely, that it takes a good many years before the trees are large enough to tempt the cupidity of the sawmill men. The same bounteous nature, if let alone, would restore the depleted oyster beds and establish an enormously profitable oyster industry for Virginia, but ignorance, selfishness and avarice, combined with the fact that a very young oyster has a very great market value, have prevented this desirable result, with the effect that today Virginia, which is naturally the greatest oyster producing State in the world, is seeing her trade go to Texas, Louisiana, Maryland, New York and Connecticut.

Geographically, no spot on earth is better adapted for oyster cultivation than Hampton Roads and the lower Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. From Hampton and Norfolk the Chesapeake and Ohio and Norfolk and Western tap the great Central West, where oysters have become an article of staple diet. This means that oysters can be gathered in the morning and put on the trains that afternoon, and the next day can be distributed in Cincinnati and Columbus. In addition to this geographical advantage the Chesapeake Bay produces an oyster of exceedingly fine flavor and size, and the experience of all planters who have been able to secure enough ground on which to raise the seed needed for cultivating oysters has demonstrated the profitableness of this business when conducted on sound principles.

It is stated, and The Times-Dispatch believes, that oysters worth $7,000,000 a year can be raised and sold by Virginia if proper laws are enforced, and it is undoubted that the present system of administering the State oyster beds is extravagant, inefficient and wrong in principle. Governor Swanson might very well take a hint from President Roosevelt's example, and call together a conference for preserving the natural resources of Virginia. If such a conference ever meets, with the intention and desire of doing what is best for the whole Commonwealth, the first thing that they should undertake would be the redrafting of the oyster laws of the State.

## A PLAYGROUND FOR MADISON WARD.

At the northernmost end of Tenth Street, between Clay and Leigh, lies a small lot and a big gully. Once it was all gully; but the city is filling up that abyss and creating valuable land. When the work of filling in has been completed there will be created an ideal site for a playground for Madison Ward.

The Times-Dispatch has already called attention to the need of air spaces and playgrounds for that section of the city, and no better use could be made of that plot of land than to use it for the good of all citizens. At present there are two or three small houses on this lot, which could either be bought or allowed to remain without seriously impairing the fitness of this location. Or, if it were found necessary or desirable, the houses might be removed and the whole tract dedicated to the welfare of the children.

There will never be a time when this lot can be acquired as cheaply as at present, and it is common sense to make provision for a playground in that section while it can be done with economy.

## QUIET IN A CITY.

Our correspondents who are interesting themselves in the subject of the noise nuisance should bear in mind that the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number holds here as elsewhere. The instinct for ordinary decorum is taken for granted, usually with satisfactory results. Where the instinct is wanting, there are police regulations to supplement. Here, possibly, the city of Richmond is not fully equipped. It would be possible, and desirable, to have many more regulations against superfluous noise.

In Berlin, often said to be the quietest city in Europe, no locomotive is allowed to blow inside the city limits, no hucksters are permitted to yell their wares in overwhelming voices, no teamster with a resoundingly loose-jointed wagon is endured to go on his way rejoicing. Even piano-playing, after a certain hour at night, is punishable with a fine. Mere banging on a piano, at any hour, is similarly punishable.

This may be galling to budding virtuosos, but undoubtedly it is delectable to the neighbors. Quiet is a real asset to a city. Within limits, it is procurable. It is probably safe to say that any modern city which had once made a reasonable approach to noiselessness would look back upon its earlier din as the status of pure barbarism.

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Says the New York Times: "There must be wonderful vitality in the Democratic party. Even after its poor old body has been racked for twelve years by a dreadful malady, it responds," etc. The point of which is: What damages has a man got coming for having himself described as "a dreadful malady"?

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"I remember the time when the victims of rabies were numerous," writes an Englishman to the New York Sun. "Lovely children especially were liable to be attacked by rabid dogs." Is it a fact that the British mad-dog stops to pick and choose the lovely ones out of a flock of children?

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The Washington Herald tells of a man in Pennsylvania who eats nothing but slate pencils. It's an unimportant case, however, and we have no doubt his inside is all write.

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The time of the year is swiftly rolling around when Oyster Bay can hand the smile of contempt to little old Washington, D. C., not to mention Esopus, N. Y.

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Peary says that he could find the Pole with $50,000, but who is going to spend his $50,000 that way? As we have indicated before, the prudent housewife can buy no less than twelve good rhinoceroses for that money.

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Now that Hetty Green has paid $300 to a beauty doctor, in hot cash, astonishment falls stunned and declines to flutter ever again.

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In view of the talk about dividing Texas into two States, will the Norfolk Landmark kindly stand ready to tell us what the plural form is?

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If "God made Congress," as a recent applicant for naturalization stated, how are we to account for the Republicans there?

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Probably it is true that William J. Bryan would carry the safety-razor districts as against William H. Taft.

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Shakespeare, who maintained that there was nothing in a name, had never heard of an emergency currency bill.

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How many more years will it be before Gene V. Debs has a chance to appoint a cabinet?

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At the Denver convention, Alton B. Parker will, of course, have the privilege of hollering for Bryan like anybody else.

## Rhymes for To-Day

### CLIMATIC REGRETS.

YET I was the person who shouted
last winter,
In accents angry and bold:
"What! Ice on the water-can, that I must splinter!
O what is the point of this cold?"

And I was the man who resented a tippet
And cursed at the chill air of Feb.,
And cried: "If the street is so iced that I'll slip it,
Hang me, I'll go home in a keb!"

I railed at the snowfall that made me to shiver,
I screamed at the fine, falling fuzz,
I stormed when I had to get out double kiver,
O silly young ass that I was!

Now what would I give for a snatch of that weather
I once found such fault with—the fool!
O me for a snowstorm and iceberg together!
O me and O me to be cool!

You ne'er want a thing, little dears, when you've got it;
You value it when it is gone——
But there! e'en philosophy's heating—dodrot it!
Wife, how comes the cool julep on?

H. S. H.

## MERELY JOKING.

**Knew Right Away.**

Charlie Loveday: "Um—ah—er—er—er! He! he——!"

Jeweler (to his assistant): "Bring that tray of engagement rings here, Henry."—Spare Moments.

**Nobody to See 'Em Now.**

Mrs. Noseigh: "Jane, you haven't washed the front windows in over a week."

Jane: "No'm. I didn't think it necessary since the neighbors across the street moved away."—Bohemian.

**Leave It to the Plain Girls.**

"You ought to go in for palmistry," declared the intellectual damsel.

"What's the use?" demanded the local beauty. "I can get my hands held easily enough."—Washington Herald.

**Accurate Figure.**

"I tell yes, he's a smart feller. He knows a thing or two."

"That's about all he does know."—Judge.

**Hens Couldn't Understand 'Em.**

"Who got up those hanging gardens of Babylon?"

"Some king."

"For what purpose?"

"I judge he wanted to outwit the neighbors' chickens."—Kansas City Journal.

**Men Only.**

Lady Applicant: "I see, sir, that you advertise for a partner, and as sex wasn't mentioned I called to——"

Merchant: "Pardon me, madam, but I thought the question of sex was quite covered. My advertisement calls for a silent partner."—Boston Transcript.

## HINTS FROM PARAGRAPHERS.

THE two carloads of buttons they are making for the Johnson boom may be a good thing, but a couple of carloads of delegates would mean more.—Philadelphia Press.

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Mae C. Wood did not arrive at the goal of her ambitions but in the gaol of her deserts.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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St. Louis physicians have successfully removed several sections of spine from a patient in that city, but it was much easier than putting backbone into some men who sadly need it.—Washington Post.

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The only trouble with emergency currency appears to be its failure to emerge.—Brooklyn Standard Union.

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If you are opposed to the nomination of Mr. Bryan you are either a predatory trust or a hireling of one.—Chicago Tribune.

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John Barrett, of the Bureau of American Republics, told the s. g. g.'s of Fairmont Seminary, Washington, that this century would be dominated by women. Director Barrett reasons as a man who predicts the sun will rise on the morrow.—New York Mail.

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It appears that our fleet beat all of its own records at target practice in Magdalena Bay. It also appears there were not any other records worth while trying to beat.

## PERSONAL AND GENERAL.

The total wages paid to textile workers in Germany increased from $62,118,000 in 1886 to $122,570,000 in 1905.

In the United States last year 103,000,000 railway ties were used, which denuded 600,000 acres of forest to supply.

Much as it rains in England, there still prevails an indisposition on the part of both men and women to wear rubber overshoes.

A Tennessee farmer has been shipping acorns North for some time, receiving as high as $1 a bushel for them. The acorns are used for planting.

After living seven years in cities, a horse broke out of a stable at Wabash, Ind., and went to his old home in the country, several miles distant.

Great attention is being given in Bohemia to the building of mountain dams not only to provide water-power, but to lessen the damages from floods.

In the vicinity of Lonoke, Ark., about 6,000 acres of prairie land was planted to rice and the yield was about 4,000,000 bushels of rice, valued at $500,000.

After reposing in London for 136 years, the bones of Emanuel Swedenborg, the famous mystic and writer, will soon be on their way to Sweden for burial in their native soil.

Old Bowdoin College is preparing to welcome at commencement time next month the survivors of the class of '58. Of its twenty-nine members fifteen of the class are living.

Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell's boat, the Lorna Doone, is in Boston harbor, taking on a cargo of cast-off clothing and other gifts for the poor of Labrador, among whom Dr. Grenfell labors.

Prince Augustine de Iturbide, grandson of the great liberator of Mexico, heir to a throne, man of the world, educated, widely traveled and a member of the jeunesse doree of many European capitals, has forsaken the ways of the fashionable world and joined the Third Order of St. Francis. In Washington fashionable society Prince Iturbide was widely known for many years.

The eminent philologist, Prof. Skeat, is counted among the new converts to Esperanto. He took his first lesson at 1 P. M., and that evening was able to appear before an Esperanto society and translate into English a story written in the new language. But Prof. Skeat is an expert linguist; the average learner probably could not hope to master Esperanto in so summary a fashion.

## THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

### How It Will Be Affected by the Crumpacker Resolution.

In just what respect would the South suffer from a Census Bureau investigation of negro disfranchisement such as the Crumpacker publicity bill provides for? Southern representation cannot be reduced by a Census Bureau report.

In preventing publicity of campaign contributions in order to balk this inquiry the Democratic Senators have allowed the Republicans to put them in a hole. The South cannot prevent a reduction in representation merely by defeating a publicity bill. The Republicans can still take up at any time in the future the question of enforcing the fourteenth amendment.

If the South desires to hold its present representation it must help restore the Democratic party in the North, which twelve years of Bryanism has all but obliterated in national affairs.

The World's advice to the Southern Senators is to help pass the publicity bill, regardless of the disfranchisement investigation; defeat Bryan at Denver, nominate Johnson, rehabilitate the Democratic party, and then fight out the issue of reduction of representation squarely on its merits.

The South can save the Democratic party. Unless the South does so, the South will be the chief victim of its own folly.—New York World.

## STATE PRESS

**No Perfect Method.**

Last winter while the State Legislature was in session the Journal on several occasions called the attention to the necessity for some method of remedying the manner in which so many ill-advised and purely technical laws were biennially placed upon our statute books, only to be rendered futile whenever brought before the Supreme Court, either on constitutional grounds, for some defect as to detail in their construction, or conflict with some other law.—Fredericksburg Journal.

**The Loyal Daniel.**

No one who knows the man is surprised at the statement from Senator Daniel to the effect that he will support Mr. Bryan if he be nominated. His traducers have tried to make it appear otherwise, but he was a loyal Democrat before many of them were born. Nothing else was expected of him except by the demagogues, notwithstanding the fits that Mr. Thomas, of Lynchburg, has been on the verge of throwing.—South Hill Enterprise.

**A Good Investment.**

This is a problem for some of our citizens to solve. We know that this matter has been in the minds of several gentlemen for some time, and sincerely wish to live to see the day when an electric line will connect the two towns. Our capital city, Richmond, should be interested in this line, as well as the Southern Railway Company, for a great area of good farming land, thickly settled, and plenty of deep water harbors would be opened up.—West Point News.

**Hare and Hounds.**

The Democrats of Nelson county have elected Mr. Thomas Fortune Ryan, of New York, one of their delegates to the Roanoke convention. Mr. Ryan appears to have his attacks of Democracy quadrennially. And they do not last long. He employs the interims in contributing money toward the defeat of Democratic nominees. The minutes of the New York City grand jury have been rather illuminating in this particular since the last time Mr. Ryan figured as a delegate from Nelson county.—Harrisonburg News.

**A Spade.**

The Republican House of Representatives has passed, under pressure from their political boss, Speaker Cannon, a so-called emergency currency bill, which will be promptly repealed after the election. For a precious set of political hypocrites, commend us to the majority membership in Congress.—Fredericksburg Star.

**Have Not Heard News.**

The assertion is being made in certain quarters that the necessities of life are cheaper now than they have been in the past two years. Incidentally, however, the grocers and other merchants do not appear to be aware of it.—Floyd Press.

**Hit When He's Down.**

It looks as if a mistake was made in Richmond by appointing a legislative committee to build the new Capitol. But it has stood for three years, which is longer than many of their laws stand.—Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch.

## Voice of the People

**The Cry of the Vendor.**

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—While "West Grace" has no desire to curtail the means by which the honorable merchant who signs himself "R. P. H." disposes of his wares through street peddlers, she must yet take issue with him on the manner of that disposal.

If he would spend a weekday at home and would undertake to do some specific work requiring close attention and concentration; or, if he passed the day at the bedside of some one who was ill and suffering for lack of sleep and quiet, perhaps the fact of ten or twelve lusty-lunged youths calling "ap-puls," or "straw-berries," or "ripe bananas," at the tops of their voices under his windows might upset him to the degree of making a frantic appeal to any one who had authority to put an end to the noise. Perhaps then he would speedily find that "persons living in comfortable homes on the best streets," have actually no incentive to sit down in the quiet, calm frame of mind necessary to "the appreciation of their own blessings."

One inducement to live on a "best street" is the assurance that one's surroundings are also to be the best that can be obtained for paying for such residential privilege. If the "best street" is to be made a testing spot for the lungs of those who have wares to dispose of, it has lost all claim to its title.

The honorable merchant fancies that it is no pleasure to the street peddler to shriek his wares aloud. Well, perhaps it is none to the peddler himself, but if the honorable merchant will observe, the peddler has always with him one or two or even three, boys, who vie with each other in shrieking and who, when remonstrated with, shriek all the louder to show their utter indifference to remonstrance.

Now, to be personal, "West Grace" has to earn her own living. She has therefore much sympathy for those who are forced to do likewise, and she is quite well aware that no species of wage-earning is a flowery bed of ease by any means. She is a great believer, moreover, in the adage "live and let live"; but when the liver proceeds to live so vociferously as to make a nuisance of himself to block after block of good people, then she is wise enough to see that he also must be taught to respect the adage.

The honorable merchant wished to put an end to "the skating nuisance." Now, this was a thing that gave pleasure to hundreds of people, besides being of immense profit to a number of good merchants of this city. It is just possible that he sent for an officer to put a stop to it, entirely forgetting that "if he had thought less of his own selfish comfort and had taken a broader and more humane view of life" perhaps, even though he was nervous and irritable, he "would not have found the nuisance so maddening," but would have remembered that "we are all members of one body." If that body chose to skate he should have taken pleasure in their pleasure.

It is not possible to judge for each other either in the matter of taste or of nuisances. Perhaps if "West Grace" had wares to put on the market the yells of those who peddled them would be as siren strains to her ears; while if the honorable merchant had ever known the exhilaration of skating, the hum of the little wheels would have been like music to him. But "West Grace" defies the honorable merchant to say that he would not endeavor to put down anything that he fancied encroached upon his rights as a citizen and an inhabitant of "a comfortable home in the best street."

WEST GRACE.

**Mr. Ryan for Senator.**

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—The numerous friends of Mr. Thomas F. Ryan will be much gratified to learn of his recently announced intention to become actively interested in the political affairs of his party in his native State, and that he may be chosen to represent the Old Dominion in the United States Senate next year.

If Mr. Ryan is elected a delegate to the Denver convention his services to his party will be almost invaluable, because, besides being a very wealthy man of great influence, he possesses rare tact and sagacity. If he exerts the same talent to restore harmony amongst the discordant elements in the Democratic party that he displayed in reconciling the contending parties in the large corporations with which he has been connected, he will be entitled to any honor that can be conferred upon him.

J. H. T.

**Don't Muzzle.**

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—You could not muzzle the rooster, but it seems now some one wishes through this column to down the industry of gaining a livelihood by one of God's laws—the sweat of the brow.

There are some who are glad to know that fruit is plentiful and to hear the voice of the vendors. Many different wheels must turn to make life for one and all. Is there not some method to quiet the chronic croakers of this beautiful World God created for His own glory?

A CONSTANT READER.

Petersburg, Va., May 28, 1908.

## Memorial Day Poems

**Tribute to Colonel Cowardin.**

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—Having known Colonel C. O'B. Cowardin, who was a great friend of mine in years gone by and under whose conducting I sang in the Richmond Cathedral choir, I thought I would send The Times-Dispatch an humble production of my brain for publication in your issue of the 30th inst. I hope Colonel C. O'B. Cowardin is enjoying the fruits of a life well spent, and that he has entered into the eternal sphere where he will have gained the reward which his good works on earth have merited. He was the most jovial entertainer in the Southern capital, and has been a sad loss to those who loved him. As an entertainer and story-teller he had no superior, but as a sterling man he was excelled by none.

JOHN J. McGUINESS.

Philadelphia, Pa., May 26, 1908.

**Our Nation's Honored Dead—A Tribute to the Blue and the Gray.**

What sadd'ning mem'ries fill our hearts to-day,
As 'round our heroes' graves we softly tread,
And decorate them with the flowers of May—
Those silent chambers of our honored dead.
All bitterness since Sumter's fall has flown;
Our foes become our friends through fleeting years;
And graves that closed o'er patriots unknown
Are watered with our sympathetic tears.
As soldiers to their colors they proved true—
One wore the gray, the other wore the blue.

They fought with all their courage, strength and might,
Each man believing that his cause was just;
They perished in a well-contested fight,
Their bones long since are crumbling into dust.
At Gettysburg (on Cemetery Hill);
No fiercer fight in hist'ry e'er was fought;
'Twas vict'ry or a soldier's grave to fill
That two great armies in death's struggle sought.
With love of country burning in each breast,
They offered up their lives, and sank to rest.

Old vet'rans who have reached threescore and ten,
Will join their comrades in to-day's parade;
They left their homes, their wives and children, when
Their country called upon them for their aid.
Survivors of a fierce and bloody strife,
They'll march with colors rent with battle scars,
And now the foe they fought would give his life
Defending that old flag—the Stripes and Stars.
'Gainst foreign powers this country he would save;
Let's strew sweet flowers o'er the hero's grave.

JOHN J. McGUINESS.

Philadelphia (formerly of Richmond, Va.), May 30, 1908.

**Decoration Day.**

Orchids and lilies and roses and sweet peas,
Bluebells and daisies and garlands of May,
Boxwood and violets and pansies and heart's-ease,
Come in your best dress and fragrance to-day.

Lay on the graves of our heroes your homage,
Over the sleep of the brave waft your breath;
Bloom o'er the dust of immortal courage,
Tell of the triumph they won over death.

Come from the city, farm, village and wildwood,
Mountain and ocean and plain far away,
Young men and maidens, gray heads and sweet childhood,
Meet by the mounds where our dead soldiers lay.

Silver-tongued orators tell the old story,
Like some Demosthenes on the green sward,
When from the carnage emblazoned in glory
Rolled home the ranks of the old Grecian Guard.

Speak of the battles, the camps and the prisons;
Tell of the forests and swamps where they lie,
Dying alone, 'neath the stars in the heavens,
Kissed by the pitying winds passing by.

Talk of the banners they brought from the storming,
Tell when defeated, were not in despair,
Speak of the emblem high-masted each morning,
Each night untarnished, still waving up there.

Here this May morning beneath the sun's beaming,
Tenderly lay we our tribute of love,
On the green sod where our warriors lay dreaming,
Waiting the call of the bugle above.

Pledge we anew by our lives and our station,
Never to suffer dishonor to fall
On their brave effort, their name, and our nation,
Nor on the old flag that floats over all.

D. H. KENNY.

Richmond, Va.

**Confederate Memorial Day.**

Hear me while I chant a lay—listen well,
And a picture grand portray—time will tell,
Of the boys in Southern Gray—Oh! so true,
Who to glory led the way—now so few.
For they fought for what was right—Oh! so well,
Naught the glory then can blight—though they fell.

For their freedom and their hearth, as true men;
For the land that gave them birth—Ah! what then?
See the history—it will tell to your ken;
History never read so well—not till then.
Now at rest beneath the sod—calmly sleep,
And their souls are with their God—while we weep.

But with us their memory'll stay—as to-day;
And to them we'll homage pay—yes, alway.
And the laurel leaf will lay on their grave,
Though the flag they loved so well cannot wave.
May the lessons they have taught ever dwell
In the land for which they fought—Oh! so well.

Then with hearts and hands high the stone we'll raise;
Thus more fittingly than words—chant their praise;
And let boys and maidens sing—loud and long,
To their virtues tribute bring—in their song,
Thus inspire to deeds as great—man and boy,
Then to serve the land they loved will be joy.

ANNE CHEW DORSEY COQUILLETT.

**Not so Simple.**

Mr. Perkins, of New York, was probably right when he said in the debate on the diplomatic bill that Franklin's democratic simplicity, when he represented the young republic in France, was on a scale that would require an income of $50,000 a year nowadays to maintain. It is a common mistake to err about the economy of the fathers of the republic. Most of them expended all the money they could afford to keep up the dignity of their offices.—New York Times.

## The City of the Angels

BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

Los Angeles, Cal.

The Los Angeles Country Club is getting ready to move. It is the only country club in America which is migratory by habit. It has moved before, and it will move again, because it has to move to keep in the country. Years ago when the club was first organized it went away out into the rural districts and established itself. By and by the city of Los Angeles followed it, streets and city homes grew up all around it, and it was a country club in name only. So the club cut up its ground into city lots, sold them for a fortune and went miles away out into the country. But the city of Los Angeles pursued it. The Country Club is surrounded by paved streets and houses regularly planted on hundred-foot lots. It is no more in the country that the Madison Square of Manhattan. It is preparing to sell out again, for a greater fortune this time, and it will pitch its tent somewhere five or six miles away from the city.

But the club is hopeless. It has abandoned all idea of a permanent home. It knows it can find no rest from its wandering. Said the club, speaking through one of its members: "We will try to find a place next time where we can stay for eight or ten years. We can't hope for more, because if we went beyond the city limits of Los Angeles of 1920 we would have to get so far away that it would take nearly all day to go and come from the club."

Country clubs live a precarious life in this part of the world. There is no objection to clubs, but the descriptive adjective "country" is like a red rag to a bull when waved in the face of a city that doubles its population every five or six years. Another Los Angeles Country Club, whose members actually want to play polo and golf, has undertaken the most elaborate precautions to prevent the city from swallowing it whole. It has established itself in a deep ravine which is protected on the city side by a high mountain. The trolley line will approach it on the outside of the mountain wall. But no city-building, country-destroying trolley will be permitted to invade the sacred precincts. By no means. The members of the club will alight from trolley cars in the face of a blank and forbidding cliff. They will glance furtively about to see if Frank Wiggins or any other agent of the city-extending Chamber of Commerce is about. If the coast is clear the club member will dart quickly into a half concealed opening in the cliff. It is the tunnel through the mountain which leads to the country club. It is a private tunnel to be used by members only. Even so robust and all-devouring a city as Los Angeles will have to look alive if it ever succeeds in capturing this well-fortified Country Club.

Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles, as this city was called when it was a Spanish pueblo, is not an enemy of the good people who play golf and tennis. But it is the implacable foe of rural territory. It pounces upon farms and orchards and transforms them into city wards. In carrying on this warfare against the rural territory surrounding it, Los Angeles has grown more rapidly than any other American city of importance. It has kept its growth up steadily, and it intends to keep it going.

Los Angeles was a hundred years old in 1880. It then boasted of a population of 11,000 people. Five years later came the new railroad which gave it transcontinental transportation facilities. Apparently the first thing the railroad brought was a regiment of real estate agents and a boom. Like the other town booms of the eighties, things went too far and too high. There was a great inflation, and then the bubble burst. But even after the boom had collapsed, Los Angeles still had 50,000 people, which means that its population was multiplied by five in five years. The real estate agents were left here when the bottom fell out of the boom. It was resolved that the good work that had been done should not perish.

So it came about that on the ruins of the boom was born the Chamber of Commerce. The men who went into that organization proclaimed that doctrine of boost. They furthermore declared that he who does not boost is an enemy to the city. That was twenty years ago. The Chamber of Commerce has an influence greater than any other single organization of its kind in any American city. Boosting is the essence of the life work of every Angeleno. A knocker is not permitted to live in the town. This is not a fanciful characterization; it is a literal fact that a resident of Los Angeles who begins to "knock" on the town is so completely ostracized that he must choose between exile and becoming a pariah among his own people. The record of men who have been "fired" from good jobs at the public request because of the heinous guilt of "knocking" is a long one in Los Angeles.

In the ten years between 1890 and 1900 the city doubled in population—that is, it reached the hundred thousand class with a few thousand to spare, according to the Federal census. The school census taken this month shows a population of 304,000—having tripled in eight years. Four years ago a real estate agent put up a number of wooden "For Sale" signs on vacant lots. On each was the bold inscription: "Los Angeles, Population 200,000 in 1910."

Some of the signs are still in existence, but the painter has run a line through the "200,000" and has painted beneath it "350,000." Few cities realize the ambitions of real estate agents as presented on "For Sale" signs within the limit of time fixed. Los Angeles has made even the optimism of a real estate man seem like the conservative estimates of a property-holder talking business with the assessor.

There may be those who will say that the school census is not good authority. Even if the enumerators have overstepped the bounds a little bit, the United States census office has declared that the growth of Los Angeles has been so much greater in proportion than for the preceding decade that it was forced to omit the city from the list of mid-decade population estimates. The most conservative estimate made places the present population at 285,000, which is but little below the 300,000 mark. Of course, none of these statistics take into account the many beautiful suburban towns which are a part of the metropolitan clientele of Los Angeles.

When the last census was taken, eight years ago, Los Angeles was the thirty-seventh city in the United States in the amount of receipts at the postoffice. Now it has moved up to eighteenth in the list, ranking just ahead of Indianapolis. On account of the large number of tourists and other transient visitors who come to stay a week or a month, the Los Angeles postoffice has the largest general delivery service in the whole country. It has proved almost impossible to provide room in buildings to keep up with the rapid expansion of the postal business of the city.

Not all of the tourists who come to Los Angeles are rich people who can afford to stay in the magnificent hotels with which the city is plentifully provided. The great majority of the visitors take furnished rooms. The Chamber of Commerce helps the visitor to find a place to stay and it has on its list 60,000 furnished rooms. No city in the country of the size has anything like this number, and not even New York can boast of a list or directory which contains so many addresses of the kind. The Angeleno is always willing to help a stranger. Any policeman can direct one how to reach any address in the city by street car—something that can be done in very few cities. Of course, the "cop" is aided by a book he carries, but Los Angeles sees that he has the book.

The Los Angeles real estate agent is in a class by himself. The stranger within the gates cannot escape him. He calls at the hotels. Let the stranger declare that he is only a tourist; that he doesn't want to buy any property; that he has a prejudice against real estate; that nothing on earth could induce him to become interested in a corner lot. The real estate agent smilingly replies:

"Certainly, certainly; but I came around just to take you for a drive over the city, just to show you the town."

From his tone one would think that selling land was the last thing on earth he would care to think about.

The agent takes the stranger into his motor car. He sweeps through the well-paved streets. He points out the splendid system of ornamental street lighting, and mentions that Los Angeles was the first American city to follow the lead of Paris in this particular. He indicates new office buildings and hotels with a careless mention of millions of dollars in connection with each. He stops for a minute on the crest of an elevation and says: "Look." The stranger looks about, and as far as he can see in every direction there are neat streets bordered with roses and geraniums and flanked with rows of homes and bungalows of every conceivable style of architecture except the square box effects of Eastern cities.

When the vision is all taken in the real estate agent casually remarks that four years ago there wasn't a house in all that section. Parks, clubs, palatial residences, avenues of palms, long rows of pepper trees, a profusion of tropic flowers and a maze of beautiful homes. The real estate agent hasn't yet said a thing about lots. But he will. He knows that there is a good chance to sell some of them, for that is exactly the way some forty or fifty thousand people have been brought to Los Angeles.

The City of the Angels refuses point blank to look at the hole. It concentrates its gaze upon the doughnut. When the panic came last October it hit Los Angeles as it did every other city. But creditor wholesalers said to debtor retailers:

"You mustn't fail. We won't let you fail. We will give you more time. We must look out for the reputation of the town."

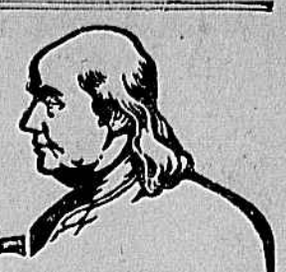
The booster spirit here penetrates even into the region of the personal pocketbook. It is a city of ideals. Even a real estate agent, with his mind on business, said:

"Remember, Los Angeles can furnish a geranium for every man, woman and child in the United States every day."

(Copyright, 1908, by Frederic J. Haskin.)

* * *

To-morrow—Oranges and Progress.



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