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TWELVE PAGES.

FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 1900.

"SNAGGED" IN FALLING.

There is undoubted apprehension in the minds of his friends about the condition of the Hon. Thomas S. Martin regarding the Constitutional Convention. He seems recently to have been shoved from the fence upon which he sat with much grace, and becoming inanimate from the shock, and unable to speak, has been nailed to the wrong side of the fence, where his good reputation is warping in the hot rays of the noontide sun of criticism of his admirers.

Some of his friends are asking the Senator to speak, if only as an evidence that life is not extinct, but the shock is too severe, and the Senator still stands bolt upright nailed to the wrong side of the fence by the anti-Convention people, blinking away without even the protection of blue glasses.

It were a pity to have disturbed the sphinx-like grace of this statue of silence; but since the rude awakening has resulted in such realistic disaster to the fond hopes of the erstwhile admirers of this Senator, the speculative instinct inherent in human nature forbids any interference with his natural actions. The question is, when the warping process twists him into activity what will he do, and what excuse will he give for fighting the Convention, besides providing for a few henchmen?

Senator Daniel has had better luck. Hon. Carter Glass, of Lynchburg, lifted him over on the right side of the fence in favor of Constitutional amendment, but he seems to have gotten his leg hung in some way on the fence, and it may be the same nail holding Senator Martin on the other side upon which Senator Daniel is caught.

Senator Daniel has made Rome howl with his vociferous and indignant eloquence, for Carter Glass wound him up tight and well, in favor of a Constitutional Amendment; but his silence about submitting the work of the Convention to the people is as ominous as his thunderous indignation that "somebody" thought he opposed the Convention. Senator Daniel should unhook his leg from that Senator Martin nail on the fence.

The Senator made a nice piece of statuette while he was on the fence, but Carter Glass shoved him off so abruptly that he did not have time to get entirely loose from the Senator Martin nail.

Come to think of it, it does not take much more time to say whether he is in favor of submitting the new Constitution to the people than it took to grow indignant at being accused of fighting against a Convention. Out with it, Senator! Your friends expect it of you.

Beyond all doubt, John W. Daniel is a power in this State. He draws his inspiration and his strength from the people. It was they who went out of their way to endorse him at the Roanoke Convention. It is the people who place the laurel wreath of applause and fame upon his brow. Will the Senator so far forget those who love him and admire him (and upon whom his name and fame feed and live) as to ignore and desert them? We do not believe it.

President McKinley has cited the fact that vacancies may occur in offices under the Porto Rican bill faster than they can be filled. The prospect of a few vacant offices that can be filled never fails to create consternation among the faithful.

JEFFERSON AND THE PROPHET.

From his letter to the Brooklyn Democratic Club, on the occasion of its celebration of Thomas Jefferson's birthday, it will be inferred that the vasty deeps of Hon. Grover Cleveland's soul are vexed. As on all previous occasions, the eructations constitute a more or less portentous phenomenon. The Hon. G. C., it will be noted, is stout in his allegiance to the "old and well-organized standards" (whatever an "organized standard" may be), yet it was he who first made a radical and pronounced departure from one of the oldest tenets of the party—the Jeffersonian tenet of bimetallism.

It will be conceded, however, that when the sage of Princeton declares that "there has not been a time when false leadership and a departure from simple Democratic faith have not been quickly discovered and ruthlessly rebuked by listless support, pronounced defection and bitter defeat," he puts the case mildly. The support which his wing of the party marshaled at Chicago in 1896, and afterward at the polls, was something more than listless; and if we may judge from the consequent howl, the defeat was assuredly bitter.

Quitting the past and coming down to the present, Dr. Cleveland finds the patient in a bad way, and promulgates this diagnosis:

"The healthfulness of our party may well be questioned when it shrinks from such an examination of its position as will enable it to avoid disaster by keeping in a course of safety, under the guidance of true Democracy."

This is ambiguous. Dr. Cleveland's reference to "our party" would indicate that he has in mind the hosts (?) of Palmer and Buckner. If this be true, he has hit the symptoms exactly. Part of that magnificent array has so "swunk" from examination that it has taken to the woods; while part of it has concluded to return to the "guidance of true Democracy." As the Doctor was writing to a Democratic club, however, he may have "had in mind the Democratic party. If so, his observations are quite unintelligible. It has never shrunk from an examination of its position since, at Chicago, it assumed a position it could defend before the people,—the old position it occupied before the attempt was made by recalcitrant leaders (like the Doctor) to drag it into the Republican camp. It has, on the contrary, invited the fullest possible examination of its own position, and has so effectually examined that of its enemies, that they were driven to the adoption of the tactics of the guerilla and the bush-whacker.

Even his most fanatical followers will have to admit that G. C., as the prophet, has not quite come up to the occasion. It is Clevelandesque, to be sure. Who else would, after nearly four years had given opportunity for calm reflection, have complacently assumed that, in repudiating him for betraying Democratic principles, the party had repudiated the principals also?

"DEWEY AND DONNELLY."

Having failed to grab time by the forelock, there is now a splendid opportunity for Admiral Dewey to get a grip of its fetlock, if he still has left the dash and daring that carried him into the harbor at Manila, and at the same time to inject into a hot campaign an element that will go far to relieve its stress and strenuousness. We advert to the fact that the middle-of-the-road Populists show signs of wavering in their allegiance to Hon. Wharton Barker, who nominated himself for President as soon as the 1896 returns were announced.

Lieutenant Carl Brown, who is and has been on terms of the closest relationship with fame as the commissary officer of Coxey's army, has declared outright for the Admiral, and in a speech before the middle-of-the-road Populists of Missouri is credited with saying:

"Barker is up against the iron wall of conditions, and defeat for him is inevitable. The head of the ticket should be the popular idol of the people, Admiral George Dewey, with Wharton Barker or Ignatius Donnelly for Vice-President."

"Dewey and Barker," or "Dewey and Donnelly"—what a slogan is there! In the classic phraseology of Lieutenant Brown:

"With such a ticket we will stand some show of knocking out both the ticket dominated by the money power and headed by President McKinley, and that headed by Wm. J. Bryan."

"Show?" Well, we should say so. Beyond peradventure it would be the show of the century! It would not be necessary to "knock out" any ticket. No other ticket would be in it!

We trust that the Hon. Wharton Barker will see it in the proper light and be reasonable. Lieutenant Brown says he is "up against the iron wall of conditions;" and Lieutenant Brown ought to know. He has been there himself. If Hon. Wharton entertains any doubt of his ability to climb over, or scratch under, he should come off the perch. He can retire from the field with honor. Nobody will doubt his courage or his willingness to bear the brunt of battle.

Let him retire altogether and wait till next time. "Dewey and Donnelly"—that is the mouth-filling, soul-thrilling cry for this emergency. None, none can resist its music and its inspiration!

Do not forget that the paramount issue before the Democrats of Virginia now is whether they are willing to stand for a revised Constitution WITHOUT ITS SUBMISSION TO A VOTE OF THE PEOPLE.

SPEAKER HENDERSON: AUTOCRAT.

An incident in connection with the Nicaragua Canal bill has served to direct attention to the growth of autocracy at Washington, and likewise to another of Mr. McKinley's famous changes of mind. There has been for some time a strong desire among Congressmen of both parties to take up the consideration of the canal bill, but all efforts to get it before the House have proved futile, because Speaker Henderson and the Committee on Rules were unwilling for it to be taken up. Finally a petition signed by 250 members of Congress, 125 from each political party, has been presented to the Speaker, begging that he graciously permit the representatives of the American people to call up this measure!

Of course, 250 is a majority of the House, and the inquiry naturally arises, why can not a majority consider anything it pleases it to consider? The answer is that nothing can get before the House without the consent of the Speaker and the Committee on Rules, EVEN THOUGH A MAJORITY DEMAND IT. Thus three men are able to block action upon any measure to which they are hostile; and are vested with more power than a majority of the House. To such a pass has the Republican party brought one branch of the National Legislature.

The reason of the Speaker's refusal to permit the bill to be considered is to be found in the President's opposition to it. The Senate having indicated an intention to reject the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, which sought to put the Canal under the virtual control of England, Mr. McKinley, through pique, is blocking canal legislation in the House. This is being done in the face of his specific recommendation in his message to Congress, that it authorize the construction of the canal.

All this is apart from the merits of the question, as to whether the canal should be constructed, but it serves to show how, in another matter of grave moment, Mr. McKinley has changed front; and likewise how completely the Executive can dominate Congress through the Reed rules and a pliant Speaker of the House.

Another incident calculated to warm the hearts of the American people with pride in the dominant statesmanship of the hour was the speech of Mr. Gresvenor in avoidance of the question as to whether Mr. McKinley had changed his mind on the Porto Rican measure (?) This was the language of the Republican floor leader in defending the position of his party:

"We would not consent that millions and millions of Malays and all those people might come over here and march into our labor markets, and we will make it warm for you before the campaign is over."

And this, gentle reader, was the language of a "statesman" on the floor of Congress, not of a school boy in the debating club of Billville.

The pass to which Mr. Quay's case has been brought in the United States Senate is clear from the fact that his friends on the Elections Committee are delaying consideration of the report adverse to Senator Clark, until the latter shall have cast his vote to seat Mr. Quay. And yet we are told that the Senate was never an abler or a cleaner body than at present. The exclusion of Clark is a foregone conclusion, but Quay is willing to accept his vote for his own "vindication;" and Quay's friends are aiding and abetting this dirty piece of peanut politics.

In case of war between Russia and Japan, the contest would not be so unequal as might be imagined. All the advantage of position is with Japan. The first point to be settled would be naval supremacy in Asiatic waters, and while Russia has 22 first-class battleships, as against Japan's 6; and 12 armored cruisers, as against Japan's 7, the fleet of the latter is mobilized and ready for instant action, while Russia's is scattered. On land and sea, the Japs have shown themselves good fighters. Their isolated position makes them almost impregnable to land attacks.

In arming the Basutos against the Boers, England has shown that tender regard for weak peoples which has been the "steady company" of her morning drum-beat.

Paducah, Kentucky, has sent Admiral Dewey twelve quart bottles of whiskey. The Kentucklian can always be depended on to inject a little exhilaration into the gloom.

Hon. Thomas B. Reed emerged smiling from a wreck on the New York elevated. Hon. Tom Reed was several times Speaker of the House.

Senator Allison declines to be the tail of the kite, and Secretary Long can't be. Will the kite have to worry along without a tail?

The Ameer of Afghanistan will not get in reach of Adamzad if he can help it. The pair ought to put up something neat in the way of a tussle.

What difference does it make that a Republican convention hissed Hon. Lemuel Eli Quigg? Lem Eli is a whole volume of applause in himself.

The Georgia man who wooed the object of his affections by throwing rocks at her got thirty days for thinking he was still a schoolboy.

Hawaii is to have a delegate in Congress, but Porto Rico is not. Our colonial scheme is not only beautiful, but consistent.

Chicago is still of the opinion that Paris don't know how to do the thing up brown.

That invitation to the Duke of d'Arcos may have been due to Chicago's jealousy of his famous brand of hams.

Admiral Dewey may not get the Presidency, but autograph albums are still coming his way.

Paris seems inclined to convert its funerals into one of those progressive functions.

NOTES AND OPINIONS.

THE WAYS OF PLATT.
(Hartford Courant.)

It was on exhibition—one kind of harmony, that is—at the New York Republican State Convention yesterday. The business might have been transacted to the music of lutes and soft recorders. Senator Platt and Mr. Odell had nicely settled everything of importance in advance—the Troy contest and the other contest, the platform, the make-up of the electoral ticket, the delegation to Philadelphia, the State Committee. All the convention really had to do was to do as it was told, to refrain from doing anything else, to greet its leaders with loyal cheers, to listen to the usual speeches and to applaud at the right places.

MOSQUITOES AND A FREE COUNTRY.
(Roanoke Times.)

It will no doubt be immensely interesting to the suffering public to know that the Department of Agriculture at Washington has issued a bulletin entitled "How to Distinguish the Different Mosquitoes of North America." If there are any in this broad land who have not learned by hard and bitter experience to distinguish between the various mosquitoes that hover lovingly around the couch where Morpheus seeks to get in a little solid work, we have not been apprised of the fact. The Agriculutral Department divides the mosquitoes into the culcidae, the simullidae and the culex. The varieties should be borne in mind, as this is a free country and people have the privilege of calling for any kind of anything they want. If you ask for culex and find instead a simullidae sitting astride your thorax, you have a kick coming to you, and can demand the return of your blood. No doubt the Government means well, but it has done nothing more than to strike terror to the souls of the unprotected. What if these mosquitoes should get together and form a trust? They live on the people anyhow and could get much fatter by amalgamation.

PLUM PUDDING VS. CROW.
(Baltimore American.)

And now the chances are that Buller, who was to eat his Christmas dinner in Pretoria will be sent back to eat crow in London. Which impresses anew the great moral that a man should think twice before he speaks once.

TWO BILLS TO THE MINUTE.
(Savannah News.)

The Senate the other day passed eighty-three private pension bills in forty-five minutes. The rate was practically two bills passed to the minute. Of course it was a matter of absolute impossibility for any adequate understanding of the merits of the bills to be arrived at by the members. The measures were simply railroaded through, without anybody knowing or caring anything about them. It it such legislation as this which scandalizes the pension system and opens the doors of the treasury to fraud and unworthiness.

THE PEOPLE'S APPROVAL NECESSARY.
(Danville Register.)

The question of submitting the Constitution, when framed, to the people for ratification or rejection, is now the topic of general newspaper discussion. So far as we have seen the only newspaper to come out boldly against such reference of the convention's labors is the Charlottesville Progress. Our contemporary is in a hopeless minority, and though the minority is not necessarily wrong, we think it is undoubtedly in this case. Common prudence demands that the servants of the people shall be responsible to those from whom they derive their authority. A constitution adopted by a convention of representative Virginians may be, and we trust will be, such as to command the approval of the voters, but it is better to lose the labor and the money expended thereon than that a constitution obnoxious to the people should be put upon them. Let the people say whether or not they favor and approve the constitution under which they are to live. It is their right to demand it. It is not a question of trusting or distrusting our fellow-citizens, and should not be viewed in that light. But, however wise our representatives in that convention may be, they may make mistakes from which the people will suffer. The difficulty of remedying such mistakes makes it important that the people should pass upon the convention's work.